RIEVAULX ABBEY AND ITS SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT, 1132-1300

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Submitted in Accordance with the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Leeds

School of History

September 2001

The candidate confirms that the work submitted is her own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor Dr Wendy Childs for her continuous help and encouragement at all stages of my research. I would also like to thank other faculty members in the School of History, in particular Professor David Palliser and Dr Graham Loud for their advice. My thanks go also to Dr Mary Swan and students of the Centre for Medieval Studies who welcomed me to the thriving community of medievalists.

I would like to thank the librarians and archivists in the Brotherton Library Leeds, Bodleian Library Oxford, British Library in London and Public Record Office in Kew for their assistance.

Many people outside the University of Leeds discussed several aspects of Rievaulx abbey's history with me and I would like to thank particularly Dr Janet Burton, Dr David Crouch, Professor Marsha Dutton, Professor Peter Fergusson, Dr Brian Golding, Professor Nancy Partner, Dr Benjamin Thompson and Dr David Postles as well as numerous participants of the conferences at Leeds, Canterbury, Glasgow, Nottingham and Kalamazoo, who offered their ideas and suggestions.

I would like to thank my friends, Gina Hill who kindly helped me with questions about English language, Philip Shaw who helped me to draw the maps and Jacek Wallusch who helped me to create the graphs and tables. I am also indebted to Axel Müller of the International Medieval Institute who gave me much encouragement with all things medieval during my time at Leeds. Above all my gratitude goes to my parents who supported my interest in medieval history through many years of my studies, financially and otherwise.

The research leading to this thesis was made possible by the generous financial assistance from the ORS, the University of Leeds, School of History and Stefan Batory Foundation.

In addition, I want to state that any remaining errors are exclusively my own.

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines Rievaulx abbey's relationship with its social environment from the foundation in 1132 to 1300. In particular it analyses social networks around this institution and the types of relationships with individuals, families and tenurial groups developed over the course of the first two hundred years of Rievaulx abbey's existence. Although the work focus primarily on Rievaulx abbey, comparative material from other Yorkshire houses as well as continental Cistercian houses is discussed.

The core source is the cartulary of Rievaulx abbey. By a careful analysis of the distribution of information, its hierarchy according to certain inferable rules, and the relations between individual entries in the cartulary, this thesis shows how Rievaulx abbey understood the social networks of which this monastic house became a part, and how the monastic community saw its own place among the diverse social strata of twelfth-century Yorkshire.

In the first chapter, issues of religious foundations, the motivations of patrons and their interpretations currently present in scholarship are discussed before the analysis of the troubled relationship between Rievaulx abbey and its patrons. The second chapter contains an examination of the interaction of the Cistercian monasteries with lay people in the respect of fraternities, burial requests and prayers as well as the implications of the abbey's landholding for its benefactors and their heirs. The central part of the thesis, in the second chapter examines the relationship of Rievaulx abbey with its lay neighbours and benefactors. The closing parts of this chapter are devoted to the complexities of land holding and the abbey's perception of its relationship with benefactors. Chapter three presents issues of monastic co-operation, conflict and the monopolist tendencies of religious houses before examining the place of Rievaulx abbey in relation to other monasteries in Yorkshire. The next chapter discusses Rievaulx abbey's contacts with archbishops, bishops, deans, chapters and canons in the wider context of the internal Church politics. The fifth, final chapter examines Rievaulx abbey's involvement in the wool trade and the consequences of its business with the Italian merchants on the background of historiographical interpretations of Cistercian economy and its involvement in the commercial world.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Cartulary	*Cartularium de Abbatie de Rievalle,* ed. by James C. Atkinson, Surtees Society 88 (1889)
CRR	*Curia Regis Rolls* (London: HM Stationary Office, 1922-)
CChR	*Calendar of Charter Rolls* (London: HM Stationary Office, 1903)
CR	*Calendar of Close Rolls* (London: HM Stationary Office, 1892-)
CPL	*Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers Relating to Great Britain and Ireland*, vol. 1, *Papal letters* (1198-1304), ed. W. H. Bliss (London, 1893)
CPR	*Calendar of Patent Rolls* (London: HM Stationary Office, 1901-)
DNB	*Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. L. Stephen, S. Lee, 63 vols. (London, 1885-1900)
EEA	*English Episcopal Acta*, vol. 1- (Oxford:
EYC	*Early Yorkshire Charters*, ed. by William Farrer and Charles Clay, 12 vols. (Edinburgh and Wakefield: Ballantyne Hanson, 1914-1965)
Peerage	*Complete Peerage, or a History of the Houses of Lords and all its Members from the Earliest Times* by G. E. C., revised edn. V. Gibbs, H. A. Doubleday, G. H. White, 13 vols. in 12 (London, 1910-59)
PL	*Patrologiae Cursus Completus Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, 221 vols. (Paris, 1844-64)
PU	*Papsturkunden in England*, ed. Walter Holtzmann, 3 vols. (Berlin and Göttingen: Weidmannsche and Vadenhoeck, 1931-1952)
Statuta	Joseph Canivez, *Statuta Capitulorum Ordinis Cisterciensis sb anno 1116 ad annum 1786* (Louvain: Revue d'histoire ecclèsiastique, 1933-1941)
VCH	*Victoria County History: Yorkshire*, 3 vols. (London, 1907-3)
YD	*Yorkshire Deeds*, ed. W. Brown, C.T. Clay, M.J. Hebditch, M.J. Stanley Price, 10 vols, Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Record Series 39, 50, 63, 65, 69, 76, 83, 102, 111, 120 (1909-55)

INTRODUCTION

The ruins of Rievaulx abbey located in the steep valley on the North York moors are a important tourist attraction drawing one hundred thousand visitors per year by the mid-1990s. In recent years, English Heritage has transformed this site of former precincts with a new visitors' centre, information boards and guided tours.

Despite these recent developments, the history of Rievaulx abbey, in contrast to its material remnants, has not attracted much attention. The scholarly interest in Rievaulx abbey, its architecture in particular, was originally of antiquarian character. First descriptions of the architectural remains of Rievaulx appeared in the 1820-1850s.[1] The earliest academic study of the abbey ruins, even though short, was published in 1894 by William St John Hope.[2] The last private owner of Rievaulx Abbey donated the site to the Office of Works in 1918 and soon after the site was opened to the public after the excavations carried out by Charles Peers in 1919-21. Unfortunately these were done with very little archaeological supervision. Later, in the 1950s further excavations took place, but the exploration did not go below the level of the latest surviving floors. The archaeological surveying and excavations carried out between 1992 and 1996 by the team led by Dr Glyn Coppack, Professor Fergusson, and Stuart Harrison provided substantially new information for the material history of the abbey.

The head of the first excavations, Peers, published a guide to Rievaulx Abbey containing a short history of the monastery and description of the architecture according to the state of research at that time.[3] Recently, English Heritage has published a number of booklets aimed at the popular audience, including the most recent by Glyn Coppack and Peter Fergusson. This richly illustrated publication gives a concise, but up-to-date description of the history of the abbey and its buildings.[4] The most current academic work on the architecture of Rievaulx abbey, by Peter Fergusson and Stuart Harrison with a contribution from Glyn Coppack, incorporating results of the latest excavations,

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[1] T. D. Whitaker, *A Series of Views of the Abbeys and Castles in Yorkshire* (London, 1820); W. Richardson, *The Monastic Ruins of Yorkshire*, vols. 2 (York, 1844); P. H. Delamotte, J. Cundall, *A Photographic Tour among the Abbeys of Yorkshire* (London, 1856).
[2] William St John Hope, 'Rievaulx Abbey', *The Builder* 7 (1894), 9-12.
[3] Charles Peers, *Rievaulx Abbey Yorkshire* (London: Stationary Office, 1934).
[4] Glyn Coppack, Peter Fergusson, *Rievaulx Abbey* (London: English Heritage, 1994).

is an excellent study of the development of the monastic buildings in their historical context.[5]

In contrast to the substantial volume of works devoted to the physical remains of Rievaulx abbey, the history of this institution has been rather neglected. Although this monastic house features in many works on the history of the Cistercian order in Britain, or ecclesiastical institutions in the north, there is not a single monograph devoted to the history of Rievaulx abbey.[6] Although a book by the Helmsley and Area Group of the Yorkshire Archaeological Society published in 1963 deals with medieval and post-dissolution history of the abbey this work has a local-history bias, and parts of it are also based on the outdated historiography.[7] Only very recently has the history of Rievaulx abbey received more direct attention. Janet Burton reconstructed the process of land accumulation and grange formation by the abbey and the major economic developments in the history of this institution.[8]

The reason for this neglect, particularly in contrast to the attention which the other important Cistercian house in the area — Fountains abbey — has received is mainly due to the meagre written sources related to the history of Rievaulx abbey. The main source for the pre-1300 history of Rievaulx abbey is the cartulary of this house created in the late twelfth century, after 1179. The manuscript of the cartulary (British Library, Cotton Julius D. I.) is a small volume (17 x 13 cm) containing 193 parchment folios written in sections with rubrics and initials in red inks. The majority of entries have titles identifying the contents of each charter, but they lack any dating.[9] The original twelfth-century parts are written in very clear book script. Later, thirteenth-century insertions show a great variety of hands of much smaller, cursive documentary script. The small dimensions of the volume as well as the scarce and very simple

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[5] Peter Fergusson, Stuart Harrison, and Glyn Coppack, *Rievaulx Abbey: Community, Architecture, Memory* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).

[6] David Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England: a History of its Development from the Times of St Dunstan to the Fourth Lateran Council 940-1216* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963); Glyn Coppack, *Book of Abbeys and Priories* (London: English Heritage, 1990); Janet Burton, *Monastic and Religious Houses in Britain 1000-1300* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Janet Burton, *The Monastic Order in Yorkshire, 1069-1215* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Bernard Jennings, *Yorkshire Monasteries: Cloister, Land and People* (Ilkley: Smith Settle, 1999).

[7] *A History of Helmsley, Rievaulx and District*, ed. John McDonnell (York: The Stonegate Press, 1963).

[8] Janet Burton, 'The Estates and Economy of Rievaulx Abbey in Yorkshire', *Cîteaux* 49 (1998), 29-94.

[9] G. R. C. Davis, *Medieval Cartularies of Great Britain: a Short Catalogue* (London: Longman, 1958), p. 92.

decoration indicate that the cartulary was intended as a practical tool, rather than a show-piece object. Despite obvious signs of frequent use, such as lacerations of the parchment and its soiling due to frequent leafing, there are very few marginal notes in the volume. The majority of them have been lost though partial cutting through them when the volume acquired its post-medieval cover.

The first four folios of the volume are blank with an additional seventeenth-century genealogy of the Ros family inserted on a folded piece of parchment. Folios 1-2v [new ff. 5-6v] are occupied by several thirteenth-century entries, among them, on f. 6 [f. 2], a mid-thirteenth century agreement between William de Ros, the patron, and Rievaulx abbey. Then on ff. 3-14v [ff. 7-18v] are copied the decrees of the Third Lateran council of 1179. This is followed by a list of the abbey's accessions titled 'Iste sunt possessiones Rievallenses perhennes quod sic collate sunt nobis' on ff. 15-16 [ff. 19-20]. This list, in chronological order, with some dates and names of the donors, provides a record of the early grants to Rievaulx. It opens with an entry recording the endowment of Rievaulx abbey consisting of two vills: Griff and Tileston and an early grant of Odo de Boltby, a neighbour of the abbey. The next donation was given, according to this list, in 1145 by Walter Espec, the founder and consisted of Bilsdale. 'Iste sunt possessiones' is based on the content of the cartulary and supplements it with dates which are missing from the charters, but it does not reflect the total content of the volume and concentrates only on a selection of early grants. It is possible that the list was either not completed, or it was not meant as a comprehensive catalogue. 'Iste sunt possessiones' is followed by an incomplete calculation of the abbey's lands on f. 16v [f. 20v] with names of the donors and numbers of carucates given to Rievaulx by these individuals. The next section of the cartulary, the index of the volume, with the number of each entry on the left hand side (in the red ink) and titles of the charters on the right, is on ff. 17-22 [ff. 21-26]. It is an integral part of the twelfth-century cartulary, but was never fully completed. Two sections of the index from number 155 to 172 and again from 203 to 213 contain only numbers without titles of the charters they refer to.

The original body of the cartulary starts only on f. 24 [f. 28] with the compilation charter (containing information about two separate donation acts) of Walter Espec, the abbey's founder. After the section occupied by charters of the patrons follow copies of other early and important benefactors of the abbey, bishops William St Barbe (1143-1152) and Hugh du Puiset (1153-1195) of Durham. In logical progress after the ecclesiastical charters come the records of the most important grants of the lay

benefactors, beginning with the charters of Roger de Mowbray and his relatives. He was the most prolific lay donor of Rievaulx abbey, a prominent baron in the north and a very generous benefactor of many religious institutions. The copies of Roger's charters and those of his mother and son Nigel are followed by a cluster of documents issued by their knights and tenants. The rest of the original twelfth-century cartulary is organized in a similar way, that is, charters are grouped according to the connections between the donors. These connections were created by belonging to the same family either by birth or marriage, or created by the tenurial ties both vertical and horizontal, that is between lords and their tenants and those between different persons holding land from the same lord.

A separate section is occupied by copies of the royal and papal charters and letters. On ff. 124v-140v [ff. 132v-147v] there are charters of protection, specific privileges and one grant of King Henry I (1100-1135) and several of King Henry II (1154-1189). The documents issued by the archbishops of York: Thurstan (1114-1140), Henry Murdac (1147-1153), Roger du Pont L'Évêque (1154-1181), archdeacons and deacons of York: Ralph Baro (1139/40-c.1158/9), Robert de Gant (after 1147) and Robert Butevilain (1158-1186) appear on ff. 147-153v [ff. 154-162v]. Finally a large section, on ff. 167-172 [ff. 174-189], is devoted to the charters, letters and bulls of popes, predominantly of Pope Alexander III (1159-1181) and some of Honorius III (1216-1227). Most of them deal with the specific issues such as tithes payment or monks' complaints about neighbours encroaching on their property. From f. 171 [f. 188] onwards the text is written in a cursive hand from the first half of the thirteenth century.

The cartulary of Rievaulx abbey shows an institution in making, which had to pay a great attention to the neighbourhood politics in order to establish and succeed in this world of close personal links. The charters were grouped predominantly according to the relative importance of the donors and connections between them not the geographical location of the properties. This latter editorial technique was commonly used in the late medieval cartularies, for example in the Byland abbey cartulary, whose volume reflected the stability of the monastic holdings in contrast to Rievaulx's cartulary which shows the process of accumulation of land. The structure of Rievaulx's cartulary allows us to identify not only early benefactors of this house, but also connections between them and their relevant importance for the abbey. This feature has a fundamental importance for this thesis and its structure, particularly the second

chapter, where the benefactors and neighbours of the abbey are discussed in the order they appear in the cartulary .

The cartulary of Rievaulx was published in 1889 by the Surtees Society which printed many other Yorkshire monastic cartularies, including Guisborough, and Whitby. The edition of Rievaulx cartulary, by Rev. James Atkinson, exemplifies many of the traditional editorial practices which reflected the strictly factual interests of the historians. Almost half of the published edition of the Rievaulx cartulary consists of documents which are not its original components. Some are clearly distinguished, for example, extracts from the Feet of Fines and Assize Rolls, but some documents are inserted into the body of the cartulary without any or little indication, thus potentially misleading the reader. In consequence, also the numbering of the entries used by Atkinson is different from the one used in the manuscript. In several places the editor changed the order of the entries, and rather arbitrarily and without explanation cut out formal parts of the entries, such as the *pro anima* phrases, which were thought to be formulaic. Half-way through the published edition, on pages 205-250, he inserted a large addition of documents from the Dodsworth MSS from the Bodleian Library, Oxford. Although these charters are related to Rievaulx abbey they were not a part of the original cartulary. The editor incorporated them, with a footnote stating that the following charters are part of the Dodsworth manuscript. Nevertheless, superficially, they appear to be a part of the original cartulary.

There are some indications that there were other cartularies or inventories of charters originating from Rievaulx abbey. A second cartulary was recorded in 1640 to be in the possession of the Earl of Rutland at Belvoir Castle and parts of it were copied by Roger Dodsworth in the seventeenth century (Bodl., MS Dodsw., lxxxv, ff. 53-57, 71v-72), but when the content of the Belvoir Castle's collection was catalogued by the Historical Manuscripts Commission in the early twentieth century, this volume was not recorded.[10] Roger Dodsworth's copy of the index of the second cartulary suggests that the material in the volume was organised geographically, according to the place they referred to. A third cartulary or a register was in the possession of William Lite of Wilburgham in Cambridgeshire in the seventeenth century, but has also ceased to exist.[11]

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[10] Davis, *Medieval Cartularies*, p. 92.
[11] William Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, rev. ed. J. Caley, H. Ellis and B. Bandinel, vol. 5 (London, 1846), p. 277.

The surviving cartulary of Rievaulx abbey remains the most important source for the understanding of the abbey's relationship with the outside world. The complex structure of the cartulary indicates its interconnected practical functions and expresses an ideological message about the identity of the institution which produced it. By placing charters in a specific order the compiler indicated which grants were more important than others. Also, the simple, but effective editorial practice of grouping together charters issued by members of one family or tenants of one lord placed these donations in the context of the local community. Understanding the neighbourhood and family politics was crucial for the abbey which was not patiently waiting for the donors to come, but probably targeted specific people or families in the areas in which it was particularly interested in expansion, for example East Harlsey or East Bolton.

The main body of the cartulary is organised according to some inferable rules, which helped to place charters which otherwise would be copied randomly, and even more importantly helped the future users of the volume to find specific documents. The first rule of organisation of the entries appears to be according to the connections between people known to the monks. According to this implicit rule, the compiler placed charters issued by the members of one family together and the charters of the tenants almost always accompany those of their lords. In not so rare cases when one individual was holding lands from more than one lord, the placement of the tenant's charter indicates which of the connections was considered more important by the abbey. Sometimes horizontal connections, that is, between the members of one family or tenants of a particular lord, were more important than the hierarchical relations. Among a few donation charters to Rievaulx by Adam de Brus, a leading figure in the social and political landscape of the North, copied into the cartulary, is his confirmation of a grant (1178-c.1190) of his tenant William Ingram, from a knightly family of active benefactors of Rievaulx.[12] In this case, however, Adam de Brus's charter of confirmation is copied among other grants from the Ingram family. This placement indicates that the Ingram family, although of lower social standing, were more important to the monks as benefactors than their lords, and their connections with the abbey were much deeper than the importance of their tenancy of with Brus family.

[12] *Cartularium de Abbatie de Rievalle,* ed. by James C. Atkinson, Surtees Society 88 (1889), n° 78, [henceforth as *Cartulary*]; *Early Yorkshire Charters*, ed. William Farrer, vol. 2, (Edinburgh: Ballantyne Hanson, 1915), n° 121.

Therefore the compiler of the cartulary grouped the Ingrams' charters in a distinctive set and was not concerned with their tenurial connections with the Bruses.

The second rule for grouping of charters in the cartulary is solely according to the property with which they are concerned. The most prominent example of such editing method in the Rievaulx cartulary is the cluster of charters connected to the acquisition of the waste below Pickering by the abbey. Clearly, the organising theme for those entries is a particular piece of property. The conflicts about the waste below Pickering were the sole reason that many people here were drawn into any relationship with the abbey and for those who were already connected with Rievaulx this dispute added another dimension to their contacts.

A great majority of the charters in the cartulary are related to grants of land from various lay people to the abbey. The grant of property, regardless of its size, was not an action confined, in time, to the actual transmission of property from the hands of one owner to another. A grant created, in a great majority of cases, a continuum, that is a relationship which lasted for more than one generation. These original acts of giving set up connections and formed a part of the wider network of relationships not only between the abbey and lay people, but between the people themselves. It was therefore important for the abbey to recognise these connections and be part of it, preferably on its own terms. The most distinct statement of the role and place of the monastery in the lay society is expressed by the conventional phrases. The opening lines of each charter 'Let it be known to these present that I/we have given, and by this charter, have confirmed to God and the church of St Mary of Rievaulx and the monks serving God there, for salvation of the soul', give the reason not only for the existence of the monastery but provide also a clear explanation for its role in lay society.[13] These formulaic expressions were not meaningless and there was reason for copying them in their entirety from the charters into the cartulary. Donation to a monastery was a gift to God entrusted in the hands of God. Their role as intercessors between the Sacrum and people gave the monks a unique place in society.

Brigitte Bedos-Rezak pointed out that 'the charters articulated and gave meaning to a specific social structure' by the means of vocabulary (*miles, nobilis*), content of the

[13]'Sciatis me dedisse, et hac presenti carta mea confirmasse Deo et Ecclesie St. Marie Rievallis et monachis ibidem Deo servientibus, pro salute anime.'

witness lists and rituals which often accompanied donations.[14] The cartularies go one step further. By creating a new entity from a great number of charters, they provided an interpretation for these expressions of social aspiration. By their methods of editing and organising this material the monks not only preserved the memory of their benefactors and their gifts, but composed this knowledge in the way they wanted it to be remembered. The placement of the charters indicated the relative importance of benefactors and their families not necessarily at the time of donation, but rather at the time when the cartulary was created.[15] By the late twelfth century some of the earlier connections might have entered a different phase or ceased to exist altogether. In the most general sense the cartulary was a way of mapping the world — how elements such as people and places were related to each other — how the social and political environment was understood by the abbey — and how this institution made sense of what was happening to it in terms of its land acquisitions, grants, conflicts and law suits. It also illustrates how the abbey wanted to see its own place in the network of social connections. This perception therefore determined the hierarchy of importance of information and documented the abbey's responses to many external factors.

It would be over-stretching the point by claiming that the Rievaulx cartulary, or any cartulary of this type was a narrative form, but it can be said confidently that Rievaulx cartulary tells a story. Apart from being a useful tool in the worldly business of the abbey, the cartulary was designed to preserve the memory of the institution, its property, and the people who were its benefactors. The structure of the cartulary gives an impression that the abbey was a central point of the social network, that lands given to Rievaulx were given to God, and thus removed from the realm of this world.[16] It might seem that the abbey was above the worldly concerns of its neighbours, and, that the monks only served as guardians of lands given, in fact, to God directly. However, as we compare this picture with information from other sources, particularly legal records,

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[14] Brigitte Bedos-Rezak, 'Diplomatic Sources and Medieval Documentary Practices', in *The Past and Future of Medieval Studies*, ed. John Van Engen, Notre Dame Conference in Medieval Studies, vol. 4, (Notre Dame: the University of Notre Dame Press, 1994), pp. 320-36.

[15] Constance H. Berman, *The Cistercian Evolution: the Invention of the Order in Twelfth-Century Europe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), p. 169.

[16] This process has been described by M. Newman, *The Boundaries of Charity Cistercian Culture and Ecclesiastical Reform 1099-1150* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), p. 69. 'Just as Cistercian authors describe the process of converting human love into divine love, so the Cistercians' cartularies demonstrate the steps by which they untangled the layers of rights and obligations attached to secular property and made their land into a religious domain.'

it appears that the abbey was much more a part of the network, entangled in various conflicts with its neighbours, than it wanted to acknowledge it in the cartulary.

Among other sources directly related to Rievaulx abbey, a number of charters have been also published or re-published in the volumes of *Early Yorkshire Charters*. Some of them originate from the Dodsworth MSS and some from the cartulary or other collections. Abstracts and translations of other charters of grants to Rievaulx abbey have been included in the volumes of the *Yorkshire Deeds*.[17] Several unpublished charters, letters and memoranda related to Rievaulx abbey are in the British Library.

A separate group of sources containing information about Rievaulx abbey are various governmental records, namely Charter Rolls, Close Rolls, Patent Rolls. These rolls were published in the forms of calendars or in full. Similarly much of the legal documentation related to Rievaulx abbey in the Feet of Fines, Assize Rolls, De Banco, Curia Regis Rolls has been published *in extensio*, in the form of calendars or as collections of selected entries.[18] These records provide valuable insight into Rievaulx's relationship with its benefactors and neighbours, and as such supplement information from the charters.

Cartularies of other houses, Bridlington, Fountains, Guisborough, Malton, Rufford and Sallay contain significant amount of information related to their connections with Rievaulx abbey. Most of them have been published, with varied degrees of extent and accuracy, apart from Byland's cartulary which will be published soon by Janet Burton.[19]

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[17] *Early Yorkshire Charters*, ed. William Farrer and Charles Clay, 13 vols. (Edinburgh and Wakefield: Ballantyne Hanson, 1914-1965), vols. 4-12 published as the Yorkshire Archaeological Society Extra Record Series [henceforth as *EYC*]; *Yorkshire Deeds,* vol. 1, ed. W. Brown, Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Record Series, 39 (1907); *Yorkshire Deeds,* vol. 2, ed. W. Brown, Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Record Series 50 (1913); *Yorkshire Deeds*, vol. 5, ed. C. T. Clay, Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Record Series 69 (1926) [henceforth as *YD*].

[18] See Bibliography.

[19] *Abstract of the Charters and other Documents contained in the Chartulary of the Priory of Bridlington*, ed. W. T. Lancaster (Leeds, 1912) [henceforth as *Bridlington Cartulary*]; *Abstracts of the Charters and other Documents contained in the Chartulary of the Cistercian Abbey of Fountains*, ed. W. T. Lancaster, 2 vols. (Leeds, 1915) [henceforth as *Fountains Cartulary*]; *Cartularium Prioratus de Gysburne Eboracenses Diocesis Ordinis S. Augustini*, vol. 1, ed. W. Brown, Surtees Society 86 (1889); *The Honor and Forest of Pickering*, ed. Robert Bell Turton, North Riding Record Society, news series 4 (1897) [henceforth as *Honor of Pickering*]; Rufford *Charters*, ed. C. J. Holdsworth, vol. 1, Thoroton Society Record Series 29 (1972); *The Cartulary of the Cistercian Abbey of St. Mary of Sallay in Craven*, vol. 1-2, ed. Joseph McNulty Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series 87 (1933) and 90 (1934).

Archiepiscopal rolls and charters of the archbishops of York and bishops of Durham provide information on the relationship between the secular church hierarchy and the abbey of Rievaulx.[20] This documentation is however rather biased towards the mid-twelfth century when the contacts between these institutions were most dynamic.

The statutes of the Cistercian Chapter General provide concise, but valuable information of Rievaulx's involvement in the politics of the Cistercian order.[21] Similarly, collections of the papal letters and bulls give information for the internal and external Church issues related to Rievaulx abbey.[22]

Some of the narrative sources have also been used in this thesis, primarily those directly connected with Rievaulx abbey: Abbot Ailred's *Relatio de Standardo*, and *De sanctimoniali de Wattun* and Walter Daniel's *Vita Aelredi*, as well as William of Newburgh's *Historia Rerum Anglicarum* which provides important information on the ecclesiastical politics of twelfth century Yorkshire.[23] Other works of Abbot Ailred have not be utilised in this thesis due to their strictly theological focus, unconnected with the temporal aspects of Rievaulx abbey's existence.

In contrast to the sources discussed above, which are available in the printed form, the history of Rievaulx abbey's dealings with Italian wool merchants in the late twelfth century can be explored primarily on the bases of unpublished King's

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[20] *Durham Episcopal Charters 1071-1152,* ed. H. S. Offler, Surtees Society 179 (1968); *English Episcopal Acta*, vol. 5 *York 1070-1154*, ed. Janet Burton (Oxford: the British Academy, 1988); *English Episcopal Acta*, vol. 20 *York 1154-1181*, ed. Marie Lovatt (Oxford: the British Academy, 2000); *The Register of Rolls of Walter Gray Lord Archbishop of York 1215-1255,* ed. J. Raine, Surtees Society 56 (1872); *The Register of Walter Giffard Lord Archbishop of York 1266-1279,* ed. W. Brown, Surtees Society 109 (1904); *The Register of William Wickwane Lord Archbishop of York 1279-1285*, ed. W. Brown, Surtees Society 114 (1907); *The Register of John Le Romeyn Lord Archbishop of York 1286-1296,* part 1, ed. W. Brown, Surtees Society 123 (1913).

[21] Joseph Canivez, *Statuta Capitulorum Ordinis Cisterciensis sub anno 1116 ad annum 1786*, 8 vols. (Louvain: Revue d'histoire ecclèsiastique, 1933-41).

[22] *Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers Relating to Great Britain and Ireland*, vol. 1 *Papal letters* (1198-1304), ed. W. H. Bliss (London, 1893); *Original papal documents in England and Wales from the accession of pope Innocent III to the death of pope Benedict XI (1198-1304)*, ed. Jane E. Sayers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); *Papsturkunden in England*, ed. Walter Holtzmann, 3 vols. (Berlin and Göttingen: Weidmannsche and Vadenhoeck, 1931-1952) [henceforth as *PU*].

[23] Ailred of Rievaulx, 'Relatio de Standardo' in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I*, vol. 3, ed. Richard Howlett, Rolls Series 82 (1886), pp. 181-99; Ailred of Rievaulx, 'De sanctimoniali de Wattun', *Patrologiae Cursus Completus Latina* , ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 195 (Paris, 1855), col. 789-796; *The Life of Ailred of Rievaulx by Walter Daniel*, trans. and introduction F. M. Powicke (London: Nelson, 1950), [henceforth as *Life of Ailred*]; William of Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I*, vol. 1, ed. Richard Howlett, Rolls Series 82 (1884), pp. 20-503; for other works see Bibliography.

Remembrancer's Memoranda Rolls and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer's Memoranda Rolls from the Public Record Office.[24]

Any work on the history of a Cistercian house in England has to draw on existing scholarship. Although each chapter deals with the pertinent literature, here are listed those works which have provided significant amounts of material or substantially influenced the argument. Any student of northern monasticism must be indebted to the works of Janet Burton, in particular *The Monastic Order in Yorkshire, 1069-1215* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) and her other works on various aspects of the history of religious houses in the region. The monograph of Joan Wardrop, *Fountains Abbey and its Benefactors 1132-1300* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1987) remains as the most comprehensive study of this kind in the context of Yorkshire monasticism. Studies of Abbot Ailred and his political career by Marsha L. Dutton helped to place Rievaulx abbey in the context of local and national ecclesiastical politics. Finally, two works on the development of the Cistercian order influenced perception of Rievaulx against the background of wider trends. Martha G. Newman, *The Boundaries of Charity: Cistercian Culture and Ecclesiastical Reform 1099-1150* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996) is an excellent study of the place and role of the order in the context of the secular Church. Although the new book by Constance Hoffman Berman, *The Cistercian Evolution: the Invention of a Religious Order in Twelfth-Century Europe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000) contains significant mistakes and flaws, it also poses many important questions as to the entanglement of the white monks in the social networks of twelfth century Europe and, as such, helps to address these issues in the context of Rievaulx abbey.

The time-span of this thesis covers the history of Rievaulx abbey from its foundation in 1132 to 1300. The upper time-limit has been chosen to reflect a change in both economic and social practice of the abbey as well as the external factors. The twelfth century was undoubtedly the era of the greatest expansion of monasticism in the north, while the thirteenth century saw a drop in the number of grants to religious houses, but also the continuation of relationships with many families of benefactors and the consolidation of the monastic granges. The number of grants from benefactors, particularly in the form of land, significantly decreased after 1300 and monastic granges

[24] Public Record Office, King's Remembrancer's Memoranda Rolls E 159/59-62; Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer's Memoranda Rolls E 368/59-60.

were increasingly leased to lay people instead of employing the direct labour of lay brothers and paid workers. The first half of the fourteenth century brought also very destructive Scottish raids and increasing pressure from the crown as well as disastrous famine between 1315 and 1322. In 1322 Rievaulx and Byland were ransacked by the Scots, although their lands were already ruined by many previous attacks and these events cannot be compared with any difficulties which the abbey experienced in the previous two centuries.

Geographically, places discussed in this thesis are located within the county of Yorkshire, the largest medieval county, in its historical boundaries stretching from the North Sea coast to the east, Pennines to the west, Humber, Don and Sheaf rivers to the south, and the river Tees to the north. For easier location of the discussed sites an appropriate riding, parish or township distinction is used, if possible. The analysis covers in particular the vicinity of the abbey, the area of its granges stretching as far as Worsborough to the south and to the north-east coast in present day Middlesbrough. Apart from Rievaulx abbey, other religious institutions, analyzed in this work were located predominantly in the archdiocese of York and diocese of Durham.

Each chapter of the thesis concentrates on a separate social group with which Rievaulx abbey interacted. This division is based partly on the structure of the main source — the cartulary itself — which reflects the world of social interactions of Rievaulx as displayed by the content of this volume. The chapters are organized in descending order, that is, from the closest neighbours to the most distant one, beginning with the relationship of the abbey with its founder and patrons' family, then lay neighbours and benefactors of the houses. After analysis of Rievaulx's connections with other monastic houses in the north of England follows a study of the abbey's contacts with the representatives of the secular Church, namely archbishops of York, bishops of Durham, archdeacons, deans and their respective chapters. Finally, a separate type of contact between Rievaulx abbey and Italian merchants and the impact of the wool trade on this monastery are discussed. Each chapter deals with different groups of people and institutions which were all, except the Italian merchants, part of a large web of social network crossing social strata and institutional forms. To make the results of the research manageable, these connections are indicated by cross-references in each chapter to other parts of the thesis.

Each chapter also contains discussions of the relevant sources and secondary literature, particularly their controversial aspects. In the first chapter issues of religious

foundations, motivations of patrons and their interpretations currently present in the literature are discussed before the analysis of the troubled relationship between Rievaulx abbey and its patrons. The second chapter contains examination of the interaction of the Cistercian monasteries with lay people in the respect of fraternities, burial requests and prayers as well as the implications of the abbey's landholding for its benefactors and their heirs. The central part of the thesis, in the second chapter, which examines the relationship of Rievaulx abbey with its lay neighbours and benefactors, is based on the database, which was created for this purpose. It covers over 180 individuals grouped in the 60 families or groups of relatives. Most of the information related to these people came primarily from the cartulary, along with the data from *Early Yorkshire Charters*, *Early Yorkshire Families* and *Charters of the Honour of Mowbrays* as well as from the secondary literature, in particular works by David Crouch, Paul Dalton, Judith Green and Hugh M. Thomas. The closing parts of this chapter are devoted to the complexities of land holding and the abbey's perception of its relationship with benefactors. Chapter three presents issues of monastic co-operation, conflict and the monopolist tendencies of religious houses before examining the place of Rievaulx abbey in relation to other monasteries in Yorkshire. The next chapter discusses the relations of the Cistercian order with the lay Church. The particular case of Rievaulx abbey and its contacts with archbishops, bishops, deans, chapters and canons is presented in the wider context of the internal Church politics. Then fifth, and final chapter examines historiographical interpretations of Cistercian economy and its involvement in the commercial world before analyzing Rievaulx abbey's involvement in the wool trade and the consequences of its business with Italian merchants.

This structure of chapters presents theoretical, methodological and historiographical debates in the context of the Rievaulx abbey material and allows to link particular cases with the wider issues. In order to avoid repetitions and to link relevant ideas, events and people, these parts are cross-referenced throughout the text.

Almost all charters used in the thesis, which are from before 1290 are undated. Those published in the *Early Yorkshire Charters* have been dated by the editors, except when more precise dating by other authors is available. Each such exceptions are indicated in the appropriate place.

Latin spelling from various editions of the charters has been standardized to reflect twelfth-century spelling. For example *meae* is spelt as *mee*. Distinctions between letters *u* and *v* are kept according to the spelling of the *Early Yorkshire Charters*. All the

narrative sources are quoted in the spelling of the given edition. All the translations from Latin are mine, unless stated otherwise.

The spelling of geographical names is according to the *Early Yorkshire Charters* editors and Janet Burton. If a place is known under its modern name this spelling is used in the text. If the modern spelling of the place-name does not exist the original spelling from the relevant documents is left or replaced by modernized versions used by either editors of *Early Yorkshire Charters* or Janet Burton, if possible.

As indicated earlier, written sources for the history of Rievaulx abbey are rather scarce. In order to remedy these gaps a certain amount of comparative material is introduced. It is related to other northern monasteries, in particular Fountains abbey which was comparable in size and importance to Rievaulx. Besides, the history of Kirkham priory, founded by the same person as Rievaulx provides an important comparison to the Cistercian house in terms of its relationship with patrons. Apart from the comparative data from Yorkshire, material related to the history of Cistercian houses in Central and Eastern Europe, in particular North-East Germany and Western Poland have been also introduced. The choice of this comparative angle is not accidental. Although British Cistercian houses are commonly compared to French monasteries there is little reason for such choice, apart from the accessibility of the secondary literature. Social and even climatic conditions existing in southern France, particularly Burgundy, were very different from those in the north of England. Warm, densely populated areas in the south of France created very different environments to sparsely populated regions, near borders, with a substantial component of woodland. In contrast, conditions in the trans-Elbe region and even Silesia show similarity to the north of England in terms of being thinly populated, borderland territories experiencing political instability. The introduction of comparative material also serves another purpose. It shows how different or similar were strategies of the Cistercian monasteries in terms of their interactions with their benefactors and neighborhoods and how these religious houses responded to the needs and expectations of the lay nobility.

CHAPTER I
RIEVAULX ABBEY AND ITS PATRONS

In this chapter, before turning to look in detail at Rievaulx abbey patrons, it will be useful to consider in general the circumstances and motivations for the foundation of monastic houses. Firstly, motivations for religious foundations and their interpretations will be analyzed. This discussion of the literature will also place the case of Rievaulx abbey in the context of current research and types of questions which historians ask in relation to religious foundations, issues of gift-giving and reciprocity. Secondly, social and political factors surrounding early Cistercian foundations in the north of England will be presented. The central part of this chapter will be devoted to the actual foundation of Rievaulx abbey and its relationship with the founder, then it will move on to discuss contacts between the abbey and the patron's family and tenants, finally it will examine the role of the Ros family as the hereditary patrons of Rievaulx.

Among the contacts with the outside world of any religious house the founder and patrons were the most important lay persons associated with it and their actions often had strong and direct impacts on the life of the monastery. In the history of any monastic house the patron's family played an important role as protector, benefactor and defender. Usually, such a relationship was developed in the early years of the house's existence and then sustained for several generations. In turn patrons enjoyed special spiritual services, such as perpetual prayers, commemorations and the social status attached to this function. Patrons of the Benedictine houses also enjoyed considerable power over their houses, including custody during vacancies, varying control over abbots' elections and hospitality.[1]

The Cistercian order rejected many links with the outside world and tried to minimize any formal ties between the monasteries and their lay patrons. Cistercian houses accepted land predominantly in free alms to avoid the necessity of supplying knightly service, but this did not prevent the development of informal and sometimes even close relations with the patrons. There has been a growing literature devoted to the dynamics of the relationships between monasteries and their patrons, which shows that contacts between the Cistercian houses and their patrons were an important part of their existence. The dynamics of the relationship between a monastery and its various benefactors was usually shaped by the physical proximity of their properties, areas of

[1] Susan Wood, *English Monasteries and Their Patrons in the Thirteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955), pp. 40-101.

economic interest and local politics, but in the case of the relationship between a patron and a monastery, there were certain additional expectations by the latter from the former. The responsibilities of the patrons to protect and support their monasteries were fulfilled with various degrees of involvement and this level of commitment tended to change over the generations.

Although the role of lay nobility in the success of the Cistercian order has been emphasized in the literature, the motivation of these people remains a debatable issue. In the last thirty years there has been an enormous growth in the scholarship devoted to religious foundations, the intentions of donors and the issue of the gift exchange in the monastic context. The great obstacle for many historians analyzing motivations for grants to the monasteries is, as rightly pointed out by David Crouch, that 'historians tend to be cynical both by nature and training and treat patrons' motivation very suspiciously'.[2]

Generally, there seem to be three main trends of approach to the issue of the motivations behind monastic foundations and donations. The first one interprets intentions of spiritual motivations, expressed by the founders and donors in the charters, as concealed secular interest, sometimes even sales.[3] These historians suspect that spiritual motivations were a kind of cover up of more mundane motivations and the real reasons for the donation to the religious houses were predominantly material. Bennett Hill asserts that many of the gifts were in reality concealed sales, but the payments were not recorded in the charters to disguise the true nature of these transactions.[4] Christopher Harper-Bill maintains that 'many grants, were in reality commercial transactions'.[5] More cautiously, Emma Mason, without discarding spiritual motivation emphasizes the ambivalence of relationships between monastic houses and their patrons. In her interpretation donations were often made 'with an eye to the material wellbeing of the donor rather than to that of the recipient.'[6] This ambivalence was in her understanding inherent to this relationship which was designed to promote not only

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[2] David Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy in Britain, 1000-1300* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 311.

[3] See for example, Bennett Hill, *English Cistercian Monasteries and their Patrons in the Twelfth Century* (Urbana Illinois Press, 1968), pp. 62-79; Victoria Chandler, 'Politics and Piety: Influences on Charitable Donations during the Anglo-Norman Period', *Revue Bénédictine* 90 (1980), 65.

[4] Hill, *English Cistercian Monasteries*, p. 57.

[5] C. Harper-Bill, 'The Piety of the Anglo-Norman Knightly Class', in *Proceedings of the Battle Conference on Anglo-Norman Studies II 1979*, ed. Allen R. Brown (Woodbridge: Boydel, 1980), p. 67.

spiritual but also temporal interests of the lay patron. Similarly, John Howe stresses that the support of nobility for Church reform, including foundations of the Cistercian houses, was a mixture of piety and desire for material profit.[7]

The second trend of interpretation takes the intentions of the founders and benefactors expressed in charters at face value. Ludo Milis characterizes existing research and points out that the formulae of religious motivations in the charters should not be overlooked:

> Little attention, however, is paid to this and similar formulae. They are often overlooked as 'useless clichés', as if clichés were without meaning. Why should they exist otherwise? It is precisely to these expressions, superfluous to positivist historians, that we should turn to find the major social reason for the existence of medieval monasteries.[8]

Christopher Holdsworth asserts that the charters themselves hold the main clue to patrons' motivations. He points out that prayers were the main concern of the donors, 'it comes first in their charters and has to be taken seriously.'[9] More recently, Emma Cownie reaches similar conclusions in her study of early Anglo-Norman religious patronage, that the grants were given because of predominantly religious motivations.[10] David Postles, on the other hand, stresses the importance of self-representation and prestige, besides spiritual considerations in the donors' motivation.[11]

Finally, the third approach derives from the interdisciplinary investigations of the social phenomena heavily inspired by ethnology, anthropology and sociology. Historians belonging to this school argue that the religious foundations and grants are manifestations of the deeper, often trans-cultural, patterns of social behaviour such as gift-giving, exchange and reciprocity. This approach offers very exciting possibilities, but also poses several interpretational difficulties. Firstly, many of these works use

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[6] Emma Mason, 'Timeo Barones et Dona Ferentes', in *Religious Motivation: Biographical and Sociological Problems for the Church Historians,* Studies in Church History, ed. Derek Baker vol. 15 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1978), p. 70.

[7] John Howe, 'The Nobility's Reform of the Medieval Church', *American Historical Review* 93 (1988), 317-39.

[8] Ludo J. R. Milis, *Angelic Monks and Earthly Men: Monasticism and its Meaning to Medieval Society* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1992), p. 88. The author makes his standpoint very clear in the matter of interpretations of the grants to the monasteries, but this work should be treated very cautiously. It is full of broad generalisations and almost entirely based on the secondary literature. See the review by Constance Bouchard in *Speculum* 69 (1994), 843-4.

[9] Christopher Holdsworth, *The Piper and the Tune: Medieval Patrons and Monks*, The Stenton Lecture 1990 (Reading: University of Reading, 1991), p. 17.

[10] Emma Cownie, *Religious Patronage in Anglo-Norman England 1066-1135* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1998), p. 153.

[11] David Postles, 'Small gifts, but big rewards: the symbolism of some gifts to the religious', *Journal of Medieval History* 27 (2001), 24-5.

anthropological studies of non-European societies, which although being essentially pre-industrial are distinctly different from medieval societies. Historians tend to use anthropological or sociological studies rather selectively concentrating on the usefulness of their conclusions, disregarding difference in methodology between history and these social sciences. Anthropologists study societies in a direct way, but historians have no access to the past societies. The archives and written sources are not comparable with the interviews which anthropologists conduct with the members of the societies under consideration. Secondly, constructs such as 'gift economy' developed by Bronisław Malinowski and Marcel Mauss in the early twentieth century themselves pose several problems. In Mauss's theory based on the gift-giving among Maori people, every gift needs its counter-gift, which also needs to be reciprocated, resulting in a circular process of exchange. The desire for reciprocity was motivated by the belief in 'hau', a kind of spirit of the gift-object, which having power over the recipient, wanted to be returned to the original donor. Therefore gift and counter-gift created a permanent bond between the donor and recipient, while the object remained highly significant. In the Mauss theory this system of exchange was crucial for the functioning of the whole society, maintaining social bonds, diffusing aggression and conflicts.[12] In historical scholarship this model has been applied to the early medieval societies in which the volume of monetary exchange was not significant and barter trade very common. George Duby used this theory to explain land donations to the early medieval church and counter-gifts in the form of prayers and alms to the poor.[13] Although the notion of reciprocity was crucial for the early medieval societies, the 'hau' factor, so important in the Maori context, never existed in a European context. Moreover, since the early 1960s anthropologists themselves have reinterpreted Mauss's findings and these are no longer seen as universally acceptable, as before, to many pre-industrial societies.[14] Simultaneously, the important debate in anthropology about the applicability of Western economic and social concepts to non-Western societies, became relevant to historians, because it posed the wider issue of cross-cultural interpretations and usefulness of the

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[12] Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Society*, trans. Ian Cunnison (London: Cohen and West, 1954).

[13] George Duby, *The early Growth of the European Economy: Warriors and Peasant from the Seventh to the Twelfth Century*, trans. Howard B. Clarke (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1974), p. 56.

[14] See in particular *Economic Anthropology: Readings in Theory and Analysis* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968) and *The New Economic Anthropology,* ed. John Clammer (New York: St. Martin Press, 1978).

models developed in an entirely different context.[15] As much as the application of the anthropological notions to the historical material is often based on the superficial similarities, these innovations should not be disregarded. One of the eminent British anthropologists, Edward Evans-Pritchard, acknowledged differences in methodology between history and anthropology, but recognized a fundamental similarity between both disciplines — both history and anthropology 'translate' other cultural realities into our modern understanding.[16]

In this sense the only way forward in application of such models as the 'gift economy' to historical investigation is as artificial constructs or rather ideal types which can be used in explaining past reality without necessarily looking for all the elements of the model to appear in the context of every case. Particularly works by Barbara H. Rosenwein provide good examples of inspiration on the analytical level, not using it simply as comparative or illustrative material. In her study of the monastery of Cluny and its patrons she uncovers many layers of interactions and meanings which narrowly understood historical research would not access. She analyses the complexity of land holding between the abbey and the benefactors which was based on the notion of reciprocity. In her other work on early medieval immunity she uncovered deeper meanings of the legal concept.[17] Although the model of gift exchange developed by Rosenwein is applicable to the early medieval context it cannot, however, be applied to the practices of the Cistercian order, as Constance H. Berman elucidates. In her understanding, the counter-gifts from the Cistercian abbeys to the benefactors were not expressions of the anthropologically understood 'gift economy', but rather a way to prevent claims of the donors' family to the land given to the monastery. Although in Berman's understanding these counter-gifts were motivated by the practical and legal considerations, the religious component was present in all these cases which causes ambiguity of language; for example a phrase '*donare*, *laudare* and *vendere*' could appear in the context of one donation, that is a particular grant could be given, confirmed and sold at the same time.[18]

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[15] See for example, John Weeks, 'Fundamental Economic Concepts and their Application to Social Phenomena', in *The New Economic Anthropology*, pp. 21-30.

[16] Edward Evans-Pritchard, *Anthropology and History: a lecture delivered in the University of Manchester* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1963), p. 14.

[17] Barbara H. Rosenwein, *To Be the Neighbor of Saint Peter: the Social Meaning of Cluny's Property, 909-1049* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989); *Negotiating Space: Power, Restraint and Privileges of Immunity in Early Medieval Europe* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999).

[18] Constance H. Berman, 'The Debate on Cistercian Contracts: Regarding a Recent Book', *Cîteaux* 43 (1992), 438-9.

Another successful application of the interdisciplinary methods to the study of lay-religious interactions is a work by Illana Silber published in 1995. She approaches the problem of gift-giving in the medieval church from the sociological stand point.[19] Her book is a comparative study of medieval monasticism and Theravada Buddhism with eclectic theoretical inspirations ranging from Marcel Mauss to Anthony Giddens; a large part of her study is also a dialogue and polemic with the Weberian idea of the role of religion in the development of the Western world.[20] Despite the large scale comparative framework of Silber's study, she avoids too broad generalization. Her interpretation of the relationship between the monks and lay donors is an important voice in the debate:

> Lay donations, in short, are not just a payment for monastic secular or religious services. Neither are they, however, equivalent to a straightforward commitment to the virtuoso [monastic perfection - EJ] ideals. A more adequate interpretation of donations, rather, is that they contribute to mediating between two otherwise polarized and even antagonistic sectors, between a religious elite exemplifying certain ideals, and lay believers willing to acknowledge the same ideals but unable or unwilling to commit themselves to their fullest enactment. The gift, in this case at least, is perhaps "total" (in Mauss's sense of being simultaneously economic, religious, political, etc.), but it is also ideologically, a highly pliant and multivocal phenomenon.[21]

This explanation of lay-monastic interaction points to the fundamental reason for the existence of religious communities and their role in the medieval lay society. Despite being intentionally general this statement can be used as a starting point for many specific historical investigations, which would confirm this model in many particular instances of the multiplicity of social meanings exemplified by the acts of benefactors.

On the level of sources we encounter another debate in the secondary literature which is relevant to the case of Rievaulx abbey. Charters which are the central type of sources for the investigation of monastic-lay interactions are highly standardized. The most debated point is the formulaic character of the charters and the possibility, if any, of seeing behind these phrases. To start with, as Milis, Holdsworth and Cownie argue, the fact that the charters are formulaic does not make them automatically meaningless. These phrases are a type of shorthand for more complex ideas. There is no need to assume that medieval people were so cynical that they would have used the vocabulary

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[19] Illana F. Silber, *Virtuosity, Charisma and Social Order: a Comparative Sociological Study of Monasticism in Theravada Buddhism and Medieval Catholicism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); see also reviews of this book in *Sociology of Religion* 5 (1996), 214-5 and *American Journal of Sociology* 10 (1996), 1776-8.

[20] Silber, *Virtuosity,* p. 6.

[21] Silber, *Virtuosity,* p. 214.

of spiritual aims without any real meaning attached to it. The generic character of charters did not allow for more personal or individual expressions, any variation from the accustomed standard might have been perceived as diminishing its solemnity. Originality was not something desired. Benefactors' intentions were expressed in the formulas which in general terms represented their beliefs as perceived in this particular society, but could not show if — and how — these general concepts were understood and expressed by the individuals. This point will be discussed further on the example of 'foundation' charter of Rievaulx abbey.

Not only did monasteries need their patrons to give them land and offer protection, but the existence of religious houses also fulfilled many of the social needs of their lay protectors who had little understanding of their ideals of isolation. The foundation of Rievaulx abbey and the people associated with it provides a good example of several social phenomena occurring among the Anglo-Norman nobility in the first half of the twelfth century. Walter Espec, the founder of the abbey, was advancing his career in the royal service and his pious foundations were a part of his attempts to assert his newly acquired social standing.

The reign of King Henry I was a time of profound changes in the administration and governing of the country, which greatly influenced relationships between the King and the magnates. Although the royal court was still mobile, travelling constantly between Normandy and England, Henry increasingly concentrated justice and governance, as well as patronage, in his own hand.[22] He needed advisors around him at all times and the fluctuating membership of the court can be traced through the lists of witnesses to the royal charters. Walter Espec's name appeared frequently as a witness and this would clearly indicate his presence at the court. He was also an addressee of several writs and mandates by Henry I concerning the rights of various monastic institutions in Yorkshire and he witnessed many royal confirmations of their property rights.[23]

Contrary to the old historiographical ideas of King Henry's reign as a period of terror, C. Warren Hollister voices a completely different opinion, pointing towards the politics of patronage and the manipulation of favours which could keep barons more grateful for past favours and hoping for future ones, rather than terrorize them. Such a policy created a number of prominent individuals who benefited from it and, in turn,

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[22] C. Warren Hollister and John W. Baldwin, 'The Rise of Administrative Kingship: Henry I and Philip Augustus', *American Historical Review,* 83 (1978), 867-77.

[23] Paul Dalton, *Conquest, Anarchy and Lordship, Yorkshire 1066-1154* (Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 306-7.

supported the King.[24] Walter Espec, certainly belonged to the group described as the 'new men' of Henry I. The fact that they were considered 'new' does not mean that they were of a low social standing altogether. Their lineage was in most cases considerably high if not eminent.[25] Importantly, they were a second generation of settlers in England still having interests in Normandy, but increasingly building their main bases in England and these included the foundation of religious houses in England.

In the early years of Norman rule in England, the northern peripheries became important not only because of the closeness of the unstable Scottish border, but also because Yorkshire was the region where Norman rule was opposed the most strongly. As the result of the rebellion of 1069 and the subsequent harrying of the north, the change in property structure, shape of the estates and their ownership was much deeper there than anywhere in the south, but this process of reshaping lordships took several decades. Moreover, the changes of possession on the level of the tenants-in-chief were very rapid in the decades following the death of William the Conqueror, until the accession of Henry I whose policy of creating compact estates and rewarding his 'new men' provided more stability and royal control in Yorkshire by 1135.[26] All the privileges, such as offices and land, were distributed carefully to keep the balance of power between the magnates and the king. Although Henry gave away parts of his own land to reward supporters, he was rather cautious in his acts of generosity. The most extensive donations took place in Yorkshire, including four estates given to Walter Espec.[27]

The North of England was never a homogeneous region and during its post-conquest history its various parts developed in different ways. Yorkshire remained as a frontier territory of military importance, but it was the only region north of the Humber and Mersey which was under direct royal government. There were two castles in York, a mint and a sheriff.[28] The Norman families who settled in Yorkshire, far from their continental estates, were more likely to establish their main base there and thus became involved in the local politics. The process of military enfeoffment and non-military tenancies was slower here than in south of the country, which means that the process of

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[24] C. Warren Hollister, 'Henry I and the Anglo-Norman Magnates', in *Monarchy, Magnates and Institutions in the Anglo-Norman World*, (London: the Hambledon Press, 1986), p. 172.
[25] Judith A. Green, *The Aristocracy of Norman England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 9.
[26] Green, *Aristocracy*, p. 101; Dalton, *Conquest,* pp. 79-101.
[27] Judith A. Green, *The Government of England under Henry I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 180-1.

[28] Green, *Aristocracy*, p. 118.

TRADITIONAL PARISH AND TOWNSHIP AREAS
(based on John McDonnell, 1975)

L.E.: Little Edstone

the alienation of land was more gradual in Yorkshire, which, as we will see, provided opportunities for the religious houses.[29]

The wave of reform monasticism of both canons and monks coincided with the Normans settling in the north and new monasteries as much as castles became the visible signs of the Norman presence there. By the means of religious foundations Norman families 'put down their roots' in the northern frontiers.[30] Castles, whose number rose sharply after 1066 had not only military and administrative roles, but also served as high status residences for tenants-in-chief and mesne lords.[31] Parallel to this development, Yorkshire became the region with the highest number of religious foundations in England in the twelfth century.

This revival of monasticism after the conquest should be attributed to a variety of reasons, social, economic and political. A monastery was as much a status symbol for its founder, a family burial place, and sanctuary for unmarried children as it was a useful tool for the consolidation of power and control in the locality.[32] Not accidentally this power-consolidating quality of the monasteries mattered in Yorkshire, which was far away from the centre of political gravity in Normandy and southern England and close to the unstable Scottish border.

The majority of founders of Cistercian houses were also founders or benefactors of other orders, particularly Augustinians, Premonstratensians, Gilbertines and older Benedictine houses. Such eclectic taste in religious foundations can be explained by the prevalent family and tenurial alliances to various houses.[33] In the first half of the twelfth century the Cistercian order had particular appeal to the social group which previously could not afford to become a founder and to those who had only recently acquired wealth and high social status. It has been asserted in the literature that Cistercians not only moved to the areas untouched or sparely covered by monasteries, but also these lands were given to them by knight or lesser noblemen, who did not have the means to establish Benedictine houses. Some rising social groups were particularly inclined to patronize new orders, for example the so-called 'honorial barons', that is those who held large multiple fees from various honors, attended their lord's *curia* and often aspired to

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[29] Dalton, *Conquest,* pp 131-2.
[30] Judith Green, 'Aristocratic Loyalties on the Northern Frontier of England, c. 1100-1174', in *England in the twelfth century: proceedings of the 1988 Harlaxton Symposium* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1990), p. 94.
[31] John Le Patourel, *The Norman Empire*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), p. 317; Dalton, *Conquest,* p. 31.
[32] Dalton, *Conquest,* p. 135.
[33] Richard Mortimer, 'Religious and secular motives for some English monastic foundations', in *Religious Motivation*, pp. 83-4.

lead the life-style of their superiors. Many of them became founders of Augustinian, Cistercian and Premonstratensian houses.[34] Saying that, it is important to point out that the founders of all the Cistercian houses in Yorkshire (except Jervaulx) were tenants-in-chief.[35]

The phenomenon of copying those in higher social groups was particularly visible in peripheral areas, where there was relative abundance of land such as Yorkshire, parts of Western Poland and Eastern Germany. The majority of founders of Cistercian houses, across Europe, in the second half of the twelfth century were lay noblemen, whose social position or wealth were of relatively recent date. Among the benefactors of Dargun Abbey (Mecklenburg) were some of the newly Christianised Slavic noblemen, who expressed in that way their political, as well as ideological alliances.[36] One of the oldest Cistercian houses in western Poland, in Łekno was founded in mid-1140s by a wealthy knight on a part of his demesne comprising three vills and a lake. The actual monastery was established on the site of an abandoned stronghold.[37] Zbylut, the founder of Łekno monastery, a daughter-house of the Altenberg monastery, shared another important characteristic with his western counter-parts. He was a witness to many other religious foundations and donations, and among these Zbylut was also a witness on the foundation charter of the Cistercian monastery in Jędrzejów established almost simultaneously with Łekno.[38] This means that he was present at many foundations and witnessed both the prestigious and spiritual aspects of those events. This fact could have played a decisive role in Zbylut's decision to undertake the foundation of the Cistercian monastery in Łekno. His foundation charter expresses many ideas which made Cistercians so appealing to the new men throughout Europe. First of all it gives eschatological motivation which encouraged him to give some part of his property to the monastery.[39] Within this passage two layers can be

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[34] The term honorial barons is very much disputed; for the discussion see David Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins: the Roots and Branches of Power in the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 115.

[35] Burton, 'The Origins and development of the religious orders in Yorkshire c. 1069-1200', unpublished PhD thesis, University of York, 1977, p. 276.

[36] Heike Reimann, 'A Cistercian foundation within the territory of a Slavic tribe: the abbey of Dargun in Mecklenburg', *Cîteaux* 51 (2000), 7.

[37] *Monasticon Cisterciense Poloniae*, vol. 2, ed. A. M. Wyrwa, J. Strzelczyk, K. Kaczmarek (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 1999), p. 231-33; the chronology of the early foundations in Poland is debatable due to the scarcity of written sources.

[38] The charter is preserved in the thirteenth century copy; *Codex Diplomaticus Poloniae Minoris,* ed. Franciszek Piekosiński, vol. 2 (Kraków, 1881), n° 372.

[39] 'Notum sit omnibus catholicis tam futuri quam presentis temporis. Honestum ac beatum constat esse uotum, immo sanctum ac laudabile patet esse commertium, dare sua transitoria et recipere pro his eterna, terrena sibi displicere et celestia possidere. Huius itaque tam sancte

distinguished. First, the founder, as a member of the Christian community, wanted to support the Church by giving part of his property to a highly respected ecclesiastical institution; second, by this commitment, the founder hoped to secure eternal salvation for himself and his family. Being deeply impressed by the sanctity of the monastic community, he gave his earthly property to the Cistercian monastery in order to increase the wealth of the Church. Brygida Kürbis, who analysed the charter, pointed out an unusual feature, which is the formula used by the founder to describe himself: *ego Zbilud Polonie ciuis*, which has no parallels in the twelfth-century charters. She interprets this peculiar expression in the sense that Zbylut wanted to emphasise his high status in the society.[40] Certainly, the use of a term taken from Roman law indicates the idea that the founder belonged to the nobility and possessed rights as a member of it. Although, geographically the Cistercian house in Łekno was founded very far from Yorkshire, the aims of the founder, expressed in the charter, were very similar to those of the English northern noblemen who also wanted reassurance of their social status and increased chances for salvation at the same time.

This adaptability of the Cistercian order to varied social and economic conditions and the appeal which it had to a larger pool of potential patrons and benefactors than the older orders was a crucial factor in their successful spread through Europe. Although the Cistercian regulations concerning the characteristics of locations, particularly their remoteness, were very precise, the flexibility, if not disregard for them, allowed the order to expand to the edges of Christian Europe.[41] This adaptability was not only important in the first phase of the order expansion, but the ability of individual houses, among them Rievaulx abbey, to adjust to the changing socio-economic conditions ensured their survival and development. This will be discussed in greater detail in the later parts of this thesis.

In the first half of the twelfth century any potential donor had a wide choice of orders besides Cistercians. Lay people could chose to grant land to many orders both old such as Benedictine or Cluniac houses, or new ones such as Augustinian canons. The canons were a very convenient option, they could take over already existing

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negotiationis amore ego Zbilud Polonie ciuis superna inspirante gratia medullitus ignescens, decorem domus Dei et locum habitationis glorie sue diligens, simulque in libro uitę cum iustis conscribi cupiens, patrimonii mei liberi portionem [...] omnium bonorum largitori Deo ad gloriam et laudem eiusdem genitrici et beato Petro [...] institui.' Józef Dobosz, 'Dokument fundacyjny klasztoru cystersów w Łeknie', *Studia i Materiały do dziejów Pałuk* 1 (1989), 63-4.

[40]Brygida Kürbis, 'Cystersi w kulturze polskiego średniowiecza: Trzy świadectwa z XII wieku' in *Na progach historii* (Poznań: Abos, 1994), pp. 341-2.

[41] *Statuta*, vol. 1, 1134: 1, 1134: 5.

[42] Green, *Aristocracy*, p. 412.

religious communities, they did not require a rich endowment, their rule was considered strict, therefore spiritually credible. Also on a more practical level, Augustinian canons organized and ran hospitals and as a part of their endowment, they could also receive churches.[42] In this way, noblemen holding the ownership of parish churches, faced with the increasing pressure from the reform church movement, could dispose of them and acquire spiritual advantages at the same time.[43] The Augustinian canons were the first order to become fashionable in the beginning of the twelfth century and many noblemen, particularly new men and bishops became founders of priories, including Walter Espec who established Kirkham Priory c. 1122. Not only were Augustinian houses an even cheaper alternative to the Cistercians, but established houses attracted further donations from the same pool of benefactors as the white monks, for example many benefactors of Rievaulx abbey gave land to Bridlington priory as well. The patrons of the Augustinian houses had much wider control over the affairs of these houses, something which the patrons of the Cistercian houses did not enjoy. The history of both Rievaulx abbey and Kirkham priory founded by Walter Espec, illustrates this difference very well.

As we move on to the central part of this chapter it is important to stress that the foundation of Rievaulx abbey exemplifies many of the issues discussed above. Its relations with the founders and patrons shaped its early history and determined its future development in both positive and negative senses.

A. FOUNDATION OF RIEVAULX ABBEY AND ITS FOUNDER

The success, both in scale and number of the Cistercian monasteries in the north was a complex phenomenon on both religious and social levels. The foundation of Rievaulx abbey was first in the series of Cistercian houses which became important elements of the social and economic landscape of the region. Although the patrons of Cistercian houses had much less legal power over their monasteries than those of other Orders, they could still significantly influence the internal matters of the house and the history of Rievaulx abbey confirms this assumption.[44]

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[43] B. R. Kemp, 'Monastic Possession of Parish Churches in England in the Twelfth Century', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 31 (1980), 133-60.

[44] On the influence of the patrons on the northern houses see: Derek Baker, 'The surest road to heaven', in *Sanctity and Secularity: the Church and the World*, ed. Derek Baker, *Studies in Church History*, vol. 10 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1973), p. 47; Derek Baker, 'Legend and reality: the case of Waldef of Melrose', in *Church, Society and Politics*, ed. Derek Baker, *Studies in Church History,* vol. 12 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1975), pp. 81-2.

Before moving on to the particulars of the foundation of Rievaulx let us turn our attention to the career of its founder, Walter Espec. According to Judith Green, the Especs might come from the vicinity of Saint Martin d'Aubigny and were associated with the family of d'Aubigny. There are three indications of such origins. A man whose father was called Ranulf Espec held land near Saint Martin which the d'Aubigny family granted to Lessay abbey. Moreover the honors of both families in Bedfordshire — Espec and d'Aubigny — were close to each other. Walter Espec had himself connections with Nigel d'Aubigny, who represented the king in the North of England in 1118.[45] Graeme Ritchie argues that the Espec family originated from Quesnai near St-Étienne-de-la-Taillaile (district of Auge) as the estate there was in the possession of a family called Espec.[46] Both theories appear to be plausible and do not exclude each other. The Espec family in Normandy may have had different branches holding their estates in different parts of the country.

Walter Espec was a son or nephew of William de Spech who was a tenant-in-chief in Domesday. During his career Walter acquired three lordships: Old Warden in Bedfordshire which he inherited from his uncle, Wark in Northumberland and Helmsley in Yorkshire, which were granted to him by King Henry I (the honour of Helmsley was part of Robert count of Mortain's estates in Domesday).[47] The latter became Espec's main residence. Walter Espec became the justice of forests and the itinerant justice of the north, a position held simultaneously with Eustace FitzJohn.[48] His activities as the royal justice were recorded in the Pipe Roll of 1129/30.[49] Apart from conducting an eyre in the north both men were also investigating the situation in the royal manors, restocking them and scrutinizing the king's rights. As Judith Green pointed out, the area of their judicial responsibilities was correlated, not accidentally, with the location of their estates. This helped to integrate Yorkshire into the system of royal administration.[50]

The coming of the white monks to Yorkshire was orchestrated by St Bernard himself and supported by King Henry I and Archbishop Thurstan of York. The group of Cistercian monks from Clairvaux led by William, an Englishmen, brought a letter from

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[45] Green, *Government*, p. 245-6.
[46] Graeme R. Ritchie, *Normans in Scotland* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1966), p. 146, n. 4.
[47] Green, *Aristocracy*, p. 136, 380; I. J. Sanders, *English Baronies: a Study of their Origin and Descent 1086-1327* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960), p. 133.
[48] *DNB,* vol. 18, p. 4.
[49] *Magnum Rotulum Scaccarii de anno tricesimo-primo regni Henrici Primi,* ed. Joseph Hunter (London, 1833), p. 24, 27, 32, 33, 35, 104, 128, 129, 131, 138, 142, 143.
[50] Green, *Government*, p. 81, 109

St Bernard to King Henry in 1131.[51] This letter lacks any details or names, but is generally considered by historians as initiating the negotiations to establish Rievaulx abbey. The choice of the northern location might have been a result of the influence of Yorkshire monks in the circle of St Bernard.[52] The involvement of Archbishop Thurstan is unquestionable. He was known as a patron of monks, correspondent of St Bernard and supporter of the Cistercian reform.[53] Moreover his assistance was crucial as the foundation of Rievaulx abbey took place in his diocese and he had to give the official permission. Later, between May 1133 and January 1140, Archbishop Thurstan issued a confirmation charter of the abbey's initial endowment.[54]

It is not clear at which stage of negotiations and how Walter Espec became involved in the enterprise leading to the foundation of Rievaulx abbey. Janet Burton suspects that Espec as a frequent visitor to the royal court may well have met the Cistercian delegation sent by St Bernard there. In any case, it is highly unlikely that the Cistercian monks would be sent ahead of any invitation from the prospective founder.[55] Walter had already founded another monastic house, Kirkham priory, so the idea of being a patron and everything attached to it was not a novelty to him.[56] The royal court, as a meeting place of the high Church officials and lay nobility, helped to spread ideas of the new order and popularized the fashion for the monastic foundations. As Burton asserts the founders of the first four Cistercian monasteries in England were recurrent visitors at the court. The early Cistercian foundations took place in the short time span from each other, which provides a further argument for the strong influence of fashion on the prospective patrons.[57] King Henry's personal interest in the Cistercian order and his subsequent generosity to Rievaulx monastery must have been an important factor in the negotiations and the foundation process.

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[51] *The Letters of St Bernard of Clairvaux,* trans. Bruno Scott James (London: Burns Oates, 1953), letter 95, pp. 141-2.
[52] Knowles, *The Monastic Order,* p. 230.
[53] Donald Nicholl, *Thurstan Archbishop of York: 1114-1140* (York: Stongate Press, 1964), pp. 151-154.
[54] *Cartulary*, n° 218; dated by Burton in *EEA*, vol. 5, p. 51. For more information about his involvement see pp. 197-8.
[55] Burton, 'Origins and development', pp. 150, 312; William of Newburgh stated in his chronicle that Walter Espec sent an invitation to Bernard of Clairvaux and promised a site for the new monastery; William of Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', p. 50.
[56] Kirkham was founded c. 1122. David Knowles and R. Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses, England and Wales* (London, 1953), p. 114.
[57] Janet Burton, 'The Foundation of the British Cistercian Houses', in *Cistercian Art and Architecture in the British Isles*, ed. Christopher Norton and David Park (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 27.

According to the 'Iste sunt possessiones' list in the cartulary Walter Espec granted the abbey's site in 1131. The foundation of Rievaulx abbey was finalized, according to Leopold Janauschek, on the 5 March 1132, but the actual foundation process, erecting temporary lodgings for the monks and provisional church, was very likely to take longer than a year.[58] This task was usually financed and carried out by the founder.[59] The location of the monastery, merely two miles from Espec's castle in Helmsley, offered protection for the new foundation and the patron expressed his religious identity by this close association.[60] Although it is not known who made the first buildings at Rievaulx abbey it is highly possible that the material and the labour were provided by Espec. Although the initial grant was not extensive, in fact smaller than that of Kirkham, the location, so close to the founder's residence, indicates that Rievaulx was particularly important to Walter Espec.

The gathering at the foundation ceremony was an important event for both the monastic institution and the founder. The ceremony was attended by many noble neighbours, local aristocracy, knights, tenants, family, bishops and other officials. Such an event was a manifestation of piety, power, importance and the connections of the founder. As for the monastic institution, the consecration of the monastic church, usually in the form of a provisional, wooden structure, marked the beginning of the formal functioning of a monastic house.

Rievaulx's foundation charter copied in the cartulary is a composite of two documents related to two different occasions.[61] One part of the document relates to the initial endowment in 1132 and the second to an additional grant at the time of the probable retirement of Walter Espec between 1145 and 1153.[62] The first grant consisted of the actual site for the monastic precinct and nine carucates of land. On the second

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[58] BL, MS Cotton Julius D I, f. 15v [f. 19v]; P. Leopoldus Janauschek, *Originum Cisterciensium,* vol. 1 (Windobonae, 1877), p. 22; the year 1132 is given by abbot Ailred himself in his 'Relatio de Standardo', p. 184.

[59] There is on explicit information that this was the case at Rievaulx, but several examples from the north-east of Europe may serve as a strong indication of this trend. Marcin Szyma, 'Ikonografia kościoła Cystersów w Mogile w pierwszej fazie jego budowy. Przyczynek do badań nad działalnością fundacyjną Iwona Odrowąża', in *Cystersi w społeczeństwie Europy Środkowej,* ed. Andrzej M. Wyrwa, and Józef Dobosz (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2000), p. 573.

[60] Fergusson, Harrison, *Rievaulx Abbey*, p. 37. This location so close to the patron's residence was not unusual. Other Yorkshire monasteries were also located in the vicinity of their founders' seats, in particular Nostell (Pontefract) and Easby priories (Richmond castle), Roche (Tickhill) and Jervaulx (Richmond castle) abbeys. Burton, 'Origins and development', pp. 333-2.

[61] BL, Cotton Julius D I, f. 24 -25 [f. 28-29]; *Cartulary*, n° 42. Composite foundation charters were often created in the Cistercian houses to present a string of donations as a single event. Berman, C*istercian Evolution*, p. 175.

[62] Burton, 'Estates and Economy', p. 30.

occasion Walter Espec granted Bilsdale, located to the north from the abbey. Some of the witnesses may have been present in 1132 and others, namely Walter's tenants, only between 1145 and 1150.[63] According to the genealogy of the Ros family Espec retired to Rievaulx in 1153 and died on 15 March 1155 and was buried there.[64]

The opening verses of the charter outlines, in the conventional way, the founder's aims and intentions and lists people involved in the foundation in various ways:

> In the name of Holy and Inseparable Trinity, [I] Walter Espec greet all faithful sons of Holy Catholic Church. Let it be known to you all that I have given in agreement with Henry the King of the English and with the assent of Aelina my wife [to] God and the church of Saint Mary in Rievaulx, in the hand of Abbot William and the brothers serving God there, for the love of God and salvation of the soul of William King of the English, and for the salvation of the soul of Henry the King of the English and salvation of the souls of all their ancestors, and for the souls of my father and my mother and for the soul of Hugh de Wildecher and for the souls of the father and mother of my wife and [for] all our relatives and ancestors [...] to hold in perpetuity.[65]

This short text presents several problems but also provides several possibilities for interpretation as to why Walter Espec and so many other lay noblemen of his time founded religious institutions. For Walter Espec becoming a founder of Kirkham priory and later Rievaulx abbey was a part of the advancement of his career; however this does not imply that his foundations were undertaken for cynical, political reasons, but rather that being a founder was a part of the new role assumed by Walter. The desire to be a founder was essentially a personal and religious issue, but the choice of order had a broader significance. Here we might see the influence of the court in the choice of the order, and even the probable direct influence of King Henry I emphasised in the charter.

The foundation charter does not specify that Walter Espec expected any prayers, but the sole fact that the grant was given directly to God in hands of the abbot and monks serving Him ensured spiritual advantages. The gift to the Church was in itself a 'good work' and would bring spiritual reward, prayers of the monks were a kind of

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[63] *EYC*, vol. 10, p. 147.

[64] *Life of Ailred*, p. xcix. The source is a genealogy of the Ros family produced probably at Kirkham priory; *Monasticon Anglicanum*, vol. 5, p. 280.

[65] 'In nomine Sancte et Individue Trinitatis, Walterus Espec universis Sancte Catholice Matris Ecclesie filiis, salutem. Notum sit omnibus vobis me dedisse et concessu Henrici, Regis Anglorum, et concilio Aeline uxoris mee, Deo et Ecclesie Sancte Marie de Rievalle, in manu Willelmi Abbatis, et fratribus ibidem Deo servientibus, pro Deo amore et salute anime Regis Willelmi Anglorum, et pro salute Henrici, Regis Anglorum, et omnium parentum suorum, et pro salute anime patris mei et matris mee, et pro anima Hugonis de Wildecher, et pro animabus patris et matris uxoris mae, et omnium parentum et antecessorum nostorum, [...] in perpetuum tenere.' *Cartulary*, n° 42.

'added value' to the original act of giving. Unlike Benedictine or Cluniac monks, Cistercians:

> deserved to be supported for their own sake, and whose benefactors were therefore relying on the first redemptive mechanism — that they themselves were giving alms directly to the deserving poor — as much as on vicarious good works.[66]

In the foundation grant of Rievaulx abbey, royal permission was essential for the alienation of the land, which Walter was holding in-chief. Similarly important was *laudatio*, that is the consent of Walter's wife for the foundation, 'consilio Aaline uxoris mee'. This was a standard part in the Cistercian foundation charters and most commonly it was a wife giving her consent. The aim of this clause was to prevent future claims from the individuals related to the founder and who might claim rights to the property. These individuals giving *laudatio* were clearly distinguished from the witnesses who also may have been related to the founder but had no claims to the land.[67]

King Henry I, who helped to introduce Cistercians to England, and his father or brother William with all their ancestors are listed as recipients of the spiritual benefits of Rievaulx abbey foundation. Similarly it is not only Walter's and his wife's souls benefiting, but all their relatives and ancestors. The foundation of the abbey was not a relationship between an individual and God, it was a whole family, or kin entering the relationship with the Sacrum and benefiting from it. This act united past and present generations of the family and promised patronage and further grants for the monastic community. This was an obligation not only for the people immediately involved in the foundation, but also binding future generations. Its effectiveness was not always as good as monks could wish for and this will be discussed in the later parts of this chapter.

The precise identity of Hugh de Wildecher, listed as one of the named beneficiaries of the foundation, remains uncertain, although the Wildecher family had tenurial links with the Ros family who were the heirs of Walter Espec.[68] The placement

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[66] Benjamin Thompson, 'From 'Alms' to 'Spiritual Services': The Foundation and Status of Monastic Property in Medieval England', in *Monastic Studies: the Continuity of Tradition II*, ed. Judith Loades (Bangor: Headstart History, 1991), p. 235.

[67] Constance Bouchard, *Holy Entrepreneurs Cistercians, Knights and Economic Exchange in twelfth- century Burgundy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), pp. 79-87.

[68] Wildechers appeared in other charters related to Rievaulx, Kirkham and the Ros family. Stephan Wildecher witnessed (together with Walter Espec and several other men) in 1145 a grant of Odo de Boltby to Rievaulx abbey (*Cartulary*, n° 76). Hugh de Wildeker witnessed a confirmation of a donation to Kirkham by William son of Ukke between 1192 and 1198 (*EYC*, vol. 1, p. 501-2). In 1199 Walter de Wildecher witnessed a grant of the advowson of the church of Burythorpe to Kirkham (*EYC*, vol. 1, p. 493) and witnessed a charter of William de Ros to

of Hugh's name in the charter after Walter's parents and before his in-laws suggest Wildecher's importance, probably personal to the founder. It provides a rare glimpse into the realm of personal motivations, and suggests further that the spiritual motivations were genuine. Hugh Wildecher cannot be classified as one of the standard recipients, he was included in the list because of the special choice of the founder. Although it is impossible to verify, I would suggest that Hugh must have been a close friend of Walter Espec, possibly one from childhood or a personal favourite from his close circle of individuals performing services, perhaps a steward. His identity was obvious to everybody since Hugh is not described by any additional title.

The first endowment by Espec consisted of nine carucates of land of which four were located in Griff and five in Tileston (Stiltons Farm) with all the rights of pasture, collecting dead wood and timber, water and meadow and free from any secular services. These two properties lay between the east bank of the Rye river and Borobeck which runs through the township of Helmsley. Parts of this land were still covered by a wood, the rest comprised of arable and pasture. On the plateau overlooking the river Rye there are remains of medieval earthworks, which may be the remains of the Griff vill depopulated by the Rievaulx abbey.[69]

The second donation by Espec was made between 1145 and 1153 and then included in the compilation known as the foundation charter. It consisted of the southern part of Bilsdale, whose borders are described carefully in the charter: from Laskill to the confluence of William and Raisdale Becks except the manor of Stainton and the vill of Raisdale. The grant included also the right to gather wood and pasture pigs in his forest of Helmsley. The location of these grants ensured that the patron and the abbey would be close neighbours and had shared use of the same forest. These circumstances must have been perceived as favourable as long as the relationship between the patron and the abbey was positive, but this not always the case and this closeness caused significant problems in the mid-thirteenth century.

The analysis of the witness list in the foundation charter of thirty-nine people reveals four separate sub-lists containing names of people who attended the foundation ceremony and those who were present when Walter Espec granted Bilsdale. First comes

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Rievaulx about 1226 (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Dodsworth MS, vii, f. 188v, published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, p. 240). In 1226 Walter de Wildeker appeared in the witness list of Robert II de Ros to the Templars (*EYC*, vol. 10, n° 14). Wildechers were tenants of the Ros fee and Walter de Wildeker donated one and a half carucates of his land in the fee of Ros to Kirkham priory in the first part of the reign of Henry III (*EYC*, vol. 2, p. 382).

[69] John McDonnell, 'The Evolution of the Monastic Grange', *Journal of the North Yorkshire County Record Office* 2 (1975), 78-82.

a group of various clergymen: Thomas dean of Beverley Minster, Arnald priest of Beverley, Godfrey chaplain, Walter chaplain, Robert chaplain of Walter Espec, Geoffrey priest from Warter priory and five named brethren from this house, and two lay people: Eustace Fitz-John (royal justice in the north) and Henry de Manferd. Then follow nine nephews from his sisters, who not only acted as witnesses but also gave their consent for the alienation of land — 'Testimonio etiam et concessu nepotum meorum'. They are listed according to age: William, Jordan and Roger de Buscy were sons of Hawis, the oldest sister, then Geoffrey, William, Gilbert and Nicholas de Traili sons of Albreda, and finally the sons of Adelina: Everard and Robert de Ros. The third group of witnesses consists of Walter's eleven men who gave him advice: William de Steinegrif, Robert Lenveiset, Drago de Harum, Robert de Sproxton, Peter de Surdeval, William Luvel, John Ingram, William son of Amfred, William de Surdeval, Roger de Frammevila and Hugo Camin. Out of that last group, four men were tenants of the Ros fee in 1160: Peter de Surdeval, Drew of Harome, Robert of Sproxton and William Stonegrave.[70] Finally the last group is comprised of the neighbours who also acted as witnesses: Henry de Muntfort, Stephan de Meinil, Geoffrey de Sneit with his son Benedict, Roger de Hiltun, Aschelin son of William son of Aschelin and many other neighbours and friends — 'et multis aliis, meis vicinis et amicis'.[71]

These early grants of Walter Espec were confirmed by the highest authorities to ensure security of the abbey's property. In 1133 King Henry I confirmed the initial grant of four carucates in Griff, five in Tileston, pasture and forest right in Helmsley.[72] He also included a confirmation of the total of nine carucates given by Espec in the charter of immunity from various services and taxes.[73] This confirmation was then re-confirmed by King Stephen in 1135, the first year of his reign. This document was witnessed, among others by Archbishop Thurstan and the founder's nephew William de Traili.[74] Although this was clearly an important charter, it was not copied in the cartulary and the original document survived with other remnants of the abbey's archive at Belvoir Castle. The next royal confirmation of all Walter's grants in Griff, Tileston and Bilsdale was issued on 6 September 1189 by King Richard.[75]

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[70] *Red Book of the Exchequer*, vol. 1, ed. Hubert Hall, Rolls Series vol. 89 (1896), pp. 432-3.
[71] *Cartulary*, n° 42.
[72] *Cartulary*, n° 194.
[73] *Cartulary*, n° 196.
[74] Historical Manuscripts Commission, *The Manuscripts of the Duke of Rutland at Belvoir Castle*, vol. 4 (London: HM Stationary Office, 1905), p. 74.
[75] *Cartulary*, n° 174.

There is no indication in the cartulary, or elsewhere, that Walter Espec granted any more land to the abbey, but he witnessed charters to the abbey, particularly of his neighbours, his men, and influenced his tenants to become benefactors. Walter Espec witnessed a grant of Odo de Boltby, neighbour of the abbey, between 1142 and 1145, of a portion of the waste below Hesketh bordering with Boltby, also of the common pasture and woods in his three vills of Boltby, Ravensthorpe and Thirlby.[76] Walter's influence was a probable reason behind another grant of Odo de Boltby of the vill Hesketh (parish of Felixkirk) recorded in the 'Iste sunt possessiones' in the same entry as the foundation grant of Walter Espec.[77] These grants were located ten miles west from Rievaulx. Then, between 1145 and 1147 Walter Espec witnessed a grant of Benedict son of Gervase de Wombelton, which consisted of land in Wombelton where the buildings belonging to the abbey stood, twelve perches in Spelcross, four perches in Skiplam and meadows in Rook Barugh (parish of Normanby) and Muscoates.[78]

Beyond these standard acts, expected from any patron, there are other indications of the close relationship between Rievaulx abbey and Espec. The location of the monastery, merely two miles from Espec's castle in Helmsley, ensured close contact with the patron. The founder was a frequent visitor to the abbey and might, therefore, offer some practical assistance in the crucial years of the abbey's development. This seems to be suggested by Walter Daniel, the author of Abbot Ailred's biography. When Ailred, a future abbot of Rievaulx, at that point a lay person sent by the King of Scotland on a political mission to the archbishop of York, visited Walter Espec in Helmsley, he went to see the monastery with his host, who appeared to be a frequent guest there. This event took place about two years after the foundation. Walter Daniel's text seems to suggest that Walter Espec took considerable pride in the achievement of his monastery and wanted to show it to the people who were visiting him. Ailred, who came on a political mission to the Archbishop of York, was exactly the type of person whom the patron wanted to impress with the achievement of 'his monks'. The quality of the religious life of the monastery reflected directly on the position of the founder and patron, which not only increased his chances for salvation, but also his status among his peers.[79]

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[76] *Cartulary*, n° 76; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 89.
[77] BL, MS Cotton Julius D I, f. 15v [f. 19v].
[78] *Cartulary*, n° 69; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 145.
[79] *The Life of Ailred*, p. 14. Ritchie suggested that Ailred's mission was connected to claims of the Archbishops of York to the jurisdiction over Glasgow; Ritchie, *Normans*, p. 253.

Walter Espec was strongly committed to the Cistercian ideal and after the foundation of Rievaulx abbey he established in 1136 another house of white monks within his southern lands in Warden (Bedfordshire) as a daughter house of Rievaulx. His commitment to the Cistercian order was in fact so strong that he intended to turn his earlier foundation at Kirkham into a Cistercian house as well. On the occasion of the foundation of Rievaulx abbey in 1132 a certain reshaping of the priory's property occurred and a revised foundation charter was written for Kirkham to accommodate a transfer of some of its properties to Rievaulx abbey, namely the tithes of Griff and Tileston.[80] Later, two almost identical charters confirmed the transfer of these tithes to Rievaulx abbey. The first one was issued by an unidentified prior of Kirkham in 1135, before the death of King Henry I, or as Burton, suggests, prior to 1140.[81] The second one was issued by Prior Waldef not much later.[82] These changes were the direct result of Walter Espec's plans and intentions for his foundations and as such were copied to Rievaulx cartulary, even though both houses were not neighbours.[83] Sometime between 1132 and 1140, a peculiar agreement was drawn up between Rievaulx and Kirkham. The canons agreed to transfer their present house and most of their property to Rievaulx in return for a new residence built on another site within the year by Rievaulx abbey. The prior and some members of the community would stay behind, in the old house and be granted the status of Cistercian monks. All of that was done according to the 'will and wish' of the patron as stated in the charter.[84] When for some unknown reason this plan of turning Kirkham priory into a Cistercian house failed, another foundation charter was issued extending the property of Kirkham priory. The new endowment added the whole manor of Kirkham, a whole vill of Tixendale and parts of three mills in Northumberland.[85]

This attempt to turn an Augustinian house into a Cistercian one indicates not only the founder's strong belief in the quality of Cistercian piety, but also Espec's ideas of the lay patronage over religious houses, which, as his action shows, could extend as

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[80] Derek Baker, 'Patronage in the Early Twelfth-Century Church: Walter Espec, Kirkham and Rievaulx', in *Traditio - Krisis - Renovatio aus Theologicher Sicht: Festschrift Winfried Zeller um 65. Geburstag*, ed. Bernd Jaspers and Rudolf Mohr (Marburg: Elwert, 1976), p. 96; *Cartulary*, n° 216.

[81] *Cartulary*, n° 234; Janet Burton, *Kirkham Priory from Foundation to Dissolution*, Borthwick Paper No. 86 (York: Borthwick Institute of Historical Research, 1995), p. 8.

[82] *Cartulary*, n° 235.

[83] Baker, 'Patronage', p. 97.

[84] 'pro voluntate et desiderio advocati nostri', *Cartulary*, n° 149; Baker, 'Patronage', p. 94; for the full text of this charter see p. 100 of his article.

[85] The difference between these two endowments of Kirkham priory is presented in the tabular form in Burton, *Kirkham Priory*, pp. 4-6.

far as changing the religious order. Not only was Kirkham priory almost dismantled and the majority of its lands transferred to Rievaulx, but also the remaining canons had to be accommodated in quarters provided by the abbey. The timing of this failed enterprise coincided with the early years of Rievaulx abbey, when the monastic community was probably more interested in creating its own precinct than providing buildings for the remnants of Kirkham community.

An important indication of the extent of the personal interaction of Walter Espec and Rievaulx abbey and its wider significance, is the role of Abbot William in the negotiation to surrender Walter's castle in Wark after the battle of the Standard.[86] This battle between English forces gathered by the Archbishop Thurstan and King David I's army supported by many northern magnates, including Eustace Fitz John, took place in 1138. The Scots were defeated, but King Stephen did not come to help the English forces and Walter surrendered his castle at Wark (Northumberland), an act which is interpreted by historians as being the result of his disappointment in King Stephen.[87] There were many reasons to choose Abbot William as negotiator. William was an ally of Archbishop Thurstan of York, he also knew the Scottish King David personally, and at the same time he was trusted by Walter Espec. Because of his monastic position, Abbot William was above the military and political pursuits of the lay men and could be expected to be a skilful negotiator.

In addition, one of the literary works of Abbot Ailred *Relatio de Standardo* gives a testimony to the political importance of Walter Espec as seen by the abbot of Rievaulx.[88] There are several contemporary accounts of the battle of Standard, but this particular one provides further evidence for the relationship between Rievaulx abbey and its patron. *Relatio de Standardo* celebrates the military achievement of Walter Espec, his standing among the northern nobility, and even his physical strength. Ailred employed many literary techniques including oration by Walter Espec as a principal character to comply with the conventions of romances and histories. Literary conventions aside, this poem shows that the abbot of Rievaulx was not only aware of the political role of the abbey's patron, but also believed that it should be celebrated and remembered. Even if the text was written with the monastic audience in mind as

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[86] *Symonis Monachis Opera Omnia*, vol. 2, ed. Thomas Arnold, Rolls Series 75 (1885), pp. 291-2; 'Historia Ricardi Prioris Ecclesiae Haugustaldensis, de Gesti Regis Stephani, in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I,* vol. 3, ed. Richard Howlett, Rolls Series, vol. 82 (1886), pp. 171-2.

[87] Dalton, *Conquest*, p. 151.

[88] Ailred, 'Relatio de Standardo', pp. 181-99.

Antonia Gransden asserts, the *Relatio* was intended as commemoration of the abbey's founder and to keep his memory alive.[89]

Finally, the cartulary of Rievaulx abbey provides further manifestation of the role of the patron and his family. The distribution of the charters of the founder and subsequent patrons indicates the importance of these documents and those who issued them. All the confirmation charters issued by Walter Espec's heirs are copied in the opening sections of the cartulary, just after the composite foundation charter. On folio 31 [f. 35] of the manuscript, after the last charter of Robert II Ros his great-great-grand nephew, there is empty space left. There are several possible explanations for this. The cartulary was never completed and not all the charters which were in the abbey's archive at the time of the cartulary creation were included, thus it is possible that some of the Ros family charters were left out as well. The empty space may also indicate that the compiler of the cartulary left it deliberately because he expected that the patrons would issue more charters in the future and then they would be copied in the designated place. It is also possible that the compiler simply left the rest of the page to mark off this important section of the cartulary from the charters of other benefactors.

The continuity in the relationship between a religious house and its benefactor was important for the enlargement and security of its property, and the continuity or lack of it, between the patron and the monastery had a significant impact on the successful functioning of the religious institution. The participation of the patron's relatives would ensure not only a larger pool of benefactors, but also created a group of people who could claim particularly strong attachment to the abbey.

B. FAMILY OF THE PATRON, HIS TENANTS AND RIEVAULX ABBEY

The foundation of the abbey was not the act of one sole individual and Walter Espec's family was involved in it from the very beginning. Many members of his family, some close and some more distant, including his nephews, appeared in the witness list; one, Jordan de Buscy, became a benefactor of Rievaulx; and one of his nephews, Nicholas de Traili, who was a canon of York, witnessed diverse and unrelated

[89] Derek Baker, 'Ailred of Rievaulx and Walter Espec', *Haskins Society Journal: Studies in Medieval History* 1 (1989), 93-6; Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England c. 550 to c. 1307* (London: Routledge, 1974), pp. 212-6; Aelred Glidden, 'Aelred the Historian: the Account of the Battle of the Standard', in *Erudition at God's Service*, ed. John R. Sommerfeldt, Studies in Medieval Cistercian History, vol. 11 (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1987), pp. 180-3.

charters to the abbey.[90] This activity was probably connected to both his position in the Church and to his family ties with Espec. Canons were valued as witnesses and the chapter of York provided many confirmations for this abbey and many others in Yorkshire. Nevertheless, Nicholas's involvement with Rievaulx abbey must have been deeper than that suggested by his appearances as a witness. It is indicated by a note added in the thirteenth century on one of the empty front folios in the cartulary.[91] This memorandum is a declaration by Nicholas de Traili, that his maternal uncle Walter Espec gave the abbey a flat land in Tileston, which corresponds with description in the foundation charter. The witness list of this document, with the names of neighbours, and Abbots Roger of Byland (1142-1194), and Walter of Neath (1169-79) suggests a period after the death of Walter Espec, but it is puzzling why this note was copied so late into the cartulary and why his nephew testified about this particular plot of land. Perhaps, a long forgotten document of Nicholas de Traili surfaced in the thirteenth century and was copied to the cartulary during the disputes with William de Ros (see below).

Nicholas de Traili was also a supporter of his uncle's other foundation, Kirkham priory. His special position in relation to this institution was recognized in 1180 when he gave testimony to the justiciar, Ranulf de Glanville, of the election procedure of the prior at Kirkham, which stated that only after a suitable candidate was elected, unanimously, by the convent, was he presented to the patron for approval and then finally to the archbishop of York for the benediction.[92] Nicholas de Traili's knowledge of the election procedure at Kirkham priory was most likely derived from his family connections with the patrons of this house, but the reasons behind writing this letter are unclear. Burton considers the possibility that Everard II de Ros, the patron of the house might have interfered beyond his role in the election process, and the testimony of Nicholas, his great-uncle, was to clarify the situation.[93]

Jordan de Buscy, who was both witness and benefactor of the abbey, was another nephew of Walter Espec. Jordan must have been trusted by his uncle and he was the commander of Wark castle at the time of the battle of Standard.[94] He witnessed with his uncle the charter of Odo de Boltby, with their names opening the witness list.[95] After 1158, according to the 'Iste sunt possessiones' list in the cartulary, Jordan de Buscy gave to the abbey a half of a carucate in Bolton together with the toft and croft, which had

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[90] *Cartulary*, n° 43, 45, 129, 189, 219.
[91] BL, MS Cotton Julius D I, f. 1v [f. 5v]; *Cartulary*, n° 5.
[92] *EYC*, vol. 10, n° 105-6.
[93] Burton, *Kirkham Priory*, p. 22.
[94] Dalton, *Conquest*, p. 157.

been held by his tenant Ailsi Russel. This grant was specifically donated to augment what was already given by his uncle Walter 'ad hospitandum fratres eorum'.[96] This rather unclear phrase is interpreted by Burton as referring to the initial grant of Walter Espec, not this of his nephew.[97]

Another of Walter's and Jordan's relatives, Oliver de Buscy, gave to Rievaulx, in the mid-twelfth century all his meadow in Stilton, with the right of passage through his property, but requested one penny yearly for the services. His charter contains an interesting passage explaining reasons for his grant:

> You should known that I have given and granted and by this present charter confirmed, to the abbot and the convent of Rievaulx, for the certain sum of money, which I had received from them in my great necessity, my whole meadow in the territory of Stilton. [98]

This phrase can be interpreted in various ways, as a cover-up sale or as a return payment for a loan, but more importantly, this charter, never copied in the cartulary, indicates that Rievaulx abbey developed close links with its neighbours not only as recipients of the grants, but also was able to give financial help for the patrons' family experiencing some difficulties. This was a common practice among the religious houses. Roger de Mowbray mortgaged in 1172 a large piece of land in Nidderdale to Byland abbey for 300 marks. The agreement between them stated, that, if Roger failed to pay, the monks were to keep the land. Among the loans from Fountains abbey, Roger de Mowbray received also twenty-eight marks for his 'great necessity'.[99] Such actions, that is acting as the lenders for the benefactors, gave the monastic houses opportunity to foster mutually beneficial relations with these people and could give them more bargaining power in the future.

Walter Espec's influence prompted not only his relatives to become benefactors, but also members of his tenurial groups. These people were close neighbours of the abbey and their day to day contacts with the new abbey might have been rather regular. In the passage from *Life of Ailred* mentioned above there was a group of men from neighbourhood who went to visit the abbey with Espec and Ailred.[100] Among them

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[95] *Cartulary*, n° 76.
[96] *Cartulary*, n° 103.
[97] Burton, 'Estates and Economy', 67.
[98] 'Noveritis me dedisse et concisse et hac presenti carta confirmasse Abbati et Conventui de Rievalle, pro quadam summa pecunie, quam recepit ab eisdem in necessitate mea, totum pratum meum in territorio de Siltona'. Bodl., MS Dodsw. vii, f. 152; published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, p. 234.
[99] *Charters of the Honour of Mowbray 1107-1191*, ed. Diane E. Greenway (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), n° 120, 54 [henceforth as *Charters of Mowbray*].
[100] *Life of Ailred*, p. 14.

might have been Uctret son of Orm, a man of Walter Espec, who quitclaimed between 1154 and 1157, rights to Griff which he tried to hold, admittedly, against the rights of Rievaulx abbey. The record of the quitclaim was provided by Dean Robert de Gant and Chapter of York.[101] Between 1150 and 1157 Adam (who might have been Uctret's brother, although there is no certainty to this identification) granted ten acres in the vill of Pilley to Rievaulx abbey which he held himself, after he had given rest of the vill to his daughter and her husband.[102] Around the same time Dean Robert and the Chapter of York, attested a quitclaim of Ralph son of Serlo, also one of Walter Espec's men, of his unfounded claims to Griff and Tileston, which constituted the initial endowment of the abbey.[103]

Although Walter Espec did not have children, his relatives, particularly his nephews, had shown some interest in Rievaulx abbey. One of them, Nicholas de Traili, a canon of York, supported both of his uncle's foundations, Jordan de Buscy became a benefactor of Rievaulx and other nephews acted mainly as witnesses. An indication of the abbey's willingness to assist the founder's family is the financial help which the monks gave to Oliver de Buscy. Despite the positive gestures from these relatives and tenants of Espec, his heirs in the Ros family did not become the kind of patrons he must have wished for his favourite foundation.

C. ROS FAMILY AS THE PATRONS OF RIEVAULX ABBEY

An important transition for the abbey's relationship with its patrons came with the death of its founder. Walter Espec died c. 1153, and because he did not leave a direct heir, his estates were divided between his nephews, sons of his sisters. The Yorkshire estates were granted to Adelina's son Robert Ros and the Bedfordshire lands were divided in half between Hawisa and Albreda.[104] The patronage of the monastic houses in Rievaulx and Kirkham was inherited by the Ros family together with the estates. Walter's childlessness has been noted by abbot Ailred who, in his *Relatio de Standardo*, explained the foundations of Kirkham and Rievaulx as deriving from both piety and the lack of heirs; arguing that Walter chose, for that reason, to leave his

[101] *Cartulary*, n° 228.
[102] *Cartulary*, n° 111; *EYC*, vol. 6, n° 158.
[103] *Cartulary*, n° 227.
[104] Sanders, *English Baronies*, pp. 133-4.

property to Christ.[105] This is however a conventional explanation and may not be related to the personal motivation of Espec, who in fact left most of his lands to his nephews. A lack of direct heir who would continue his father's patronage over Rievaulx abbey created considerable problems for this institution. There are strong indications that the abbey looked for Walter Espec's replacement elsewhere and this role was taken, at some point, by the bishop of Durham.[106]

The new patrons of Rievaulx abbey, the Ros family originated from Holderness, precisely from Roos village. The first recorded member of this family was Peter de Ros who was a steward of the count of Aumâle in the beginning of the twelfth century. His son Everard inherited this rank, but in 1130 paid to the king two marks to be freed from this obligation. By that time the Ros family was a leading tenant family in Holderness and remained connected to the Aumâle family.[107] The considerable turn in the family fortune came as a result of the marriage of Peter de Ros with Adeline sister of Walter Espec. Since the founder of Rievaulx abbey died without leaving any direct heirs, his lands were inherited by his nephews.

Peter Ros and Adelina Espec had two sons. The elder one, Everard, inherited family property in Holderness and had already become a benefactor of religious houses, but in a rather limited capacity. He is known to have granted, between 1138 and 1140, the church of Atwick to the Augustinian priory in Bridlington, for his own soul and that of his wife Eustachia.[108] This grant was then confirmed by various authorities including Archbishop Thurstan, Kings Henry I and Henry II.[109] Everard died shortly before or just after his uncle Walter, in or before 1153.[110] The main share of Walter's inheritance was therefore acquired by his younger brother Robert I de Ros.

To understand the changing fortunes of the abbey's relationship with its new patrons we have to look first at the careers of the heads of the Ros family. A significant advance in Robert I's position came in 1158 when he was put in charge of the works at the King's castle in Scarborough. His wife Sybil de Valognes continued this upward trend and married after Robert's death in 1162/63, a prominent baron, William

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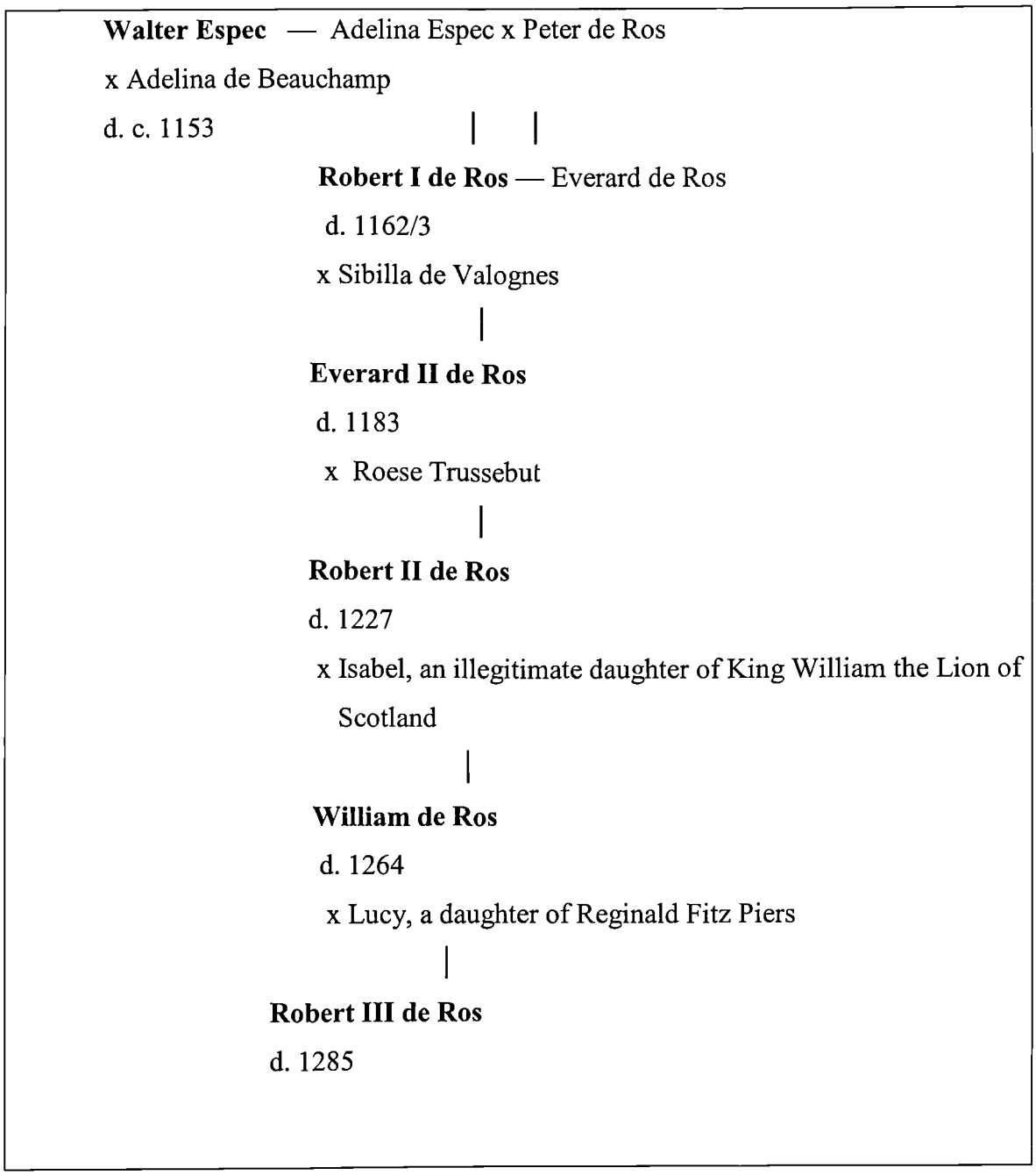
[105] 'Erat praeterae nobilis carne, sed Christiana pietate longe nobilior. Nempe cum liberis careret haeredibus, licet ei nepotes strenui non deessent, de optimis tamen quibusque possessionibus suis Christum fecit haeredem.' Ailred, 'Relatio de Standardo', p. 183.
[106] For more information on this issue, see pp. 208-9.
[107] Barbara English, *The Lords of Holderness 1086-1260: a Study in Feudal Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 151; Green, *Aristocracy*, p. 208.
[108] *EYC*, vol. 3, n° 1330.
[109] *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 1152; *EYC*, vol. 3, n° 1367; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 1148.
[110] *Peerage,* vol. 11, p. 90.

Figure 1.

The Espec-Ros family, patron of Rievaulx abbey (simplified)



II de Percy (between 1164 and 1166); after he died in 1183 she remarried for a third time with Ralph d'Aubigny.[111]

The most significant step in the advancement of the family was made by Robert's son, Everard II de Ros. He married Roese Trussebut who was the eldest of three sisters and heirs of William Trussebut Lord of Warter. This marriage gave Everard a substantial increase in his economic power. Politically, Everard remained cautious and stayed on the King's side during the rebellion of 1173.

Everard II died in 1183 and his son Robert II de Ros inherited Helmsley and other Yorkshire estates from his father, for which he paid a substantial relief of 1000 marks in 1191. In the same year, 1183, he married Isabel, an illegitimate daughter of the Scottish King William the Lion. When Roese de Ros died in 1194 Robert II inherited from his mother her portion of Trussebut fee as well as patronage of the Augustinian house at Warter.[112] Although the core of Robert's estates was in Yorkshire, he became in 1195 a bailiff and castellan of Bonneville-sur-Touques in Lower Normandy. His high connections acquired through marriage to Isabel were utilized in 1199 when Robert was sent by King John to arrange the meeting with the Scottish King. As a recognition of his service to the King he was granted in 1200, a part of Walter Espec's honour in Northumberland, which included Wark-on-Tweed where Robert built a castle.[113] Numerous appearances of his name in the royal charters, mainly in the north, with the exception of 1203 when he was again in Bonneville-sur-Touques, suggest his frequent presence at the court. In 1206 Robert planned to go to Jerusalem and received a licence for three years to raise money on the security of his land, but it is unclear if he ever fulfilled this plan. His interest in crusades and some short lived religious vocation is testified by Robert's taking on the monastic habit in 1212 but in the next few years he served as a sheriff of Cumberland. Despite his long service to the king, Robert was one of the opponents of the Magna Carta and as a result he was excommunicated together with his son who was, by that time, politically active. However by 1217 Robert was again at the King's service, and in 1224/5 witnessed the confirmation of Magna Carta and the Forest Charter. At the end of his eventful life Robert became a Templar. He died on 16 July 1227.[114]

The next lord of Helmsley, William de Ros son of Robert II became politically active before the death of his father. He joined the French Prince Louis in his claim to

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[111] English, *Lords of Holderness*, p. 151; *EYC*, vol. 11, p. 3.
[112] *EYC*, vol. 10, p. 13.
[113] *EYC*, vol. 10, p. 15.
[114] *DNB*, vol. 49, pp. 216-18; *Peerage*, vol. 11, pp. 92-93; *EYC*, vol. 10, p. 15.

the English crown after the death of King John. William was captured at the battle of Lincoln in May 1217, but his father paid for his release in October of that year. In his later life he was regularly in the King's service: in 1224 he went to Poitou, participated in the siege of Bedford castle, in expeditions to France in 1230, and 1241 he was summoned for service in Scotland in 1257/8, against the Welsh in 1258 and 1263/4. Upon the death of Hilary Trussebut and her sister Agatha in 1241 and 1247 respectively, the whole of the Trussebut fee came into the possession of William de Ros of Helmsley, who had previously inherited one third of Trussebut fee from his grandmother Roese Trussebut wife of Everard II de Ros.[115] Like his father, William witnessed some important acts: in January 1235/6 the attestation of the Magna Carta, and the agreement between Henry III and the King of Scots in 1237. This proves that the Ros family reached one of the leading positions in the political arena. However, in contrast to his father, who never fulfilled his plans for pilgrimage, William went to Santiago di Campostela in 1252. He remained loyal to the king and did not take part in the Barons' War. He died in 1264, and was buried at Kirkham.[116]

Robert III de Ros, his son and heir, was on the side of Simon de Montfort in May 1265, but after the battle of Evesham, Robert received a full pardon and became a commissioner of the North. His marriage to Isabel daughter and heir of William d'Aubigny brought him Belvoir castle in inheritance. Robert died in 1285 and was buried, as his father, in Kirkham priory.[117]

In these careers we can see that over the course of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the Ros family advanced their status from the provincial tenants of the great lord to the ranks of noblemen directly involved in the politics of the royal courts. Their estates were also significantly enlarged by the marriages to wealthy heiresses. This should have been very beneficial for Rievaulx, but by the time the Ros family reached this status, ideas and expectations about religious patronage had changed and the attitude of the subsequent generations of the Ros family towards Rievaulx and Kirkham illustrates this change very well.

The transition from one patron to another was often a difficult time for a monastery. Robert I de Ros was a nephew of the founder and his attachment to the house established by his uncle was not necessarily so close as that of Walter's son might have been. There are not many indications of the interaction between Rievaulx abbey and Robert I de Ros. He was patron for a relatively short time, probably less then ten

[115] *EYC*, vol. 10, p. 25.
[116] *Peerage*, vol. 11, pp. 93-4.

years until his death in 1162/3, and may simply not have enough time to develop attachment to the monastic house founded by his uncle. Robert I de Ros appeared as a witness in charters of other Yorkshire benefactors to abbeys and priories but this may indicate more his social position and affinities than interest in pious donations to any particular house.[118]

The charter issued by Robert between 1147 and 1153 for Rievaulx abbey is a mere confirmation of his uncle's grant, who was still alive then.[119] This charter has a very long witness list consisting of various relatives, neighbours and churchmen, which indicates that the act was undertaken during a formal gathering: Archbishop Henry of York, Archdeacon Robert de Butevillain, canons of York Thomas Sottovagina and Nicholas de Traili, Prior Roger of Bridlington and canon Gregory from that house. Among several names of chaplains there is also Robert de Ros's nephew Robert, then fellow neighbours of the abbey, among them William de Staingrif, Peter and William de Surdeval, Peter de Lasceles, and finally some of Robert de Ros's relatives and members of his household: Thomas de Ros, Stephen de Ros and the tutor of Everard, Robert's son. The original copy of this charter with the seal of Robert de Ros survived at Belvoir Castle.[120] This copy does not have any marks or numbers indicating its provenance from the abbey's archive, it is therefore possible, that it was a copy belonging to the Ros family.

Between January 1151 and 14 October 1153 Robert de Ros again confirmed solemnly all the grants made by Walter Espec in the presence of Archbishop Henry Murdac of York who issued the charter. Espec's charter was read aloud to the people present and Robert took an oath to protect the abbey and made a pledge to the archbishop.

> Therefore he promised to that House and to the brothers all support and first he [Robert] strengthened all these things by an oath, he gave himself into my hands [Archbishop's] as a hostage, and constituted me a pledge on a reliquary in all these things.[121]

Although this statement does convey more than conventional reaffirmation of the patron's responsibilities, the final clause states that any trespass on the abbey's right by

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[117] *Peerage*, vol. 11, pp. 95-6.
[118] Robert witnessed a grant to Meaux abbey by William earl of Aumâle c. 1150 (*EYC*, vol. 3, n° 1380) and a confirmation grant by William de Vescy to Watton priory c. 1150-57 (*EYC*, vol. 3, n° 1884).
[119] *Cartulary*, n° 43.
[120] HMC, *MSS at Belvoir Castle*, vol. 4, p. 75.

the patron will be prosecuted by the church authority. Such provision does not indicate any great personal connection between Rievaulx abbey and Robert I de Ros, but rather a cautious approach of the monks who wanted to minimize possible damage, rather than to develop close cooperation with the patron. The archbishop appears here as a go-between the layman and the monastery, who could intervene if things were likely to go wrong in the future.

The importance of tenurial and family connections was particularly crucial if the patrons did not show much interest in their religious houses. Robert I de Ros never showed much generosity toward Rievaulx abbey but some of his connections, chiefly those established by the marriage of his daughter Joan to Stephen II de Meinil, brought new benefactors to the abbey. Stephen II de Meinil, grandson of Stephan I de Meinil who witnessed the 'foundation charter' of Rievaulx abbey, granted to Rievaulx between 1175 and 1189 forest in Greenhowe and a right of way through his property towards Bilsdale, for the soul of his wife Joan, his own, and his parents and ancestors.[122] This pattern of establishing new connections between the abbey and potential benefactors by the means of marriage was present among the abbey's benefactors on many levels, but can be more easily traced in the upper stratum.

The next generation of the Ros family brought some changes to their relationship with Rievaulx. Robert's son and heir, Everard II, interacted much more with the abbey than his father, although he acted as the abbey's patron for not much longer than Robert. He confirmed his great-uncle's and father's grant to the abbey, probably soon after he took his inheritance.[123] Later he donated an additional grant in Helmsley consisting of wood on the west side of the vill and a common pasture in the wood of Pockley vill.[124] This grant was significant for the abbey and Rievaulx acquired a specific royal confirmation for it.[125] Besides this donation, Everard made an affidavit, between 1178 and 1181, to the charter of one of his tenants, William Ingram, which was a confirmation of William's father's grant in East Heslerton to Rievaulx abbey.[126] Everard's appearance as a witness to the grants to the abbey indicates his active participation in local politics, as much as his interest in the prosperity and security of

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[121] Insuper promisit Domui illi et fratribus omnem manutenentiam; et primum haec omnia sacramento firmavit, deinde Christianitatem in manu mea qua se obsidem dedit, et me plegium constituit de his omnibus'. *Cartulary*, n° 219; dated by Burton in *EEA*, vol. 5, p. 99.
[122] *Cartulary*, n° 164; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 799.
[123] *Cartulary*, n° 45.
[124] *Cartulary*, n° 44.
[125] *Cartulary*, n° 211.
[126] *Cartulary*, n° 122.

Rievaulx property. His steward, William, also witnessed two charters for the abbey: a quitclaim by Walter son of Asketil and a gift by William son of Humphrey de Bolton.[127]

Despite these positive gestures, there are strong indications that Everard II was trying to reclaim some of the abbey's properties in the late 1160s or early 1170s. He was not alone in his actions, as several prominent noblemen tried the same. They were all benefactors or relatives of the benefactors of the abbey. Their actions must have been considered as a considerable threat to the abbey as the monks turned to the pope, Alexander III for help. The pope sent a mandate to the bishop of Exeter, the abbot of St Mary's York and the Dean of York to restore the property unjustly occupied.[128] However at this time the main aggressors were Robert de Stuteville and William, his son, who encroached on Rievaulx property in the vills of Hoveton (forest and newly cultivated land) and Middlehead (forest and land). Also other men, Roger Mowbray and his son Nigel, Alan de Bowforth, Robert de Vado, and his brother Ralph, Everard de Ros and Robert son of Ernisius were accused by the Pope of encroachments on the abbey's lands. Some participants of this encroachment were related to larger disputes. William and Robert de Stuteville had a long standing dispute with Roger de Mowbray about the lands of the Stutevilles family, which had been given to the Mowbrays by King Henry I, after the battle of Tinchebrai (1106). By the time, the Stuteville family returned to the royal favour, some of their lands were already alienated to religious houses by the Mowbrays.[129] Although the papal mandate does not specify which lands were encroached on by Everard de Ros, it is possible that he tried to regain some properties given by his ancestors to Rievaulx abbey or to invade the land located conveniently close to his own property.

Following the earlier example of his father, Robert II de Ros confirmed before 1198 the grants of his great-grand uncle, grandfather Robert I and father Everard II de Ros to Rievaulx abbey.[130] In contrast to his father, Robert II was less aggressive towards the abbey, although not overly generous either. Two grants by Robert II to the abbey were not particularly substantial. One of them consisted of the property previously held by Simon de Hale in Lebberston (one carucate with eight tofts) and Cayton (four bovates), also two parts of the mill in Cayton. Robert de Ros also rendered a service payment for Lebberston of twelve shillings and five pence and added a

[127] *Cartulary*, n° 59, 144.
[128] *Cartulary*, n° 262.
[129] Burton, 'Estates and Economy', pp. 44-5.
[130] *Cartulary*, n° 46.

pittance to be distributed yearly in the abbey on All Saints Day.[131] Robert's second grant consisted of one silver mark which Robert had been receiving yearly as a service payment from Bilsdale, but now surrendered and added to the monetary grant which the abbey received yearly on All Saints day.[132] He also quitclaimed, by a different charter, all the rights he might have to the parts of the waste below Pickering with the assent of his wife and children, as well as his brothers Peter and William Surdeval, who were his tenants in Theokmarais.[133] As a part of his patron's duties Robert II witnessed, with his sons William and Robert, the confirmation of an important grant of Crosby and Cowton by Bishop Richard March of Durham on 1 July 1217, which was given by his predecessors, bishops William and Hugh of Durham.[134]

Robert's main gifts went elsewhere. It is likely that his crusading intentions prompted his generosity to the Knights Templar and he seems reluctant to give any more land to Rievaulx abbey. Between 1206 and 1212 Robert II granted the vill of Hunsingore to the Templars for the salvation of his own soul and that of his wife Isabel.[135] Soon before his death another grant was given to the Templars, the manor of Great Ribston, the advowson of the church there and the hamlet of Wilshford in exchange for Robert's burial in the Templars' church.[136] It appears that the Cistercian abbey of Rievaulx did not appeal to Robert's pious taste as he became a Templar in his old age and was buried in the Temple church in London.[137] Robert's generosity to other religious orders had some considerable impact on Rievaulx abbey, particularly in the respect of the abbey's relationship with other houses.[138]

Upon the death of Robert II in 1227 and taking his inheritance, William confirmed his father's monetary grant received yearly by the monks on All Saints day.[139] More importantly, in 1228 William with his brother Robert quitclaimed a debt, of unknown size, which was due in the name of their father from the abbey of Rievaulx. They received a considerable compensation of 250 marks for their quitclaim.[140] This loan was almost certainly taken by the abbey for the financial support of the building programme carried out during the abbacy of Roger II (1225-1235) when the monastic

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[131] *Cartulary*, n° 47.
[132] *Cartulary*, n° 48.
[133] *Cartulary*, n° 180; for the discussion on the background to this conflict see, pp. 146-52.
[134] Bodl., MS Dodsw., vii, f. 136; published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, pp. 222-3.
[135] *EYC*, vol. 10, n° 13.
[136] *EYC*, vol. 10, n° 14.
[137] *DNB*, vol. 49, p. 218.
[138] This is discussed in detail on pp. 177-8, 192-3.
[139] Bodl, MS Dodsw., vii, f. 188; published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, p. 240.

church was rebuilt in the Gothic style and extensive works were carried out on the monastic choir, presbytery, and the new eastern chapel.[141] The information about the loan indicates that the relationship of the abbey with the patrons was not limited to the sporadic confirmation charters, but had also a practical dimension. It appears that, although he gave little further land, Robert II de Ros was supporting the abbey on a practical level by lending money and his sons were prepared to make a compromise beneficial for both sides; the abbey did not have to give back the whole sum and William and Robert received some financial compensation.

Despite this initial goodwill gesture of William de Ros, his subsequent relationship with Rievaulx abbey was very turbulent. Their conflict, which began in the late 1220s and lasted until the early 1250s, was essentially a series of attempts by William de Ros to reclaim the properties granted to the abbey by his ancestors or a least to change the conditions of these donations. There was nothing unusual about the dispute. There are many cases of donors and their heirs trying to reclaim properties given previously, but William displayed a great persistence in his actions.

The object of the dispute was four carucates of land in Griff and five carucates in Tileston as well as common pastures and woods of Helmsley and Pockley. These properties were parts of the initial grants of the founder and early grants of the patron's family to the abbey and were located in close proximity to both the abbey and the family seat at Helmsley castle. The land in Griff and Tileston were parts of the original endowment, the right of common pasture and woods were extended by Everard II. The core of the conflict was a disagreement about the hunting rights, which William claimed to possess in the forest of Helmsley. At the time when this grant was given in the twelfth century, all the components of the rights were handed over to the monks, except hunting. It was simply of no concern then, but with the changing conditions of the land use and lifestyle of both noblemen and the monks, hunting rights became a very vexatious issue.

In 1213 William de Ros sued the abbot of Rievaulx, but the plea does not specify the reason.[142] The first more detailed indication of the conflict is a piece of information that Roger, Abbot of Rievaulx, appointed brother Jordan of Wardon or brother Alan of Rievaulx as his representative in the case against William de Ros in

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[140] *Excerpta e rotulis finium in turri londonensi asservatis Henrico regis A.D. 1216-1272*, ed. Charles Roberts, Record Commission (London: G. Eyre, 1835), vol. 1, p. 169.
[141] Fergusson, Harrison, *Rievaulx Abbey*, p. 172.
[142] Coram Rege, 17 John, n° 50, m. 5, [new ref.. Assize Roll (VS80) 613], published in the *Cartulary*, p. 382.

1229.[143] Robert de Everingham, Philip son of John, Philip de Ascelles and Richard de Rivera were appointed as justices in York in the case of Abbot Roger versus William de Ros.[144] The lawsuit went ahead in the same year and Abbot Roger sued William for the warranty of four carucates of land in Griff and five in Tileston, the common pasture and forest in Helmsley and Pockley, which the abbey held from Robert II according to his charter. Because William did not come to the court he was attached to appear later, one month after Michaelmas.[145] When both sides met again in the same year, the abbot listed all the legal right of the abbey to the disputed property. He asserted that:

> William acted against the charter of his father, which witnesses that the said Robert father of the said William granted and confirmed to God and the church of Holy Mary of Rievaulx four carucates of land in Griff and land in Tileston where there are five carucates, and through which he confirmed to them all his easements in the manor and his forest of Helmsley, namely the timber and wood for his own use, and pasture land and panage free from all custom in the whole forest of Helmsley, and through which he confirmed to them the common pasture in Pockley in wood and open land for his sheep and his other cattle and timber and wood for his own use in the whole forest of that vill and pasture and panage free from all customs, and that he himself and his heirs will never welcome men of any religion into the above said pasture except the same monks, just as the charter of Everard de Ros father of the said Robert better testifies.[146]

Not only did William act against the charter of his father, but also obstructed in many ways the monks' use of the land. The abbot listed all the damages caused by William:

> he hindered in making entry for him [the abbot] and his people within the above said nine carucates of land from making hay and from having timber and wood for their own use and from having common in the wood in Helmsley and there impounded his draught animals, so that an ox died in his enclosure, and besides that he shot with arrows dogs of the said abbot and of his people [...] to the value of fifteen marks.[147]

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[143] *CRR*, vol. 13, p. 380. Rievaulx abbey had a number of cases against several noblemen in that year. The abbot appointed brother Alan as his attorney in these cases. *CR 1227-1231*, p. 240.

[144] *CPR 1225-1232*, p. 351.

[145] *CRR*, vol. 13, p. 423.

[146] Willelmus contra cartam patris sui, que testatur quod idem Robertus pater predicti Willelmi concedit et confirmat Deo et ecclesie Beate Marie Ryavall' iiii. carucatas terre in Grif et terram de Tillonestun', ubi sunt v. carucate terre, et preterea per quam concedit eis omnia aisiamenta sua in maneria [sic] et foresta sua de Hamlec, scilicet materiam et ligno ad suos proprios usus et pascua et pannagia ab omni consuetudine quieta in omnibus boscis de Hammelac, et per quam concedit eis communam pasture in Pockele in bosco et plano ad oves suas et cetera pecora sua et materiam [et] ligna ad suos proprios usus in omnibus boscis ejusdem ville et pascua et pannagia quieta ab omni consuetudine, et quod ipse et heredes sui nunquam recolligent alicujus religionis homines in predictam pasturam preter eosdem monachos, sicut carta Eborardi de Ros patris ipsius Roberti melius testatur.' *CRR*, vol. 13, pp. 556-7.

[147] 'Inpendit eum et homines suos infra predictas ix. carucatas terre secare et habere materiam et ligna ad proprios usus et habere communam in bosco de Hammelac et ibi inparcat averia sua, ita quod quidam bos mortuus fuit in parco suo; et preterea sagittat canes ipsius abbatis et hominum suorum [...] ad valentiam xv marcarum.' *CRR*, vol. 13, p. 557.

Because William denied all the charges the court ordered another hearing. The case was scheduled to be tried in three weeks from Easter and in the meantime, the abbot and William remained in possession of exactly what they had at that point.[148]

That was, however, not the end. On 4 July 1231 the itinerant justices in York received a royal mandate that the case between Rievaulx abbey and William de Ros about the dispute over Helmsley forest was to be heard in Westminster a fortnight after Michaelmas.[149] Finally, in January of 1232 Abbot Roger, the plaintiff and William de Ros, the defendant, reached an agreement, probably after several sessions, in Westminster, in the presence of justices; Stephan de Segrave, Robert de Lexintona, William de York, Master Robert de Scherdelawa, Rudolf de Norwich and Adam son of William. William dropped his claims to the four carucates in Griff and five in Tileston and the common pasture and forest in Helmsley and Pockley according to the charters of his ancestors of whom he was the legal heir. Particular attention was given to the hunting rights within this territory contested so fiercely by William:

> And they [the monks] may take the same wild animals, and all kinds of wild beasts, by their dogs and hare-hounds, and by bow and arrows and by all other means which they can, at their will, without any hindrance or objection of the said William or is heir and his people.[150]

In return the abbot acknowledged William's right to the park on the eastern side of Helmsley, another park there called Le Haye and the common pasture of 'Plocwude' to which the abbey did not have any rights. William gave a warranty for the agreement and abbot presented him with 200 silver marks.[151] This large sum of money indicates that William pressed a hard bargain and wanted a substantial compensation for his quitclaim. Even if all the legal rights were on the abbey's side, the settlement still required some considerable financial compensation for the patron whose strategy of obstruction and persistency proved to be very effective. The ability to push his claims so successfully also indicates how strong William's position was in relation to the abbey, which could not defend its property against the claims of a powerful nobleman.

This agreement was copied to the cartulary as 'Cirographum inter nos et Willelmum de Ros', on one of the empty folios which were left by the original scribe in

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[148] *CRR*, vol. 13, p. 557.
[149] *CR 1227-31*, p. 522.
[150] 'Et easdem feras, et omnimodam salvaginam, capiant per canes et leporarios suos, et per arcus et sagittas, et omnibus aliis modis quibuscunque poterunt, pro voluntate eorum, sine omni impedimento vel contradictione ipsius Willelmi, vel heredum suorum, et hominum suorum.' *Cartulary*, n° 217.
[151] *Cartulary*, n° 217.

the middle of the volume.[152] Very soon after this agreement was settled, on 27 March the abbot contested specific parts of the agreement claiming that abbey had, from the beginnings of its existence 'possession of winter food for oxen and cows and sheep, collecting nuts, burning heath in the pasture within the said woods and making charcoal for their own use.' [153] It was then agreed that the abbot could collect animal fodder and nuts, but should not cut too many trees in one place.

In the Michaelmas term of the same year, 1232, the abbot of Rievaulx again sued several noblemen including William de Ros for breaking the previous agreement over the common pasture, right of pasture and wood gathering in the forest of Helmsley and Pockley. The patron had obstructed the monks' passage against the agreement signed only a year earlier.[154] Yet again in 1233 the abbot sued William for not adhering to the recently signed agreement concerning forest and pastures in Helmsley and Pockley. At the hearing the abbot gave more evidence of William's tactics:

> The same William had his oxen and cows taken, that is to the number of 300 sheep and eighteen cows and he held them enclosed until all became useless and near death, and that he had his [the abbot's] people distrained and took their carts, on the account of which he sustained damages, amounting to the value of ten marks.[155]

William's attorney came to the court, examined displayed charter and confirmed its validity, but denied all the accusations. The court decided therefore that the attorney would wage his law by the oaths of twelve men but there is no record of any such action taking place.

The next court case in the same year about the common pasture of 'Plocwude' was in Westminster, but William did not attend and the sheriff was not able to bring him to the court.[156] The conflict surfaced again in 1239 when Abbot Roger sued William de Ros for the warranty of four carucates in Griff and five carucates in Tileston and again the common pasture and the wood of Helmsley and Pockley. As in previous years, William did not appear in the court.[157]

The last indications of the dispute between Rievaulx and William and its settlement, which was probably more lasting than the previous ones, are two thirteenth

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[152] BL, MS Cotton Julius D I, f. 145v [f. 152v].
[153] *Cartulary*, n° 217.
[154] *CRR*, vol. 14, p. 519-20.
[155] 'Idem Willelmus capi facit averia sua et pecora, scilicet semel usque ad trecentas oves et bo[ves] suos usque ad xviij et detinet inclusa donec omnino inutiles fiunt et usque ad mortem, et quod devadiari facit homines suos et capi facit charettas suas, propter quod deterioratus est et dampnum habet ad valentiam x marcarum.' *CRR*, vol. 15, p. 23-4.
[156] *CRR*, vol. 15, p. 63.
[157] *Coram Rege: Henry III*, 1239, n° 32, m. 11; published in *Cartulary*, p. 390.

century entries in the first pages of the cartulary left empty by the original scribe.[158] The first one suggests that there was another agreement between the abbot and William in the presence of judges in York; Bishop Sylvester Everdon of Carlisle and Roger de Thurkelby in 1251/2.[159] The second document issued in the same year, was also copied on the front folios of the cartulary. William appeared to have the activities of the monks monitored in the forests of Helmsley and Pockley, and came to the conclusion that these were excessive:

> The said abbot against the said fine [the agreement of 1232] has winter fodder cut for their oxen and cows at some times round about 30 carts full, or other times about 40 carts full, and has these carried away, and also has acorns and hazels collected in the said wood, round about twelve quarters, and sometimes round about ten quarters, and has them taken away, and similarly has trees cut down in the above said woods, and makes charcoal from the said trees in diverse places; and similarly has round about 30 oaks or more cut down at the time for sap, and strips them of the bark to sell the bark and leaves those oaks to lie in the above said woods until they should be dried. He said, also, that against that fine he has heath burned in the pasture within the above said woods to the great damage of the above said pasture. He [William] said from that, that by doing this he [the abbot] did not keep the above said fine, he [William] was harmed, and sustained damage to the value of 100 pounds.[160]

The abbot denied these charges and repeated the earlier argument of the abbey's right received from the ancestors of the present patron. In addition, the abbot :

> brought out a charter under the name of Robert son of Everard de Ros in which it is contained that the said Robert gave and by his charter confirmed to God and the church of Holy Mary in Rievaulx and the monks serving God there, [...] in that place in Ricalf for charcoal and charcoal-burners, which they held in the time of Everard his father.[161]

Finally William de Ros and the abbey settled this conflict by the means of exchange, which would eliminate constant interference between the parties. William:

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[158] BL, MS Cotton Julius D I, f. 1v [f. 5v] - 2v [f. 6v].

[159] *Cartulary*, n° 6.

[160] 'Predictus Abbas contra predictum finem scindere facit husagium ad boves et vaccas suas, aliquando circiter xxx carettatas , aliquando circiter xl carettatas, et illis asportare facit, et etiam colligere facit de glanis, et nucibus in predictis bosci circiter xii quarteria, et aliquando circiter x quarteria, et asportare facit; et similiter prosternere facit arbores in predictis boscis, et facit carbones de predictis arboribus in diversis locis; et similiter prosternere facit circiter xxx quercus vel amplius tempore seve, et eas excoriat, et vendere corticem, et dimittit illas quercus jacere in predictis boscis quousque fuerint desiccate. Dicit ergo quod contra eundem finem comburi facit brueriam in pastura infra predictos boscos ad magnum detrimentum predictae pasture: Unde dicit quod per hoc quod non tenuit predictum finem deterioratus est et habet dampnum ad valorem c librarum.' *Cartulary*, n° 8.

[161] 'profert quandam cartam sub nomine Roberti filli Everardi de Ros in qua continetur quod [idem] Robertus dedit et carta sua confirmavit Deo et Ecclesie Beate Marie de Ryevalle et monachis ibidem Deo servientibus, [...] locum illum in Rycalvegray[ne] ad carbones et

> gave them [the monks] a piece of land in exchange for all the common which they quitclaimed him in the wood and in the land next to Helmsley as far as the south part of the road which goes to Helmsley and to Rievaulx beyond their ditch and wall, beyond the ditch of their main assart as from the bank of Helmsley to the River Rye. He also granted to them that they may enclose by wall and ditch that place where waters of Deepdale and Litelbee come into confluence.[162]

This document appears to finish this long dispute, and although William did not achieved what he wanted, which appeared to be the eviction of the abbey from the lands he wanted so badly, he had settled for a compromise. The exchange between the parties appeared the most sensible option opened to them. The issue of common in the forest of Helmsley was so vexatious, that only elimination of the abbey's claim to it could finish the dispute once and for all.

Throughout this conflict, lasting for three decades William's tactic was persistence and the boldness of his actions. Even the fact that William signed a final agreement in 1232 with the abbey did not stop him from breaching it soon afterwards. The abbot had all the legal rights to hold the disputed properties and appropriate charters were displayed in the court on several occasions. The abbot had also a powerful tool on his side — memory and tradition. The argument that the abbey possessed certain rights from its foundation and had them during the life of the previous abbots was invoked by Abbot Roger on several occasions.[163] From the records of the legal proceedings it appears that the tactic of the abbey was consistent, the plaintiff, the abbot or his representative, steadily referred to the charters of Everard II de Ros and Robert II de Ros and William's legal obligations as their heir. William's tactic, as the defendant, was denying the accusations or simply not turning up to the court, which was, after all, very effective, not least because he was a wealthy and important lord and even a powerful institution, such as Rievaulx abbey, could not stand up to him. This statement brings forward again the role of powerful individuals in the life of the abbey. In its early years several such individuals acted in favour of the abbey as benefactors and

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carbonarios suos, quem tenuerunt tempore Everardi patris sui.' *Cartulary*, n° 8. Ricalf, a lost vill was located half way between Muscoates and Harome.

[162] 'Tenendum et claudendum et utendum sicut voluerint in perpetuum, liberum et quietum ab omni exactione et servitio — qui locus habet viii perticatas in longitudine et iiii perticatas in latitudine. Hunc autem locum dedit eis pro escambia totius commune quam sibi quietam clamaverunt in bosco et in terra juxta villam de Hamelec, ad australem partem vie que itur ad Halmelak et ad Ryevallem extram fossatum et murum eorum extra fossatum sarti eorum sicut nemus tendit a barra de Halmelak usque ad Ryam. Concessit etiam illis claudere muro vel fossato locum illum divise sue ubi aqua de Dipedale et Litelbee simul veniunt de qua conventio fuerat inter eos.' *Cartulary*, n° 8.

[163] 'dicit predictus Abbas quod ipse et omnes predecessores sui, a fundatione Domus sue [...].'

protectors, but in the changed circumstances, a powerful lord was capable of inflicting substantial damage to the abbey.

The son and heir of William de Ros, Robert III continued his father's quarrel about pastures and forests in Helmsley and Pockley, but with less persistence. In 1282 Abbot William IV of Rievaulx sued Robert de Ros and two other men for breaking the agreement and taking away the abbey's sheep grazing in the pastures of the said vills.[164] This case indicates that the problem of close proximity between the abbey and the patron's residence and the shared use of the pasture continued to be the cause of conflict. This proximity, understood by the founder and the monastic community as beneficial for both sides turned out to be, in the changed circumstances, a real burden.

William de Ros was a difficult patron not only for Rievaulx abbey but also for Kirkham priory, which had, otherwise, a very positive relationship with the Ros family. In 1251 Prior Roger and the convent reached an agreement with William concerning the same forest of Helmsley, in which Kirkham had certain rights, breached by the patron. The prior was promised access to estovers for husbote and heybote, as well as fishing in the river Rye east from the bridge. In 1261 the next prior, Hugh, sued William de Ros for the right of hunting in Helmsley wood and moor.[165] As a settlement compensation William granted one toft in Pockley, right of passage through the woods and moors of Helmsley and three animals yearly in lieu of the tithes of hunting. Since the right of hunting was also a object of controversy between Rievaulx and its patron and the location of Helmsley wood, in the vicinity of William's residence might be a reason for his persistence in trying to secure this right for himself against the claim of both religious houses.

Despite this conflict, it is quite clear that Kirkham priory was the family monastery with several burials in the church, as well as the Ros arms on the gatehouse.[166] Similarly to many other Augustinian houses, Kirkham was closely dependant on its patrons.[167] The Ros family as the heirs of Walter Espec had chosen the Augustinian priory in Kirkham rather than Rievaulx as their favourite object of patronage. This much smaller and less famous house was preferred not only because the patrons had more power over the canons than over the Cistercian monks, but also because Kirkham priory had agreed to a display of the status and position of the family,

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[164] De Banco, Easter term, 10 Edw. I, m. 59, in *Notes on the Religious and Secular Houses of Yorkshire,* vol. 1, ed. William Paley Baildon, Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Record Series, 17 (1895), n° 9, p. 178.
[165] Burton, *Kirkham Priory*, p. 23.
[166] Burton, *Monastic Order*, p. 195.

to which Rievaulx, as a Cistercian house, would not agree. Robert III de Ros, son of the quarrelsome William, who was himself buried in front of the altar, was buried in the marble tomb in the south part of the priory's church. Several other patrons were also buried at Kirkham.[168] The late thirteenth-century gatehouse of the priory was decorated with the Ros coats of arms. The gatehouse, apart from its practical function of controlling entry and exit to the monastic precinct had also a symbolic function. The portal was the means to impress passers-by and visitors and to convey the impression of the status and splendor of the house.[169] However, the coats of arms on the gatehouse say even more about the status of Kirkham priory. They indicate that the patrons wanted to be closely associated with the religious institution, but also, that the Ros family had a considerable power over the house. The absence of such manifestations at Rievaulx abbey confirms the much cooler relationship between this house and its patrons, but also indicates that Cistercians did not want to be associated with the lay world in the way Augustinian canons did. The white monks wanted to convey the image of a certain separation and independence from the lay world. Martha G. Newman described this image-building as a conscious differentiation of the monks' social role from those of lay aristocrat and secular clergy, but not a rejection of social entanglement as such.[170] As for the Ros family, while the patronage of a great Cistercian house could give public prestige, at the same time, the size and importance of the abbey might have been a deterrent for the patrons, particularly those who inherited patronage rights from more distant relatives, as in the case of the Ros family. The steady social advancement of this family throughout the late twelfth and thirteenth century, due to very advantageous marriages, needed its reaffirmation in the visual manifestation such as gatehouse in Kirkham, something that Rievaulx did not want to provide.

Although Walter Espec is said to be buried at Rievaulx, the first member of the patron's family certainly buried in the church, in the galilee porch, was Isabel d'Aubeney, wife of Robert III de Ros (d. 1301). Later, Thomas de Ros (d. 1384) as well as John de Ros (d. 1393) and his wife Maria were buried at Rievaulx, in front of the high altar and to the south of it, respectively.[171] As Brian Golding's research has shown

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[167] Burton, 'Origins and development', p. 128.
[168] Burton, *Kirkham Priory*, p. 23.
[169] R. W. Morant, *The Monastic Gatehouse and Other Types of Portal of Medieval Religious Houses*, (Lewes: The Book Guild, 1995), pp. 12-13, 81.
[170] Newman, *Boundaries of Charity*, p. 2.
[171] Fergusson and Harrison, *Rievaulx Abbey,* p. 242, n. 5 and p.250-251, n. 28.

the choice of the family burial was intended to show stability and permanence.[172] This late change therefore from Kirkham priory to Rievaulx abbey indicates a new phase in the relationship between the Ros family and Rievaulx abbey. The old loyalty to Kirkham priory was weakened and the prestigious monastic church of Rievaulx abbey became the burial place for the Ros family. By the late fourteenth century the family's position was assured and the splendor of Cistercian church became a more appropriate burial ground, than a small Augustinian house. The late dating of the patrons' burials could also be a result of the early Cistercian prohibition on lay burials within the monastic church. However in numerous cases particularly prominent patrons were allowed to be buried in 'their' monasteries. In fact, as early as the thirteenth century the patrons of the Cistercian house in Oliva, near Danzig, the dukes of Pomerania were buried in the monastic church. Although their graves cannot be archaeologically traced, the existence of these burials is known from the monastic chronicle, which indicates that the monks were very proud with such a close association with the ruling family.[173] It was not however only very prominent patrons who were buried in the Cistercian houses. A Cistercian house in Volkenroda (Thüringen) established in 1131 accepted the burial of the son of its foundress only eighteen years later.[174] The Chapter General tried to stop these practices by issuing a prohibition in 1152 of any lay burials inside the church except those of kings, queens, archbishops and bishops. Five years later the order decided that nobody except the founders should be granted such privilege.[175] However by the late thirteenth century patrons' burials in the Cistercian houses became common throughout Europe. The great variety of relationships between Cistercian houses and their patrons indicate not only difference in the socio-economic position of the houses, but also the highly personal, and therefore difficult to regulate, character of these contacts.

Although the Ros family never displayed much generosity towards the abbey, they did perform one of the duties of the patrons and kept reconfirming over several generations what was already given. In none of the confirmation charters however

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[172] Brian Golding, 'Burials and Benefactors: An Aspect of Monastic Patronage in Thirteenth-Century England', in *Symposium on England in the Thirteenth Century: Harlaxton Conference Proceedings*, ed. Mark Ormrod, (Harlaxton: Harlaxton College, 1995), p. 74.
[173] Barbara Lepówna, 'Wyniki badań archaeologicznych przeprowadzonych w obrębie pocysterskiego zespołu klasztornego w Oliwie', in *Cystersi w kulturze średniowiecznej Europy'*, ed. Jerzy Strzelczyk (Poznań: UAM, 1992), p. 290, 299.
[174] Franz Winter, *Die Zisterzienser des nordöstlichen Deutschlands* (Gotha, 1868), p. 33.
[175] *Statuta*, vol. 1, 1152: 10, 1157: 63.

appears the phrase 'my monk' which, on one hand, signifies a proprietary attitude of the patrons, but on the other, indicates warm and personal connections. Examples of such manifestations of close connections between patrons and their monasteries in Yorkshire come from both Cistercian (Kirkstall) and Augustinian houses (Bridlington, Newburgh, Malton).[176] This may indicate that it was not the character of the order as such, which hampered the possibility of close connections between the patrons and the monastic convent, but rather particular circumstances and personal choice in the case of Rievaulx and the Ros family. The absence of any personal relationship between Rievaulx and the Ros family manifested itself in the lack of commemoration in some form, particularly writing, of the patrons. Often Cistercian monastic cartularies incorporated histories or genealogies of the patron's family, and monastic houses were often 'repositories of family tradition'.[177] At Rievaulx, this business-like approach to the issue of patrons, the lack of sentimentality or even commemorative attempts appears to reflect their distant relationship. Although there is a genealogy of the Ros family attributed to a monastic writer, it is more likely to originate from Kirkham, than from Rievaulx.[178]

On the material level Rievaulx was never dependant on its patrons alone. Other baronial families such as the Mowbrays or Gants and a large number of knightly benefactors gave substantial lands to the abbey. What was confirmed and granted by the Ros family was only a small part of its estates.

As much as the relationship between the heirs of Walter Espec and the abbey was difficult, Espec's inheritance brought to the Ros family several tenurial links, which provided Rievaulx abbey with several families of benefactors. Some of them kept their links with Rievaulx for several generations either as donors or simply as neighbours.

Two men from this group, Peter and William de Surdeval were registered in the witness list of the foundation charter of Walter Espec. They were his tenants from the fee of Mortain given to Walter by Henry I. They also held an under-tenancy of the fee of Ros in Ampleforth and Oswaldkirk. Peter and William were, along with other members of Surdeval family, frequent witnesses of the charters to Rievaulx abbey.[179] The brothers consented to their lord's grant of twelve bovates in Theokmarais and quitclaimed their rights to this property.[180] The next generation continued the association with the abbey. Robert de Surdeval, the son and heir of Peter de Surdeval

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[176] Burton, 'Origins and development', p. 340.
[177] Wood, *English Monasteries*, p. 124.
[178] *Monasticon Anglicanum*, vol. 5, p. 280.
[179] Charters witnessed by the members of the Surdeval family: *Cartulary*, n° 43, 45, 88, 194, 120, 123, 127, 129, 130, 132, 133, 152, 153, 162, 163, 180, 182, 191, 239.

confirmed, between 1160 and 1176, the boundaries between Welburn, Beadlam and Newton, which were given to Rievaulx abbey by Roger de Mowbray as described by his charter. Robert de Daivill, who was at that point Robert's lord, gave his consent.[181]

At the end of the twelfth century Robert de Surdeval granted the vill of Nawton, pasture there for 300 sheep, and free passage to the sheepfold of Skiplam. This is known from the confirmation charters of his heir, nephews and a niece, William son of William, Peter Rabaz, Robert de Newton and Juliana de Sutton, issued in the late twelfth or early thirteenth century.[182] Also William son of William and Peter Rabaz promised on behalf of William Willoughby, husband of Juliana de Sutton, that he would confirm Robert de Surdeval's grant to Rievaulx and that Robert de Newton would do the same when he reached the legal age.[183] The contacts between Rievaulx abbey and the Surdeval family did not cease then. About 1259, one of the descendents of the Ros' tenants, John de Surdeval, who was a rather difficult neighbour of the abbey was sued by the Abbot Adam de Tilletai for many trespasses on his property. As John did not come to the hearing, the sheriff was ordered to distrain him, but the outcome is unknown.[184] Although the Surdeval family were relatively local as tenants of greater lords, they were some of the closest neighbours of the abbey. Although their grants were not particularly substantial they acted as witnesses to the grants of other benefactors as they continued to live in the vicinity of the core estates of the abbey. Even if their grants were insignificant their continued presence as witnesses of the grants of others to Rievaulx abbey was a way of expressing affinities.

Robert de Sproxton was one of Walter Espec's men who witnessed the foundation charter and presumably under the influence of his lord, Robert became a benefactor of the abbey. With the consent of his wife Albreda and sons Simon, Richard and Walter, he granted before 1155-67, a pasture in Sproxton for 200 sheep, thirty cows, and one bull with the supply of straw for the sheepfolds. In return the monks promised pay three shillings yearly for the services and the grantor reserved manure for himself and his heir.[185] His son and heir, Simon de Sproxton confirmed his father's grant, probably soon after he acquired his inheritance.[186] Simon was also a benefactor of Kirkham priory, which indicates a strong tenurial influence on his generosity to the

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[180] *Cartulary*, n° 182.
[181] *Cartulary*, n° 130; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 140.
[182] *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 141.
[183] *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 142.
[184] *Yorkshire Assize Rolls for the reigns of King John and King Henry III*, ed. Charles Clay, Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Record Series 44 (1910), p. 134.
[185] *Cartulary*, n° 127.

monastic houses.[187] He was then succeeded, in the early thirteenth century, by his nephew Richard, son of Walter de Sproxton.[188] Throughout the twelfth century members of the Sproxton family acted as witnesses of grants to the abbey, as much as neighbours as the benefactors of this house.[189]

This neighbourhood connection brought, in the changed circumstances, troubles to the abbey, which were parallel to the abbey's dispute with William de Ros. In November 1226 Abbot Roger sued Richard de Sproxton, who claimed common rights in the abbey's forest in Griff, but the monks refused him, because they did not have a reciprocal right in Richard's wood in Sproxton. The dispute was resolved by a compromise, the abbot granted Richard restricted rights (within described bounds and for only certain types of trees) to take timber from his forest for the purpose of repairing the mill in Sproxton. In turn, Richard gave the abbot a tillage of land in Sproxton which bordered with abbey's sheepfolds in the same vill.[190]

Another member of this family became in time a difficult neighbour. In the August of 1228 justices were appointed for an assise of novel disseisin, which Roger abbot of Rievaulx claimed against Robert de Sproxton concerning a common pasture in West Newton.[191] This was only the beginning of several disputes between them over the common pasture rights. In 1233 the abbot sued Robert for forty-two acres of land and a pasture for thirty cows, one bull and seventy-nine head of cattle and forty sheep in Sproxton granted by Simon de Sproxton his uncle. Robert was accused of blocking access to the common pasture. During the hearing, he acknowledged the abbey's right to the land but not to the common. Since the case was not resolved, it was to be tried again by the sheriff in York on 11 April.[192] On 20 January 1237-38 the abbot brought another plea against the same Robert de Sproxton for rights of common in 'Oustscouh' wood, to which the abbot believed he had right, because of his holdings in West Newton. Robert de Sproxton did not come to the hearing and was attached to appear in the court three weeks after Easter.[193] It was only three years later, in January 1240-41, that both sides reached a compromise. The abbot dropped his claims to the pasture in 'Oustscouh' and in turn Robert quitclaimed his rights to the common pasture in West Newton within

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[186] *Cartulary*, n° 128.
[187] Burton, *Kirkham Priory*, p. 14.
[188] *EYC*, vol. 1, p. 327.
[189] *Cartulary*, n° 59, 104, 105, 127, 128, 129, 132, 153, 162, 163, 182, 184, 186.
[190] *Feet of Fines for the County York from 1218 to 1231*, ed. John Parker, Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Record Series 62 (1921), p. 82.
[191] *PR 1225-1232*, p. 222.
[192] *CRR*, vol. 15, pp. 25-6.
[193] *CRR*, vol. 16, pp. 66-7.

carefully described bounds. The free access to his pasture in Sproxton was guaranteed by the delimitation of the passage.[194]

Robert de Sproxton's daughter Aubrey did not continue the litigious line of her father and before 1251 she gave two oxganges to Rievaulx.[195] Her cousin William who was the heir of Robert de Sproxton rendered two shillings of rent from the land in West Newton and other monetary payments (two shillings for sheepfolds in Sproxton, three shillings and a new penny and a half-penny for another field, two shillings for four carucates in Newton). William's son Robert confirmed also his grandfather's agreement with the abbey concerning passage to the grange in Newton.[196]

The relationship between the Sproxton family and the abbey continued into the fourteenth century, more in the capacity of neighbours than the benefactors. In 1300 William de Sproxton (who may, or may not be the same person as William son of Robert) brought a formal complaint against Henry abbot of Rievaulx and several named monks who assaulted him in Sproxton and 'consumed and spoiled his corn there to the value of twenty pounds.'[197] This rather bizarre story is an indication of some tension between the abbey and the Sproxtons. The attack on William might have been a retaliation for some actions of his against the abbey or was a part of some other disagreement, which was not recorded otherwise.

In this instance the abbey was an aggressor, but on other occasions it was the abbey's property under attack. In 1285 somebody had broken into the buildings of abbey's grange in East Harlsey, assaulted a lay brother Serlo le Forester and took away goods.[198] Cases of physical violence and theft from monastic granges were a real problem for many Pomeranian houses in the early fourteenth century. For example the abbey of Eldena tried to prevent particularly aggressive neighbours buying any more land in the abbey's vicinity.[199] Rievaulx abbey, at least before 1300, did not experience a great level of aggression against its property, but it was, nevertheless, an element of life, which all, both lay and religious landowners encountered.

This long-lasting connection between the abbey and the Sproxton family originated from their tenurial connections with the founder, but with the passage of time, this connection became irrelevant and was replaced by one deriving from the fact

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[194] *Feet of Fines for the County York from 1232 to 1246*, ed. John Parker, Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Record Series 67 (1925), pp. 105-6.
[195] This is known from the royal confirmation of Henry III in 1251; *CChR. 1226-1257*, p. 360.
[196] *CPR 1330*-1334, p. 316; published in *Cartulary*, p. 292-3.
[197] De Banco, Michaelmas, 28 Edw. I, m. 24, in *Notes on the Religious,* vol. 1, n° 12, p. 179.
[198] *CPR 1281-1292*, p. 203.

that their properties were bordering and therefore created possibility for further conflicts.

The Ingrams were another family who had an early connection with the patron family, but later became donors to the abbey in their own right. Similarly to other tenants of Walter Espec and the Ros family they witnessed charters for the abbey, but many fewer than the Surdevals or Sproxtons. However, in contrast to these two families they were also more generous.[200]

John Ingram was listed in the foundation charter of Walter Espec among his men. Matilda, probably John's wife gave to Rievaulx abbey her demesne vill in Heslerton.[201] Her son Walter Ingram (Engelram) confirmed this grant between 1160 and 1170 to the extent of thirty acres and a common pasture for 1000 sheep in East Heslerton.[202] In the same time-span Walter together with his wife Holdierda gave five bovates in Welbury near Northallerton in the parish of East Harlsey (Holdierda was a heiress of Welbury) which were held previously by his tenant John Tort, as well as a meadow in Arncliff and pasture for 500 sheep, ten cows and a bull. Walter acknowledged that the monks gave him, in return, fifteen marks, a golden ring for his wife and two shillings for their sons.[203] The low value of the counter-gift from the monks in contrast to 500 sheep, which could bring an income of ten marks a year was commented on by Hugh Thomas, who suggested that it indicates other motives than purely financial for this transaction.[204]

William, who was son and heir of Walter and Holdierda Ingram, confirmed his parents' grant in Welbury, Arncliff and East Heselerton. Both of these confirmations were pledged by William to his lord, Everard II de Ros.[205] William also permitted and confirmed grants of his own tenants Guy de Walworth and Roger son of Richard de Shitlington of three and a half acre and twenty two perches of land in Heslerton. This grant was given by Guy and Roger for the salvation of their own souls and those of their parents, ancestors and heirs, but also their lord William Ingram.[206]

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[199] Krzysztof Guzikowski, 'Rycerstwo na Pomorzu Zachodnim wobec konwersów cysterskich', in *Cystersi w społeczeństwie Europy Środkowej*, p. 692.
[200] Charters witnessed by the members of the Ingram family: *Cartulary*, n° 90, 118, 123, 164.
[201] This is known from the papal confirmation of 1167-69; *Cartulary*, n° 252.
[202] *Cartulary*, n° 85; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 713.
[203] *Cartulary*, n° 90; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 710.
[204] Hugh Thomas, 'Vassals, Heiresses, Crusaders and Thugs: the Knightly Class of Angevin Yorkshire, 1154-1216', unpublished PhD thesis, Yale University, 1988, p. 154.
[205] *Cartulary*, n° 120; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 716; *Cartulary* n° 122.
[206] BL, MS Cotton Julius D I, f. 88v [f. 93v]; published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, n° 137.

Throughout the early 1230s, Robert Ingram, son of William, like his lord William de Ros and neighbour Richard de Sproxton, tried to reclaim the grants of his predecessors in East Heslerton. In 1232 the abbot sued Robert Ingram for thirty-one acres of land and a pasture for 500 sheep which the abbey held from his father in East Heslerton.[207] A year later in 1233 the abbot sued Robert for the same lands, the defendant did not come to the court and was attached to appear at the next hearing.[208] The sides met in the court again on 13 January 1234, but without any outcome.[209] The abbot sued again in late 1234 Robert Ingram for the common pasture in East Heslerton and thirty-one acres of land which was granted by his father William. Robert was accused not only of preventing the abbey's sheep from grazing on the common, but also of carrying away sixty-four bushels of corn from the abbey's field. Robert denied these charges, but the final verdict is unknown due to the damage of the roll.[210]

Despite this long-lasting conflict other members of the Ingram family continued giving grants to Rievaulx abbey. A sister of Robert Ingram, Ingelisa, married Philip Colville.[211] This brought another set of people into the contact with Rievaulx. Ingelisa's husband Philip granted to Rievaulx his land in Thimbleby, which was located at the exit of the vill, between the abbey's land (given by Robert de Lund) and the public road to the church of St Stephen. He also dropped any claims, which he had previously, to the lands granted to the abbey by Robert de Lund and Jordan Harum.[212]

The association of the Harum family with both Walter Espec and then tenurial links with the Ros family illustrates again the complexity of association between lay people and the abbey. Drew Harum witnessed among Walter's men in the 'foundation' charter, and also together with Walter Espec witnessed the charter of Odo de Boltby to Rievaulx abbey.[213] Then in 1166 Drew is reported to hold one knight's fee from Everard II de Ros.[214] Not only did he witness charters for Rievaulx abbey but he received a right to have a chantry in the chapel of Harome from Kirkham priory, another house in the Ros family's patronage.[215] Drew's son William witnessed numerous charters to Rievaulx abbey and also confirmed the grant of his ancestors of a meadow in

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[207] *CRR*, vol. 14, p. 519.
[208] *CRR*, vol. 15, p. 21.
[209] *CRR*, vol. 15, p. 50.
[210] *CRR*, vol. 15, p. 219.
[211] *EYC*, vol. 2, p. 59; John Lister, 'Ingleby Arnclife', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, 16 (1902), 154, she is identified there as a daughter of Robert's brother Thomas.
[212] Bodl., MS Dodsw. xciv f. 137v; published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, pp. 248-9.
[213] *Cartulary*, n° 76; between 1142 and 1145.
[214] *Red Book*, vol. 1, p. 432.
[215] Burton, *Kirkham Priory*, p. 14.

the territory of Harum. Among the witnesses appeared lord Peter de Ros.[216] Jordan de Harum, also witnessed a grant of his man Robert de Lund in Thimbleby, which the abbey held on the knightly service, and added meadow and a common pasture for 200 sheep in the same vill. He also promised, on his own behalf and his heirs, not to disturb the use of the pasture by the abbey.[217] This promised was not fulfilled and already in 1232 the abbot entered a plea against Jordan for four bovates of land and a pasture for 200 sheep in Thimbleby, which the abbot was entitled to hold according to his charter. As Jordan did not come to the court, he was attached to appear at a later date.[218] The parties were scheduled to appear in court in 1233, but not until the following year was the dispute drawn to its conclusion.[219] In May 1234 Jordan was sued by Roger abbot of Rievaulx for four bovates and nine acres of land and a pasture for 200 sheep in Thimbleby. This was resolved by a compromise. Jordan was allowed to keep Hayckedal wood belonging to the said four bovates. The land given to the abbey by Robert de Lund, which was previously held from him by Jordan was now held by the abbot in the extent of one knight's fee (four bovates and six carucates) and he was obliged to pay forinsec service. Jordan also gave to the abbey meadow which had been held by Eager Burdun and three acres of meadow which Phillip de Colvill, another benefactor of the abbey, had given him. In return the abbot quitclaimed all his rights to the common pasture in Thimbleby.[220]

From the discussion above, it is clear that the men of Walter Espec, who were close neighbours of the abbey, formed reoccurring groups of witnesses on the abbey's charters. Although their relationship with the house originated from the tenurial links with Walter Espec it was developed and sustained by the physical proximity of their own lands and abbey's estates. Espec's men such as Robert Sproxton, John Ingram and Drew Harum witnessed the foundation charter of Rievaulx abbey. From then on, the relationship between these families and the abbey continued to develop. Some individuals, for example Walter Ingram gave large pasture grants, but these families displayed varying degrees of generosity, which would indicates not only amount of land they disposed of, but also the levels of their attachment to Rievaulx abbey. Some individual acted very much in accordance to their tenurial connections, for example Drew Harum gave grants to both houses of the Ros family patronage. By the middle of

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[216] Bodl., MS Dodsw. vii f. 153v; published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, p. 236.
[217] Bodl., MS Dodsw. vii f. 96v; published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, p. 212.
[218] *CRR*, vol. 14, p. 519.
[219] *CRR*, vol. 15, p. 59.
[220] *Feet of Fines from 1232 to 1246*, p. 8.

the next century, however, these families show the same tendency to dispute predecessors' grants as do many other benefactors, while being a neighbour was likely to aggravate this situation.

The foundation of Rievaulx abbey by Walter Espec exemplified the role of the 'new men' in the expansion of the Cistercian order and the interdependence between the needs and expectations of the order and the patron's desires for the public display and conspicuous acknowledgment or their piety. Although Espec as a patron of the Cistercian houses had much less formal power over these institutions, Walter's actions towards Kirkham abbey shows that he had very clear ideas about the role of the patron. The lack of direct heirs broke the close relationship which developed between the founder and Rievaulx abbey. Although the majority of the patrons from the Ros family did perform basic duties towards the house, neither Robert I, Everard II nor Robert II showed any signs of personal interest or attachment to the abbey. The series of conflicts between Rievaulx and William de Ros in the mid-thirteenth century exemplified changing expectations of the noblemen and changing socio-economic conditions in the area. While patronage of a great Cistercian house gave public prestige, in a strange way the size and importance of the abbey might have been a deterrent for the patrons, particularly those who inherited patronage rights from more distant relatives, as in the case of the Ros family. A smaller and less important abbey might have been a more attractive object of patronage since it might provide more personal service and the patrons might have felt more significant when faced with a smaller abbey or priory than approaching a huge institution which had already accumulated large estates. Augustinian canons were a very popular order with a strong appeal to lay people. The canons provided prayers and commemoration, but in the contrast to the Cistercians, the order had much lower profile despite its popularity in the first half of the twelfth century. I am inclined to seek an answer for the peculiar relationship between Rievaulx and Ros family, in these issues of power. The Ros family chose the smaller and less spectacular Kirkham priory as their favourite house which was easier to control and whose economic interest did not overlap with those of the Ros family as much as did the interests of Rievaulx abbey. In the late fourteenth century when the status of the family was assured for more then a century, the splendid Cistercian church became a more appropriate outlet for their prestigious burials.

CHAPTER II
RIEVAULX ABBEY AND ITS LAY NEIGHBOURS

In this chapter the relationship of Rievaulx abbey with its neighbours and benefactors will be explored. Before doing so, an introductory part will present central problems of lay-monastic interactions with special reference to the non-patronal benefactors of Rievaulx and ways in which these interactions were expressed, in particular, fraternity and burial requests and the continuity of relationships between the abbey and its benefactors. Then, before moving on to the specific cases, the social stratification of Rievaulx's benefactors will be discussed. The central part of this chapter is divided into three parts. First, the aristocratic benefactors and neighbours are discussed, second those of the knightly rank, and third, the complexities of land holding and abbey's response to the grant giving are examined.

Among various groups of neighbours of the abbey lay people were the largest and the most diverse one. Similarly to the patronial group considered in the previous chapter, it consisted of families ranging from barons to the tenants of small plots. Identification of some individuals is uncertain due to the fragmentary sources and repetitiveness of first names. Particular families tended to use a very small pool of names and, to make this situation even more complicated, in the early thirteenth century when many families branched out into smaller units residing in different locations, most of them did not change their naming patterns and used the same small number of names. Unless such individuals used a place-name identifying their residence or specified relationship, it is often very difficult to distinguish between cousins.

The main sources for investigating interactions between Rievaulx and these neighbours are the same as those for the patrons: the cartulary of the abbey, charters and official records, mainly court-related such as Curia Regis Rolls, Feet of Fines, and Assize Rolls. These documents were produced in a certain context and for a particular reason and therefore tend to be partial in the number of ways. The court cases documentation was made externally, by a third party, and provides information for only one stage of the process, usually the final period of a conflict between the abbey and individuals. Because of the legal nature of the most of the written documents the amount of information is larger for conflict than for cooperation. Peaceful, everyday coexistence between Rievaulx abbey and its neighbours left very little, if any, trace in the sources. This is true with other groups analyzed in my work, such as other monastic houses or bishops, but the overall volume of information concerning lay donors is larger

than for any other group of neighbours and it is important to indicate that it was distorted.

There was a variety of reasons for contacts and many types of interactions. They can be divided somehow artificially, into two groups. First, there were interactions related to the spiritual mission of the abbey, that is pertinent to the fact that Rievaulx was a Cistercian monastery, and that the lay people donated lands in exchange for the spiritual benefits. Secondly, there were interactions related to the economic activities of the abbey, that is resultant from the fact that Rievaulx abbey was a large landowner and therefore the monks and lay people had to negotiate terms of land holding and their subsequent contacts as neighbours.

These two groups of reasons were by no means separate and people would have and did interact with the abbey on both levels simultaneously. Cistercians, in contrast to many other orders, insisted on removing their land from secular obligations and this led to complex negotiations between religious houses and their lay neighbours. Despite Cistercian regulations concerning grants in free alms it was often not possible to secure such and the Cistercian monks routinely accepted land with 'feudal' obligations. The earliest examples of such donations to Rievaulx abbey come from 1150s, but some houses, for example Mortemer in Normandy received land in feudal tenure as early as 1146, ten years after its foundation.[1] But the majority of the grants recorded in Rievaulx's cartulary, similar to those made to Fountains abbey, were made with the clause providing freedom from all services.[2] Out of the total of 133 charters of grants from lay people in the cartulary, 105 contain this clause (80%). Among the remaining charters which specify payments of the services, the majority does not actually specify the type of service which the abbey was liable to pay. The annual amount varied between as little as twelve pence up to two mark, the most common being the upper limit paid in two yearly installments.

Motivations for the lay gifts from families other than the patrons were similar to the patrons, as discussed in the first chapter, and may appear in the formulae of donation charters. The Cistercian Order as a new, more spiritually viable order was able to provide better service and more effective prayers. This in turn brought more land from other people who were attracted by the fame of the abbey and therefore encouraged by

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[1] Philip F. Gallagher, 'Conditions of land tenure and their religious implications', in *Studies in Medieval Cistercian History*, vol. 2, ed. John R. Sommerfeldt (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1976), p. 113.

[2] Joan Wardrop, *Fountains Abbey and its Benefactors 1132-1300* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1987), p. 31.

the promise of more effective salvation. In that way, Rievaulx abbey was able to establish initial links with its surroundings.

Although Cistercians initially rejected donations in the form of manors, rents, mills, churches and tithes, that is income from the work of others, they did not object to the donations of land from lay people in return for the prayers. The basic economic assumption of the Benedictine monasteries was retained, Cistercian monks accepted 'the fundamental premise that their economic foundation depended on their possession of property rights and their ability to pray for others'.[3] Among the 147 charters of grants copied into Rievaulx cartulary, ninety-seven have a phrase *pro anima* (69.9%), but the explicit requests for prayers were rare. Some modern historians interpret these phrases as implying prayers, even if only as the cumulative prayers for all the benefactors of the house.[4] This may be true, although the spiritual benefit of the grant came not only from the prayers of the monks, but more fundamentally from the grant itself, that is, donating property to the religious institution was a good work in itself.

Besides this basic assumptions of monk-lay interactions there are very few indications of more complex religious connections between Rievaulx and its benefactors. Among the 147 entries in the cartulary, there are only four cases of counter-gifts and four cases of fraternity request.[5] It is likely therefore that the low level of document survival has distorted this number. Among the fifty-three charters of lay people to Rievaulx abbey, from the late twelfth and the first half of thirteenth centuries copied in the Dodsworth MSS there are two further fraternity requests and one explicit supplication for a burial.[6] In comparison, only four benefactors of Byland abbey requested fraternity rights for themselves and their families, but several benefactors of Sallay abbey made such requests. In the case of this last house, the fraternity and burial requests outnumbered by far any monetary requests. There are also examples of such requests from Nostell, Guisborough, Pontefract, Easby, Watton, Kirkstall and Fountains.[7] In light of this comparison, it seems that these low numbers do not represent a true figure for the fraternity admittance at Rievaulx abbey, which might have been done verbally in a public ceremony. Besides, many Cistercian houses placed names of benefactors in the *necrologium*, of which there is no record at Rievaulx abbey. There are

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[3] Newman, *The Boundaries of Charity*, p. 71.
[4] Wardrop, *Fountains Abbey*, p. 242.
[5] Counter-gifts: *Cartulary*, n° 75, 90, 231, 239; fraternity requests: n° 49, 88, 181, 185.
[6] Fraternity requests: Bodl, MS Dodsw. vii, f. 134v; Dodsw. viii, f. 89; burial request: Dodsw. viii, f. 117v.
[7] Burton, 'Origins and development', pp. 186, 224, 342.

clear references that such a volume existed at Fountains, therefore it is very likely that Rievaulx also had one, but that it perished with the majority of its archive.[8]

Necrologium was an important means of commemorating monastic benefactors and a way in which their connections with the religious houses were documented. One of the best examples of such books is the *necrologium* from the Cistercian house in Heinrichau (Silesia) created between the last quarter of the thirteenth and the mid-sixteenth century, partly a narrative sources and party a list. The aim of this codex was to preserve the memory of the abbey's benefactors and to keep records for the purpose of prayers on the anniversary of their death. These people continued their association with the abbey as the 'community of dead'. The earlier parts of this record, based on the recollections of the oldest members of the monastic community, were also intended as a tool against the claims of disgruntled descendants, who wanted to snatch lands given by their ancestors.[9] Hence, the commemorative and practical aspects of the relationship with their benefactors were intertwined for the monks of Heinrichau.

Admittance into a fraternity meant, in the most general sense, that such an individual would share all the spiritual benefits of prayers and masses performed for him or her in a given house in perpetuity.[10] The concept of fraternity was significantly developed by the Cluniac order and is often thought to be one of main reasons for the popularity of this order among lay people, monks of other orders and secular clergy who entered into confraternity with Cluniac houses. The bond within the confraternity was personal and vertical, with each member benefiting from the prayers of the monks.[11] The Cistercian order, in contrast, placed much less emphasis on prayers, but did not abolish the confraternity system. Instead of countless prayers for individuals Cistercian order introduced a type of cumulative payers for the benefactors across the order on 20 November of each year. Many houses kept lists of special friends of the order to be commemorated in that way.[12]

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[8] Wardrop, *Fountains Abbey*, p. 244.
[9] *Księga Henrykowska*, ed. Roman Grodecki (Poznań: Instutut Zachodni, 1949), p. 29; Rościsław Żelik, 'Wspólnota zmarłych w świetle najstarszych wpisów do Nekrologu Henrykowskiego', in *Klasztor w społeczeństwie średniowiecznym i nowożytnym*, ed. M. Derwich, A. Pobóg-Lenartowicz (Opole - Wrocław: LARHKOR, 1996), pp. 199-209.
[10] H.E.J. Cowdrey, 'Unions and confraternity with Cluny', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 16 (1965), 154.
[11] Cowdrey, 'Unions and confraternity', p. 162.
[12] Joachim Wollasch, 'Die mittelalterliche Lebensform der Verbrüderung', in *Memoria. Der geschichtliche Zeugniswert des liturgischen Gedenkens im Mittelalter*, ed. Karl Schmid, Joachim Wollasch, Münstersche Mittelalter-Schriften vol. 48 (München: Wilhelm Fink, 1984), pp. 229-30.

The low numbers, only two, of the pre-1300 pittances on the anniversary of the donor's death at Rievaulx abbey are again unusual.[13] Cistercian houses commonly accepted this type of gift.[14] It is therefore very likely that this low number is a result of losses sustained by the abbey's archive and the real number of pittances was much higher.

The second group of interactions resulting from the landowning status of the abbey was in a way a byproduct of the spiritual services and grants given to the house. With the enlargements of its estates Rievaulx came into contact with an ever growing group of people who become its neighbours, or in most cases, neighbours of the monastic granges. The necessity of accumulating the amount of land which would support the community of monks was the natural requirement of the land-based economy, but very soon this necessity was transformed into the desire for growth and expansion. The initial stage of the community existence, which was centered very strongly on the other-worldly purposes, inevitably turned into a more structured and practical stage when the institutional and practical framework of the monastic house reached a certain maturity. From then onwards, the practical consideration for the sustenance of the community and the physical aspects of the abbey's existence, such as building maintenance, food provisions and daily running cost forced this house to act as any other landowner interested in maintaining a successful estate in order to support large numbers of people, and to finance costly building projects. It is therefore very easy to confuse rational (in the modern sense of the word) economic expectations and actions with irrational (also in the modern sense) religious ideology; as the grant to the monastery was in fact a grant to God, the abbey should be interested in the endless expansion of its properties as a part of their pious mission and a visible sign of the religiously endorsed prosperity; on the other hand, expansion was also motivated by purely economic reasons.[15]

Even more than in the case of the abbey's contact with patrons, their relatives and associates, Rievaulx faced, in its interactions with neighbours and benefactors, not only individuals, but predominantly families and already existing networks of tenants and their lords. Tenants customarily donated grants to the monastic houses which were

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[13] BL, Egerton Charter 2247; *Cartulary*, n° 47.

[14] David Postles, 'Lamps, lights and layfolk: 'popular' devotion before the Black Death', *Journal of Medieval History* 25 (1999), 110, n. 90.

[15] The same idea of connection between economic and religious elements in the monasticism is expressed in Jack Goody, *The European Family: An Historico-Anthropological Essay* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), p. 40

already benefiting from the generosity of their lords. Similarly marriages between families brought people into contact with monasteries which they had not previously supported. Therefore information about formal and informal connections between people interacting with the abbey, current and potential donors, was crucial for the effectiveness of the abbey's efforts to acquire further properties. This knowledge of the abbey's neighbourhood was preserved in the structure of information in the cartulary, which, in turn, allows us to examine the abbey's perception of its neighbours.

The grant of a property, regardless of its size which might range from half of a carucate to whole manors, was not an action confined, in time, to the actual transmission of property from the hands of one owner to another. A grant created, in the great majority of cases, a continuum, that is a relationship between the donor and grantor which lasted for more than one generation. On the religious level, for donors as well as founders, the spiritual benefits of the grants were intended to last for generations, both past and those to come. One of the most common formulae used in these charters, not just in the foundation charters, 'for salvation of my soul and all my ancestors and heirs' expresses this wish. The act of giving was therefore a bridge between generations, an act performed not between an individual and a monastery, but between kin, a community of relatives, dead, living and not yet born, and the religious house. This concept of continuity was pertinent not only to the spiritual services offered by the abbey but also to the holding of the land given to the monastery, yet in practice this continuity was often questioned.

Because of the nature of landholding, disputes over possession were very common, and a grant alone, without hope for its continued confirmation and protection, was worth much less. Apart from practical and legal considerations, the participation of the whole family in a grant of a property, and the consent of the heirs, was also an important expression of family solidarity, which was often reinforced after the death of the original grantor. 'The son who did not confirm his father's gift was sinning not only against God, the saints, and the Church, but also against his father.'[16] Yet any alienation of family property created potential conflict.

> If a son acted ill by disinheriting his father of his heavenly inheritance, his father acted ill by depriving his heir of an earthly one. He did so if he alienated too much of the family land, particularly if the gift was made for reduced or no worldly service.[17]

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[16] John Hudson, *Land, Law, and Lordship in Anglo-Norman England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), p. 189.

[17] Hudson, *Land*, p. 192.

As we will see below, Rievaulx abbey had to struggle with many dissatisfied heirs, who clearly did not fear spiritual punishment for their attempts to reclaim the gifts of their fathers and grandfathers.

There are two types of documents which expressed continuity of acceptance of a grant, that is confirmation and quitclaims, but each of them has different emphasis. Confirmations were more common, but less secure than quitclaims because persons giving them, merely approved of their predecessors' donations, while retailing the claim to the property. Whilst quitclaim gave a complete transfer of all the rights to a given property, it was not necessarily created as a result of conflict.[18] Sometimes the wording of the charters give some hints to the circumstances of the quitclaims and often these acts were performed publicly with great solemnity.

Another important point, which needs to be addressed before analysis of particular cases, is the position occupied within the social hierarchy by the people who gave lands to Rievaulx. The first problem comes with the terminology. There is no agreement between historians about the use of the terms nobility, knights, aristocracy. They are used to denote various social groups, or rather denote historians' understanding of the stratification of the medieval society.[19] It would not be appropriate here to give a full historiography of the problem, but it is necessary to indicate some important standpoints circulating presently in the literature in relation to this social group in twelfth-century England. Finally it will be explained how these terms are used in the present work.

In her most recent book, *The Aristocracy of Norman England*, Judith A. Green defines the term aristocracy as reflecting 'the particular combination of birth, wealth, and power found in England after 1066 which other terms fail to convey'.[20] Although this term is ahistorical, and was not used by contemporaries, it reflects more than just legal position, but also more elusive characteristics such as aspirations, lifestyle and connections with other families of high standing. Green uses the term noble in a

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[18] Raymond V. Lavoie, Jr., 'English Monasteries' Techniques for Avoiding Property Disputes, 1250-1380', *Comitatus* 23 (1992), 49-52.

[19] There is an ever growing bibliography of literature devoted to various aspects of European nobility in the middle ages. Among the recent publications see: *Nobles and nobility in medieval Europe: concept, origins, transformations*, ed. Anne J. Duggan (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2000); *Cults of power: lordship, status and process in the twelfth century Europe*, ed. Thomas Bisson (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995).

[20] Green, *Aristocracy*, p. 7.

relatively narrow sense of the upper sections of the aristocracy, that is earls or sons of earls and as an indication of social distinction, not only wealth.[21]

In contrast, Robert Bartlett in his new study, *England Under the Norman and Angevin Kings 1075-1225*, follows a different route, concentrating on the legal aspects. He also disregards the use of term nobility as a useful social category in medieval context:

> [T]here was technically no noble class in England in this period. Although there were earls, barons, and knights — all of whom it is certainly sensible to regard as aristocrats — there was no unified group of nobles with privileges that marked them off from the rest of the population. The sharpest line, and one that was etched more deeply and clearly as a consequence of the changes in the judicial system under the Angevins, was that between freeman and villein. But there was no distinct and significant line between noble and freeman.[22]

David Crouch, on the other hand, avoids the term nobility, not because of legal distinctions, but due to its ambiguity, meaning chiefly free status, good descent, and personal qualities, as it was used in this vague sense by contemporary sources. Aristocrats were of course noble but possessed also titles and dignity which were seen as a mark setting them apart from this broader group of noblemen.[23] Knights have been perceived by the contemporaries as a separate *ordo*, distinguished by the free status and military pursuits. 'What the knight *was* did not give him much status, but what the knight *did* gave a man a sort of glamour.'[24] Knights were by no means a homogeneous group and the status of individuals and the scale of their landholding was varied.[25] In the twelfth century their life-style and expectations, particularly those of the wealthier knights, came closer to those of aristocrats and this also included grants to religious houses.[26]

Following Crouch's definition, the term aristocracy is used in this thesis to denote the upper group of nobility distinguished by their position, for example offices and wealth. The term nobility, contrary to Green and Bartlett's understanding, indicates here more than just legal rights and economic and political power, but also lifestyle and aspirations, therefore it covers aristocracy, barons and the upwardly mobile individuals

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[21] Green, *Aristocracy*, pp. 8-9.
[22] Robert Bartlett, *England Under the Norman and Angevin Kings 1075-1225* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), p. 207.
[23] Crouch, *Image*, pp. 2-23.
[24] Crouch, *Image*, p. 124.
[25] Peter Coss, *The Knight in Medieval England 1000-1400* (Dover, NH: Alan Sutton, 1993), p. 11.
[26] Crouch, *Image,* pp. 24-5.

who increasingly accumulated land and displayed elements of the behaviour and lifestyle of those above them. Below this group was a stratum of wealthy knights, some of whom broke through to the baronial group. The lesser knights and free men who were tenants of the greater men occupied a lower position and they appeared usually in the sources in the context of their lords, for example in the witness lists.

Therefore, while discussing formal and informal ties between the social strata from which the benefactors of Rievaulx abbey came, it is convenient to use the term affinity introduced by Crouch in the context of the twelfth century society. Many tenants held land from several lords, but followed only one of them. This link to a particular lord was often motivated by the common interest, not necessarily ties of homage. Many of the lords' followers did not hold any substantial lands or offices, but nevertheless were counted as 'their men'. These informal links, which contributed to the power of barons, without being grounded in the legal framework of the honorial system, should be called affinity.[27] Although the honorial system was the most important manifestation of local power, other informal structures, such as locality and neighbourhood played a crucial role in social organization.[28] The natural centres of such communities were great abbeys, large trading centres and, comparatively more ephemeral, the powers of the great barons. Ultimately, in Crouch's interpretation, the social organization of twelfth and thirteenth century England was not based in reality on the geography of honours, counties and fees, but the power in each region was sought by an individual who was dominant enough to control it and built around himself a network of followers and tenants.[29] This fluidity of power among the aristocracy of the Anglo-Norman England had an impact on the religious houses supported by them. A sudden shift of power could, and often did, influence the material security of the abbey. The specific case of the Mowbrays and Stutevilles related to Rievaulx abbey will be discussed later in this chapter.[30]

Although the social structure of twelfth and thirteenth century Yorkshire was by no means fixed, it is possible to distinguish two broad groups among the benefactors of Rievaulx abbey — aristocrats and knights — who played important, but different roles as benefactors and neighbours. The first part of this chapter is therefore devoted to the

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[27] David Crouch, *The Reign of King Stephen, 1135-1154* (Harlow: Longman, 2000), p. 166.
[28] Peter Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood and Locality: A Study in English Society, c. 1180-1280* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 8.
[29] David Crouch, 'From Stenton to McFarlane: Models of Societies of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Sixth Series 5 (1995), 194.
[30] See pp. 80-2, 105.

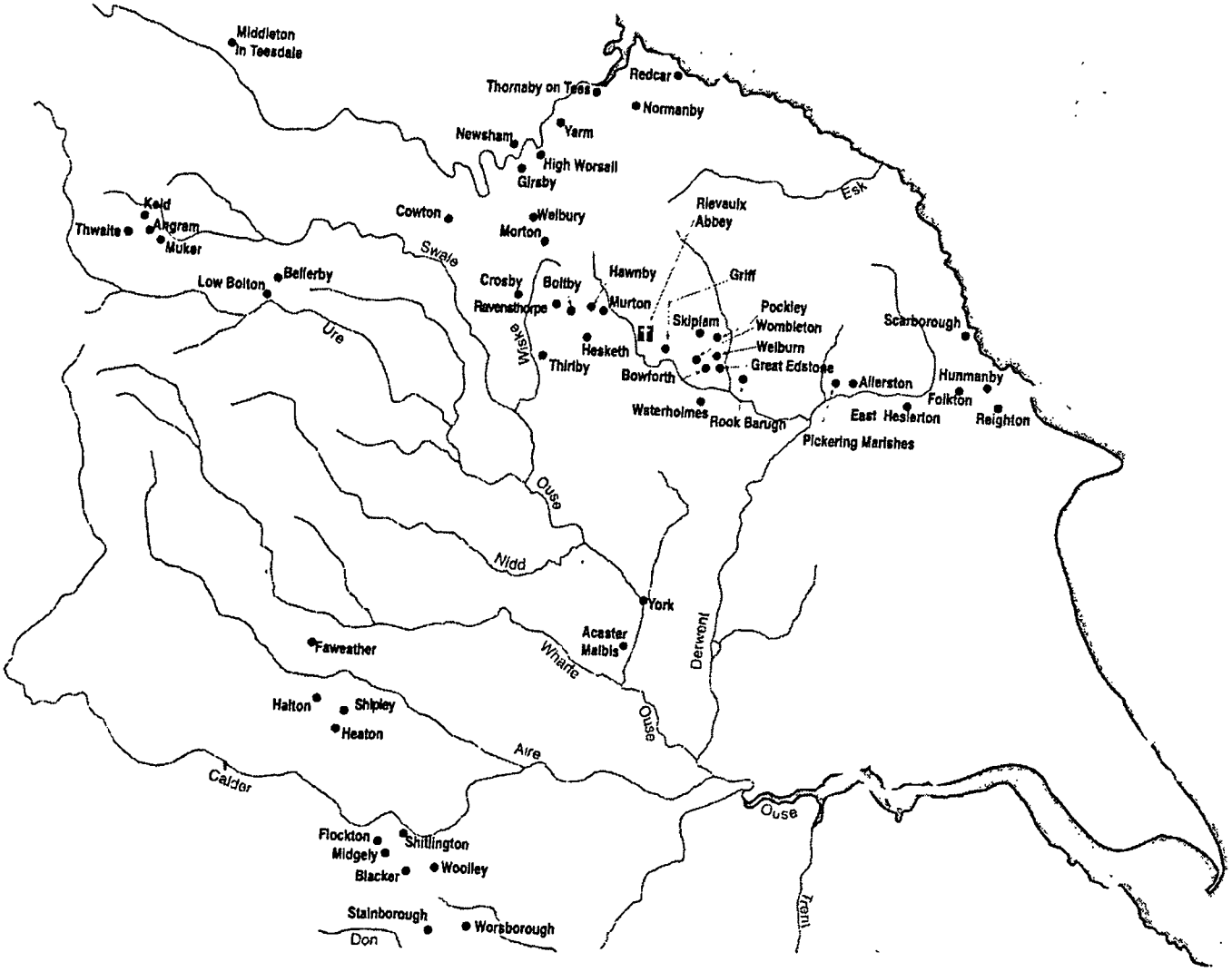
analysis of the interactions between Rievaulx and members of the top social stratum as well as their men, holders of the fees and tenants. The second part is concerned with those knightly families, who held land from the lords, but who, as benefactors of Rievaulx abbey, should be considered in their own right due to the scale and importance of their interactions.

A. ARISTOCRATIC FAMILIES AND RIEVAULX ABBEY

The analysis of Rievaulx's donors will begin with the aristocratic families who became benefactors of the abbey. In comparison to Fountains abbey, Rievaulx did not attract a large number of benefactors from the top ranks of the aristocracy, and only one family — the Mowbrays — gave substantial amounts of land. These people from the highest ranks of the society were particularly significant in the formative years of the abbey. Aristocrats were important, not only because they could afford to be generous more than anybody else, but their powerful position could bring further benefits. The example of many of the aristocratic benefactors of Rievaulx abbey encouraged their tenants to give grants to this house. On the other hand such powerful individuals could put a lot of pressure on the monastery, alienate parts of its land or cause other damages and it was not easy for the abbey to find locally suitably strong protection to counterbalance the power of the aristocrats. When Rievaulx abbey experienced many conflicts with its powerful benefactors towards the end of the twelfth century, the monks had to seek papal protection against them.

In the first half of the twelfth century, the political and social make-up of Yorkshire stabilised, and several leading families, who were holding large honours from the king established their own networks of knightly tenants, members of their retinue and honorial officials. Among these families were the Mowbrays, Stutevilles, Gants, Lacys, Bruses and Aumâles. Some of them became benefactors of Rievaulx and played a significant role in the history of this institution, while those who for various reasons did not have any interest in Rievaulx abbey, were patrons and benefactors of many other religious houses.

THE ESTATES OF RIEVAULX ABBEY (based on Janet Burton, 1998)



1. THE MOWBRAY AND STUTEVILLE FAMILIES AND THEIR TENURIAL GROUPS

The most important benefactors of aristocratic status to Rievaulx abbey were, without doubt, the Mowbray family who donated large amounts of land in the early stages of Rievaulx's development. They also encouraged and influenced their numerous tenants to give land. The generosity displayed by the Mowbrays was particularly valuable for Rievaulx abbey since descendants of the original patrons were very reluctant to donate land.

The Mowbray family played, for many generations, a very considerable role in Yorkshire's social and religious development. They supported numerous monastic institutions over several generations and the pattern of their actions illustrates well how patronage developed and changed in the course of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The rise and fall of the Mowbrays' fortune and the individual careers of family members had a significant impact on their attitude towards religious houses. Monasteries were aware of these implications and had to respond to the changing status of their benefactors. A closer look at the careers of the Mowbrays and Stutevilles illustrates the opportunities and problems for Rievaulx abbey which association with these people could bring.

The family fortune of the Mowbrays was established by Nigel d'Aubigny. Although Nigel was only the younger son of Roger d'Aubigny, himself a small Norman landowner, with no rights to the family inheritance, he became a frequent member of the royal court as one of the most prominent and rewarded among the new men of Henry I, alongside Walter Espec. As a loyal supporter of Henry I, he was granted some of the extensive lands of Robert de Stuteville, who was on the side of Robert Curthose, after the battle of Tinchebrai in 1106. Other Stuteville lands near Thirsk were granted to Nigel much later, but clearly before 1114. Nigel's continued service to the king was also rewarded by the additional grant of the Norman lands of Robert de Mowbray, the Earl of Northumberland through his marriage of Robert's divorced wife Maud. He assumed the name of Mowbray after the Montbrai estate and subsequently received six lordships in the north. Later he divorced his wife, claiming that they were too closely related, but kept the lands and married in 1118 Gundreda de Gournay who outlived him.[31] From about the time of his second marriage Nigel was a local justiciar for Yorkshire and Northumberland, but he also remained a member of the royal court. His son and heir

[31] *Peerage,* vol. 9, pp. 367-9; *Charters of Mowbray*, p. xviii, xxiv.

Roger de Mowbray was still a child at the time of his father's death in 1129. The large estates which Roger inherited were spread over Yorkshire, Lincolnshire and the Midlands with the castle of Axholme as their centre. In 1166 these estates consisted of sixty fees which had already existed when the lands were taken over by Nigel d'Aubigny. He acquired an additional twenty-eight fees, and his son Roger de Mowbray a further eleven and three-quarters.[32] An estate of nearly 100 fees put them amongst the wealthiest families in England. The young Roger participated in the Battle of Standard in 1138, alongside Walter Espec, on the side of the barons loyal to the English king Stephen.[33] He did not join other northern barons, such as Eustace Fitz-John who took the side of Kind David, and remained Stephen's supporter and a frequent member of his court.

The Mowbrays were one of the most influential families not only in Yorkshire, but also in the whole country and their political ambitions were national, not local. However, the economic basis of their power was located in Yorkshire and any shift in their economic and political power was likely to affect monasteries located there. The likely source of inspiration for Roger's grants to the various monasteries was his mother Gundreda, a prolific patron of monasteries throughout the north of England. Mother and son together took care of the monks from Calder escaping from the Scots in 1138 and granted them land in Old Byland. In 1147 Roger re-founded this monastery on the new site.[34] In 1145 he founded the Augustinian priory at Newburgh. Rievaulx abbey was another recipient of his grants together with a further twenty-one monastic houses: Bridlington, Burton Lazars, Combe, Fountains, Furness, Saint Andre-en-Gouffern (arr. Caen), Hirst, Jervaulx, Malton, Newstead, Nostell, North Ormsby, Pipewell, Selby, Welford, Whitby, Vaudey, Villers-Canivet (arr. Caen), St Leonard's York, St Mary's York, and St Peter's York, and also the Hospitallers and Templars.[35] His generosity to monastic houses was matched with his enthusiasm for the crusades. He took part in the second crusade of 1147 and upon his return he granted lands to the Templars in Balshall (Warwickshire), Axholme and other places, and founded a hospital for lepers in Burton (Leicestershire). This interest in crusading was typical for his time. After all, Robert II de Ros, Rievaulx abbey's patron directed more pious gifts to Knights Templar than to the Cistercian house.

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[32] Green, *Aristocracy*, p. 166.
[33] Aelred, 'Relatio de Standardo', pp. 184-5.
[34] For details see p. 168
[35] Green, *Aristocracy*, p. 419.

An important turn in Roger's fortune came after 1154 when eight of his fees were given by King Henry II to Robert III de Stuteville. The Stutevilles had become royal supporters and the King rewarded them with a re-grant of their ancestral lands.[36] This arbitrary act of the ruler influenced the fortunes of several Yorkshire houses, including Rievaulx. Roger's fortune changed even further after he and his two sons Nigel and Robert, frustrated with the renewed political and material rise of the Stuteville family, joined young Henry against the King in 1173.[37] When Henry and the rebels were defeated, the Mowbrays escaped to Scotland, and Roger's castles in Thirsk and Kirkby Moorside were captured and subsequently destroyed. In July 1176 he surrendered with other rebels to the King and was pardoned, but had to give back more of his lands to Robert de Stuteville. This was an significant set-back for Roger and the beginning of the long standing conflict between these two families, which subsequently caused problems for the monastic houses which received grants from the Mowbray family, including Rievaulx. It is likely that Roger went on the crusade in 1177 and returned a year later. In 1185 he went again on crusade to Jerusalem, but was captured at the Battle of Hattin on 4 July 1187. The Templars paid for his release but Roger died before returning to England, in the same year as did his wife Alice de Gant.[38]

Nigel, his older son, who succeeded him, was already politically active during his father's life, had taken over the family's Norman lands in 1172 and joined his father in the rebellion of 1173. Nigel too was a crusader, which brought him further disaster. He went with King Richard on the crusade and died at Acre in 1191. His wife Mabel outlived him and died about 1203.[39]

Their son William, who succeeded his father to the Mowbray estates continued to be politically active, but remained under pressure from the Stutevilles' claims. His family fortune was seriously threatened when William de Stuteville (the great-grandson of Robert whose lands after Tinchebrai were given to Nigel d'Aubigny great-grandfather of William de Mowbray) claimed his right to certain lands in 1200. According to the settlement reached by Mowbray and Stuteville, the latter received twelve liberates of land in Bricklow (Warwickshire) and the service of nine knights augmenting ten knightly fees which Robert de Stuteville had held from William. Another loss for the family came in 1204 when the whole of Normandy was taken by the French king and

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[36] Green, *Aristocracy*, p. 166.
[37] *Charters of Mowbray*, pp. xxix-xxx.
[38] *DNB*, vol. 39, pp. 227-30; *Peerage*, vol. 9, pp. 269-72.
[39] *Peerage*, pp. 372-3.

the Mowbrays lost all their property there, as William remained loyal to King John. However, during the later rebellion against John, William joined the rebel barons and was among the twenty-five barons appointed to oversee the implementation of Magna Carta. Because William continued his opposition to King John he was in consequence excommunicated by pope Innocent III and his lands were forfeited. Only after he was captured at the Battle of Lincoln in May 1217 and subsequently returned to the side of King Henry III were his lands restored to him. In 1223 William's property was again forfeit because William failed to accompany the King on the Welsh expedition, but this was only a temporary measure, and William's land was restored to him at the end of the same year.

Just like previous generations of the Mowbray family, William too was a benefactor of many monastic houses other than Rievaulx. His charters were however mainly confirmations of his predecessors' grants and his main object of benefaction and pious interest was Fountains abbey, where he was finally buried.[40] He died in March 1223-24 and the barony was inherited by his son Nigel de Mowbray and upon his death in October 1240 by his brother Roger. In the late 1250s Roger participated in the Welsh expeditions and during the early stages of the conflict between Henry III and the barons Roger was on the king's side. He died in 1266.[41] Although William's sons continued to be active political figures, their interest in the patronage of monastic houses was now diminishing. Roger confirmed several charters of his father to the various monasteries, but did not give any additional land.

The actions of these subsequent generations of Mowbrays, their religious foundations, grants to numerous houses, as well as their participation in the crusades indicate their strongly conventional piety. All these pursuits had a high visibility factor, which helped the Mowbrays to maintain signs of their social status, even if in reality their position was under considerable pressure. From this brief look at the political careers of the several generations of the Mowbray family, it can be seen that the scale and scope of their activities was far wider than Yorkshire. They were, indeed, far more important than Rievaulx's founder, Espec, and the heirs and descendents of Nigel d'Aubigny were active in the top stratum of the political élite. William de Mowbray did not hesitate to challenge King John, although, as his misfortunes shows, his personal and family fortune was very much tied to royal generosity and patronage.

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[40] Wardrop, *Fountains Abbey*, pp. 151-2; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 99-104.
[41] *Peerage*, vol. 9, pp. 375-6.

Although later generations of the Mowbrays were not generous, monastic foundations were a significant element in the political and social rise of the earlier generations in the first half of the twelfth century. Their donations were important to them as one of the expressions of their social status, but to the monasteries their protection and patronage was not only important, but crucial for continued successful existence. If grantors lost power, or were in any way weaker than their rivals, this could seriously threaten monastic possession. In this particular case, the Mowbray-Stuteville conflict had a significant impact on Rievaulx abbey which had to struggle to keep some of the lands belonging to the Mowbray fee. Similarly, Fountains abbey lost some of the Mowbray's grants which were successfully claimed by William de Stuteville.[42] Sudden changes on the baronial level often had an impact on religious houses. Sometimes people who succeeded to particular lands by royal will continued the benefactions of their predecessors to whom they were not related. Hugh de Laval, who succeeded the Lacy family in the honour of Pontefract in 1118 supported Pontefract and Nostell priories, but his successor William Maltravers was openly hostile to these institutions.[43] The security of the grant might be challenged not only by the heir of the original benefactor, but also as in the case of Rievaulx abbey, by somebody who was in a conflict with the donor or his heirs. The complexity of land holding and the dominance of possession over ownership meant that once the over-lord changed, the position of the previously secure grant, and the monastery's possession, might be endangered. Once the Stutevilles received parts of their lands back from the Mowbrays they reversed some of the donations to the ecclesiastical institutions made by the Mowbrays during the time when they controlled the land. It is often suggested in the literature, that the foundation of the monastery was 'a tried and tested method of consolidating power in the areas of territorial dispute or doubtful political allegiance'.[44] The foundation of some of the Cistercian houses in the newly Christianised areas of Pomerania, for example the foundation of Dargun abbey (Mecklenburg), was linked to Danish attempts to secure control over Slavonic territories, against Brandenburgian claims.[45] In more stable areas, such as Yorkshire, behind-the-scene control of monastic property by the patron or donor could have been more effective in times of serious crisis than a direct possession. If the

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[42] *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 10, 157, 158, 126, 129, 132, 161; *Charters of Mowbray*, p. xxviii, n.6; *Charters of Fountains*, vol. 1, n° 215.
[43] W. E. Wightman, *The Lacy family in England and Normandy 1066-1194* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 67-71.
[44] Dalton, *Conquest,* p. 135; Burton, 'Foundation', p. 35.
[45] Reimann, 'A Cistercian foundation', pp. 7-8.

property given to the abbey was subsequently claimed by the third party, it was an attack on a religious institution, with all the spiritual consequence, not on an individual. In reality, as the case of Rievaulx abbey suggests, the misfortune or loss of political influence of the protector would directly influence the security of the abbey holdings since many barons did not hesitate to grab land back. While protection from powerful patrons or benefactors were desired, their political fall might bring immediate loss to religious houses.

Not only political power mattered; the physical location of a religious house in relation to the lands of local barons also had a fundamental impact on the range and volume of grants. One of the smaller Cistercian abbey in Yorkshire, Jervaulx (formerly a Savignac house) was located within the lands of the earls of Richmond and never managed to procure substantial donations from other lords apart from Richmond and Roger de Mowbray. Similarly the benefactors of Sallay abbey were restricted almost exclusively to the Percy fee. [46] In that sense diversity of neighbors was very desirable because it could potentially bring further grants and prevent the monastery from being dependant on one family or one tenurial group.

The comparison between Roger and Nigel Mowbray reveals how over two generations the pattern of the patrons' behaviour changed. Roger was the founder and patron of Byland abbey and Newburgh priory and the generous benefactor of several other Yorkshire houses. His son Nigel mainly reconfirmed or restored his predecessors grants.[47] This change is even more striking in the next generation. William de Mowbray represented another generation of benefactors, who were much more reluctant than their fathers and grandfathers to alienate any more land from the family inheritance.

> Rather than continuing in his predecessors' footsteps and granting lands and rights to the house, he became to a certain extent its protector, confirming earlier grants and acting as a witness to other of the houses's transactions at a time when the status of a witness and his potential for protecting a particular agreement was becoming ever more important, while yet being assiduous in the protection of his own rights.[48]

The transformation of the Mowbrays' behaviour as benefactors was in part due to the general shift in the patterns of aristocratic patronage over religious houses and growing restraint against any further alienation of land.[49] It was also, in part, the result of the

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[46] Burton, 'Origins and development', pp. 200, 226.
[47] *Charters of Mowbray*, p. xli.
[48] Wardrop, *Fountains Abbey*, p. 146.
[49] For the discussion of this issue see p. 104.

unstable fortune of the Mowbrays and their struggle to retain family land claimed by the Stutevilles.

As with Rievaulx's patrons, so with its other donors, a very important aspect of the relationship between monastery and baron was the network of people and institutions which quickly formed around it. A baron, such as Roger de Mowbray encouraged his fee holders and tenants to offer their own grants to the abbey and protected the abbey's holdings from the people attempting to reclaim these grants. A lord's court was a place to settle such cases. Rievaulx used this channel and brought some of the cases against its neighbours to Roger's arbitration.

A closer analysis of the Mowbray charters in the abbey's cartulary illustrates how important this family was for Rievaulx. The majority of Mowbray charters in the cartulary are grouped in the early, prominent part of the volume, in two clusters: from n° 55 to n° 71, close to the patrons' charters (charters of Gundreda and Roger de Mowbray) and from n° 153 to n° 157 (charters of Roger and Nigel Mowbray). The creators of the cartulary considered the Mowbray's charters as very important ones and linked them 'spatially' with the charters of their tenants also copied in the cartulary. It is important to point out that the grants and confirmations of the three generations of the Mowbray family greatly outnumber those of the Ros family — the actual patrons of the abbey.

As mentioned above, the patronage of Rievaulx abbey was introduced to the Mowbray family by Gundreda, wife of Nigel d'Aubigny in the crucial early stage of the abbey's development. She was a benefactor of many monastic houses, including Rievaulx's closest neighbour — Byland. During her widowhood, between c. 1138 and 1143 Gundreda granted to Rievaulx a part of her demesne in Welburn in the western part of the Vale of Pickering, a common pasture and a meadow there called 'Gildelmsdale'.[50] A few years later, between 1144 and 1154, this grant was augmented by the donation of her demesne in Skiplam and the property of her and her son, being a part of their fee, between the vills of Welburn, Wombelton and Fadmoor. She reserved her rights and those of her men of Welburn to the common pasture and the right to collect fire-wood and materials for building. Gundreda added also an important clause of confirmation of any grant, sale or exchange made by her men of Welburn to the abbey.[51] This indicates that Gundreda encouraged her tenants to give more land to the abbey, even if it meant a financial loss to herself. This gesture went further than the

[50] *Cartulary*, n° 56.

standard approach of the majority of the benefactors. Many lords would confirm grants of their tenants, but giving a blanket permission was an act of very positive encouragement. Gundreda's tenants could give plots of land to Rievaulx abbey without her further permission in each individual case, which streamlined the process. Such clauses were significant for the further expansion of the abbey's property and could provide a large number of small but useful grants, which would round off the larger plots of land given by her. Indeed Gundreda's grant in Welburn was the beginning of a grange expanded by the subsequent donations by her son Roger de Mowbray and his tenants.[52]

Roger de Mowbray became, one of the most prolific benefactors of Rievaulx abbey, and there are no fewer than seventeen of his charters copied in its cartulary. They spread over Welburn, Hoveton, Bowforth, Wombleton, the vicinity of Hasketh and Boltby, and the Farndale valley. They are not only simple grants of land but also confirmations of grants previously given by him, confirmations of other people's grants, conflict settlements, exchanges and concessions.

At the end of Gundreda's life in 1154 Roger confirmed, with the consent of his heirs Nigel and Robert, all her grants to the abbey in two charters issued at this time with an identical list of witnesses.[53] The Mowbrays' charters themselves between 1138 and 1169 show a great variety of transactions. On one occasion Roger Mowbray granted two forests, one called Middlehead, where a hermit called Edmund lived, and another forest called Dowthwaite in the Farndale valley and a common pasture in the said valley. The abbey was granted all the rights to those properties with the exception of the hunting rights which Roger kept for himself.[54] Hunting was an important activity of the medieval nobility, which required suitable forest resources and these were jealously guarded even against religious houses as the example of William de Ros, Rievaulx's patron has shown.

Two of the Mowbrays' grants were perambulated by his men — a common pasture on the moor before Bowforth (a common pasture for the vills of Welburn, Hoveton, and Bowforth) and Hoveton vill to establish borders.[55] Conflict about the running of the borders on the moor could occur particularly easily due to lack of clear

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[51] *Cartulary*, n° 55.
[52] *EYC*, vol. 9, p. 231.
[53] *Cartulary*, n° 57, 60; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 151.
[54] *Cartulary*, n° 62; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 114; between 1138 and c. 1155.
[55] *Cartulary*, n° 61, 66; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 158, 125; between c. 1160 and 1169 and between 1154 and 1157 respectively.

marking of the divisions. If the moor was used as a common pasture by the inhabitants of two or more hamlets or townships the boundaries might be entirely missing.[56] Perambulation was an important legal act officially asserting and recording borders of a property. This was done by the group of people acting as witnesses, whose memory of the borders would ensure that it would be upheld in the future. This was the kind of ceremony that drew communities together and helped to maintain consensus among neighbours.[57]

The complications with the grant of Hoveton by Roger de Mowbray to Rievaulx abbey (between 1163 and 1169) illustrates well how the chains of confirmations were obtained to secure Rievaulx's rights. The charter copied in the cartulary illustrates the consecutive stages of this process. First, it contains confirmation of the grant of the vill of Hoveton, including four bovates of land in the said vill which Samson of Cornwall had held as a gift from Gundreda de Mowbray. Roger bought this land from Samson and his wife for twenty marks. Then this transaction was legally confirmed by Ralph de Belvoir, a steward of Roger de Mowbray, and the couple solemnly promised that neither they, nor their descendants would dispute the ownership. After that they made a similar pledge in Roger's court, in the presence of the sheriff Ranulf de Glanville, and finally it was legally affirmed by the York chapter.[58] The aim of the ceremony at Roger's court was similar to a warranty clause and was probably initiated by the abbey, although there are similar examples of pledges in the private charters of lay people.[59] The pledge in hand resembles much earlier practices of oath-helping, but it is not very clear how the donors chose a particular individual to receive their pledge and it is also unknown if these people were also expected to oversee the fulfilment of the pledge.[60]

It is very much left to speculation why Samson of Cornwall and his wife were asked formally to affirm their quitclaim so many times. Maybe the couple already enjoyed a status of some notoriety when it came to disputes, or maybe Roger was just acting as the protective lord keen to ensure the strength of the abbey's rights to Hoveton. A separate charter of quitclaim by Samson and his wife Hestilde to Rievaulx abbey, issued by the dean and chapter of York (between 1163 and 1169) for the same four bovates of land in

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[56] *West Yorkshire*, vol. 2, *The Administrative and Tenurial Framework*, ed. M. L. Faull and S. A. Moorhouse (Wakefield: West Yorkshire Metropolitan County Council, 1981), p. 272-3.
[57] Hudson, *Land*, p. 159.
[58] *Cartulary*, n° 67; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 126; between 1163 and 1169.
[59] David Postles, 'Pledge of faith in transactions in land', *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 7 (1982-85), 295-8.
[60] *Rufford Charters*, ed. C. J. Holdsworth, vol. 1, Thoroton Society Record Series, vol. 29 (Nottingham: Thorton Society, 1972), pp. lxi-lxii.

Hoveton, indicates that they did indeed try to reclaim what they sold to Roger de Mowbray.[61] It is probably a further indication of insecurity of the abbey's possession, that Nigel de Mowbray, Roger's son, specifically confirmed this charter and it was copied in the cartulary just after his father's charter.[62]

To make things even more complicated the vill of Hoveton was probably originally a donation of Ralph Beler, Roger's steward. If this was the case, it again provides evidence of the role of tenurial and family relations in the creation of the network of people of various status who came into contact with the abbey. Ralph was a small tenant of Roger de Mowbray and attested many of his charters, but never progressed to the higher status of fee holding.[63] An indication of Ralph's interest in Hoveton area is revealed by a separate agreement between him and the abbey reached, in the presence of Dean Robert de Gant and the chapter at York, between 1145 and 1157. This document confirmed the grant of Hoveton and specified a yearly compensation payable by Roger de Mowbray to Ralph Beler.[64] This is further substantiated by the fact that Ralph de Mowbray paid two marks yearly to Robert Beler, the successor of Ralph, for Hoveton.[65] Separately, between 1154 and 1157, Archbishop Roger of York confirmed Ralph Beler's grant of Hoveton, in the presence of his lord Roger de Mowbray.[66]

A plausible explanation for this string of confirmations is offered by Marie Lovatt. Hoveton might have been a part of the feoffment of ten knights' fee transferred from Roger de Mowbray to Robert III de Stuteville in the early years of Henry II's reign as subsequently contested by Robert. Two bovates and a toft in Hoveton had been given by Gundreda de Mowbray to St Michael's hospital of Whitby abbey between 1130 and 1138.[67] A bull of Pope Alexander III issued before 1160 informs us that these two bovates were granted to Rievaulx abbey by the hospital. Moreover, the cartulary of Whitby records that Ralph Beler had disseised Whitby of a third bovate in Hoveton,

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[61] *Cartulary*, n° 232; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 129.
[62] *Cartulary*, n° 68; *Charter of Mowbray*, n° 250; between 1163 and 1169. There is also another confirmation by Nigel of his father's grant in Hoveton, copied further down in the *Cartulary*, n° 157, but dated identically by Clay between 1163 and 1169.
[63] Thomas, 'Vassals, heiresses, crusaders', p. 23; *Charters of Mowbray*, p. lxi.
[64] *Cartulary*, n° 230.
[65] *Cartulary*, n° 66; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 125; dated 1154-57.
[66] *Cartulary*, n° 224; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 127; dating from *EEA*, vol. 20, p. 85.
[67] *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 123.

which became subsequently granted to Rievaulx abbey.[68] These various unresolved claims were likely to prompt a string of confirmations.

Meanwhile, the abbey kept acquiring more land in Hoveton to strengthen its own holdings in the area by the means of quasi-sales or, more accurately, compensation to these individuals who still claimed rights in the area. Between 1161 and c. 1180 Peter de Hoveton quitclaimed in the presence of the dean and chapter of York five bovates which he had held from the abbey and subsequently returned. Peter received compensation from the monks in the form of twenty marks of silver, and a horse for himself, two cows, ten sheep and ten lambs for his wife.[69]

In roughly the same time-span (c. 1160-74) Sunnive wife of Lambert de Hoveton and her two daughters quitclaimed to the abbey one bovate of land and two assarts of land each of five acres in Hoveton, which they had held previously from the abbey. This act was confirmed in the presence of two archdeacons in the church of All Saints, Helmsley. At a later date Engelram, the rural dean of Ryedale and Pickering Lythe, issued a charter of notification which was copied into the cartulary. As in the previous case, the tenant and her daughters received compensation of six marks of silver and one cow.[70]

As these two examples illustrate, the abbey was actively expanding its property in the direction it wanted and could enlarge its estates. By securing quitclaims and offering compensations, the abbey was able to acquire desirable properties, which would not be given otherwise and also reduce possible antagonisms. Sunnive being, presumably, a widow who was in a vulnerable position, the offer from the abbey might have been a quick and profitable solution. Unfortunately, the charters do not specify which parts of Hoveton were quitclaimed by Peter and Sunnive, but since the vill was granted originally by Ralph Beler, it is likely that Peter de Hoveton as well as Sunnive wife of Lambert de Hoveton were Beler's under-tenants or relatives. After Ralph Beler granted Hoveton to the abbey, these people acquired a new ecclesiastical lord. It is also possible that they became the abbey's tenants after Beler's donation, but the land they held was practically bought back by the abbey, which indicates that the monks were keen to have direct control over it.

These two quitclaims did not end conflicts over Hoveton. On 20 February 1171-81 Pope Alexander III issued a mandate to Bishop Bartholomew of Exeter (1161-84),

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[68] *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 124; *EEA*, vol. 20, p. 86.
[69] *Cartulary*, n° 231; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 130.
[70] *Cartulary*, n° 239; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 131.

Abbot Clement of St Mary's York (c.1161-84) and Dean Robert Butevilain of York. He ordered these men to investigate and correct all the injustices caused to Rievaulx properties in Hoveton. If the encroached properties were not returned to the monks, the pope threatened to excommunicate the offenders. The following noblemen had snatched parts of the vill: Robert Stuteville and his son William, Roger de Mowbray and his son Nigel, Alan de Bowforth, Robert de Vado and his brother, Everard de Ros, Robert son of Ernisius.[71] The charter specifies only the portion taken by the Stutevilles, that is a wood and newly cultivated land in Hoveton as well as land and wood called Middlehead in Farndale. The participation, in the attempt of reclamation, of the original donors themselves is not surprising considering how common this type of conflict was. Roger de Mowbray, the most important benefactor of baronial status, and Everard de Ros, the patron of Rievaulx, either regretted some previous grants of theirs, or else the borders of their grants were unclear and easy to dispute.[72] The timing of the papal letter also indicates that towards the end of the twelfth century the amount of disposable land was shrinking and the barons became anxious not to lose any more. Moreover, the Mowbrays had been particularly badly hit by the lost of several fees to the Stutevilles. Meaux abbey, a fellow Cistercian abbey suffered similar problems, as did Rievaulx abbey from its benefactors in the 1180s-90s who successful reclaimed parts of the abbey's land.[73]

Another important grant of Roger de Mowbray was that of the vill of Welburn given between 1154 and 1157. Although the first grants in this vicinity were given by Gundreda, her son's grant had a special importance. This donation is the first documented case of a grant of land with its serfs to a Cistercian house in England, a type of gift which was forbidden by the internal regulations of the order, nevertheless frequently broken. Although Roger granted a whole vill with its people, he also included a clause stating that the serfs might stay or leave as they wanted:

> Let it be known that I give all my serfs in Welburn to the abbot of Rievaulx, without restrictions, I permit to them all freedom and to go or stay whichever they want and to whatever place they want.[74]

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[71] *Cartulary*, n° 262; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 132.

[72] For a discussion of this conflict between Everard de Ros and the abbey see p. 48.

[73] 'Chronica Monasterii de Melsa ab anno 1150 usque ad annum 1506', vol. 1, ed. E. A. Bond, Rolls Series, vol. 43 (London, 1866), pp. 231-2.

[74] 'Sciatis quod omnes rusticos meos de Wellebruna concedo Abbati de Rievalle quietos, et ipsis de omnem libertatem eundi et remanendi quocunque voluerint, et ubi locum invenerint.' *Cartulary*, n° 64; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 152.

The significance of the grant of land with people should be first of all considered in terms of the availability of labour. The land could bring income only if there was enough labour to work on it. Indeed, the practice of the Cistercian order of forbidding the possession of serfs was by no means uniform throughout Europe and reflected this fundamental concern of the availability of labour. The majority of the houses in Pomerania and Western Poland had scarcely any lay brothers, and the workforce of the granges consisted of paid labourers and serfs. This practice was so widespread, that the Cistercian Chapter General in 1202 permitted the abbots of Hungarian, Bohemian and Polish houses to use corporal punishment on its dependant peasants.[75] In this light the grant of Roger de Mowbray to Rievaulx abbey reflects these concerns. Not only had he given to Rievaulx abbey land already cultivated and populated, but the clause of free choice for the serfs allowed them to continue to work on this land, probably as paid labourers.

As usual following the pattern set in the cartulary this entry is followed by the copy of Nigel de Mowbray's charter of confirmation, between 1163 and 1169, listing the boundaries of the vill as they were perambulated by his father's men:

> These boundaries people of my father in his presence perambulated and they took an oath, that they recognised them to be the right boundaries between Welburn and the vills which are around it.[76]

This grant was notified by Robert, the dean, and the chapter of York at the request of Robert de Mowbray with the additional grant of the plot of land on the other side of the river towards Hoveton, which was his parent's demesne property.[77]

Another grant of Roger de Mowbray, of land in Welburn, except the church and six bovates belonging to it and the vill of Hoveton, appears at first glance to be a donation of something already given to the abbey, or simply a confirmation, but it contains an important new clause that Roger will not help anyone to extract tithes from these vills:

> Concerning the tithes, that is, from Welburn and from Hoveton, if anybody should trouble them and extract tithes from them, neither I nor my heirs will interfere there in, or on anyone behalf, and we will do what we can to hold them

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[75] Teresa Dunin-Wąsowicz, 'Rola Cystersów w rozwoju kultury materialnej w Polsce średniowiecznej', in *Cystersi w kulturze średniowiecznej Europy*, ed. Jerzy Strzelczyk (Poznań: UAM, 1992), p. 20.

[76] 'Has divisas homines patris mei ipso presente, perambulaverunt, et juramento recognoverunt eas esse rectas divisas inter Wellebrunam et villas que circa eam sunt.' *Cartulary*, n° 65; *Charters of Mowbray,* n° 252.

[77] *Cartulary*, n° 229; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 153; between 1154 and 1157.

> back, nor will we encourage or help anybody speaking against them in that matter.[78]

This entry is titled in the cartulary 'Carta Rogeri de Molbrai de decimis' which indicates that the tithes issue was the most important point of this charter and was classified as such by the compiler of the cartulary.[79] Although this grant was confirmed by King Henry II between 1163 and 1166, it did not prevent more disputes.[80] Robert de Daiville, a constable of Roger's castle of Axholme and probably also a 'magister' of his castle in Thirsk, quitclaimed rights to some unspecified bounds of Welburn, but only after Roger de Mowbray made an exchange with him. The charter of his lord proclaims:

> Let it be known that I have quitclaimed to the monks of Rievaulx their boundaries in Welburn just as described in the charter of my mother and my against Robert de Daiville, and this Robert in my presence and in the presence of my people quitclaimed these on behalf of himself and his heirs for an exchange I gave him.[81]

Once again, the cost of conflict between the abbey and its neighbour was paid by the lord, who had to provide an alternative property for his tenant. This case illustrates not only the dependency of the abbey on its baronial benefactors, but also the growing bargaining power of the tenants in relations to their lords.

The tenants on the extensive estates of the Mowbray family were a varied social group. Almost all of them were of the Norman descent, with the exception of two English tenants. The scale of holding varied enormously. Such prominent noblemen as Stuteville, Vescy, Bulmer and Vere held, apart from fiefs within Mowbray honour, lands in chief from the king and lands from other lords. By the time that Roger de Mowbray inherited the honour, fees were routinely inheritable, but lords still had the power to exchange tenancies. In terms of the social and economic standing there was a distinct difference between the tenants who provided service to the amount of one or two knights and the smaller tenants whose service was a fraction of a fee, usually in

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[78] 'De decimis suis, hoc est, de Wellebruna, et de Houetune, si quis eos vexaverit, et decimas ab eis exegerit, nec ego nec heredes mei inde intromittemus, nec aliquis per nos, vel quem inde retrahere poterimus, nec aliquem contra eos inde loquentem adjuvabimus vel manutenebimus.' *Cartulary*, n° 154; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 154; between 1154 and 1166.

[79] BL, MS Cotton Julius D I, f. 100 v [f. 107 v].

[80] *Cartulary*, n° 203; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 156. This is a specific confirmation of Roger's grants of Welburn and Hoveton.

[81] 'Sciatis quod ego adquietavi monachis de Rieualle[e] divisas suas de Welleburna sicut in carta matris mee et mea continentur erga Robertum de Daiuilla, et ipse Robertus in presentia mea et hominum meorum quietas eas clamavit pro se et heredibus suis per escambiam illi dedi.' *Cartulary*, n° 155; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 155; between c. 1160 and 1176.

monetary form.[82] Among both prominent and smaller tenants were those who became benefactors of Rievaulx abbey. Their example, in turn, prompted their sub-tenants to make similar gestures, usually on a small scale.

Hugh Malabisse, a steward of Roger de Mowbray, had been the founder of the Malabisse family fortune and acquired fees of various lords, mainly Mowbrays and Archers. At the assessment of 1166 he was holding at least five knights' fees of these lords. Members of the Malabisse family remained in the Mowbray's retinues for four generations serving from Nigel d'Aubigny to his great-grandson William de Mowbray.[83] Hugh Malabisse's son, also called Hugh, was a generous donor to Rievaulx and Byland, both houses which benefited from the generosity of his lord Roger de Mowbray.[84]

The vill of Stainton, a part of Hugh Malabisse's fee was originally granted to Rievaulx by Stephen de Meinil, with the consent of his wife and their sons.[85] The vill was given to the abbey *in feudo* for the annual rent of one mark, the donor also reserved a right to take timber if necessary.[86] This was then confirmed by Roger de Mowbray, the overlord between 1143 and 1147.[87] In 1154 Roger made a deal with the monks of Rievaulx concerning Stainton. He promised not to concede the freehold of Stainton to anybody, in return the abbey was obliged to pay two marks yearly to Roger.[88] Much later, between 1170 and 1185, Hugh Malebisse, by then an important knightly tenant of Roger de Mowbray and his steward, quitclaimed any claim he might have to Stainton, which was a part of his inheritance and which was given by his lord Roger de Mowbray to Rievaulx abbey, somehow, in the process, Stephen de Meinil became forgotten as the original donor.[89]

After his grant of Stainton Hugh de Malabisse made further grants between 1160 and 1165 of a meadow to Rievaulx abbey called Oswaldenges in Scawton, which was part of Malabisse's fee, with the permission to use a pasture in Scawton and an adjoining piece of land called 'Brochesholes', located between the hill of that name and

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[82] *Charters of Mowbray,* pp. xxxv-xli.
[83] Thomas, 'Vassals, heiresses, crusaders', p. 31.
[84] Wardrop, *Fountains Abbey,* p. 194.
[85] *EYC*, vol. 3, p. 452, the editor's comment.
[86] *Cartulary*, n° 72; *EYC*, vol. 3, n° 1842.
[87] *Cartulary*, n° 71; *EYC*, vol. 3, n° 1843.
[88] *Cartulary*, n° 70; *EYC*, vol. 3, n° 1844; between 1142-1157, but probably in 1154 according to Clay.
[89] *Cartulary*, n° 73.

the river Rye, for the animals which plough the fields at Griff.[90] This grant was then confirmed by his lord Roger de Mowbray.[91] The grantor, Hugh de Malabisse, received twenty shillings of compensation from the monks in a special ceremony in the abbey church witnessed by many people:

> So, however, that I should make this grant more willingly, the monks gave me twenty shillings for love; and I presented it [charter] by my own hand on the high altar of the [church] of St Mary's Rievaulx, where also in the presence of many, monks as well as lay people, I agreed, in truth, the attestation of this charter in good faith, to be kept by me in perpetuity and said land to be guaranteed to the house of Rievaulx against all men.[92]

This case is a good illustration of how religious and economic interests were linked together. This grant was not a covered up sale, but a donation from which Hugh de Malabisse wanted to benefit on both material and spiritual level. His charter was placed on the altar in the monastic church, which was a common practice in the Anglo-Norman England.[93] The substantial reciprocal gift of twenty shillings was handed to the benefactor in a religious ceremony and this was proudly noted in the charter. This act was not something to be ashamed of, but a part of the process of establishing good mutual relations. A public ceremony of this kind reinforced ties between the monastery and its benefactors and neighbours present there. The phrase used by the historians in such cases, 'disguised sale' hints at some dishonesty of both parties, in fact, it rather hides an active role of the religious houses in procuring the grant.[94] Large counter-gifts have been also interpreted by the historians as a way of buy off services attached to the granted land.[95] It is however impossible to assess if this was the case here, since Hugh Malabisse's charter does not contain references to services or freedom from it.

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[90] *Cartulary*, n° 74. This grant of land in Scowton and Oswaldenges was probably a source of later conflict between Rievaulx and Byland abbey about the tithes from these locations. *EEA*, vol. 20, pp. 88-9.

[91] *Cartulary*, n° 156; *Charters of Mowbray*, n° 244.

[92] 'Ut autem hanc elemosinam libentius facerem dederunt michi monachi xx solidos pro caritate; et ego eam propria manu mea supra altare Sancte Marie Rievallis obtuli, ubi etiam coram multis, tam monachis quam secularibus, conventionavi in veritate huius carte attestationem sine malo ingenio me in perpetuum servaturum, et terram prefatam Domui Rievallis contra omnes homines warantizaturum.' *Cartulary*, n° 75.

[93] Cownie, *Religious patronage*, p. 161; Hudson, *Land,* p. 230.

[94] Berman, *Cistercian Evolution*, pp. 171-2. The 'disguised sales' did exist, but rather as a way of preventing secular powers to tap on the monastic income, as shown on the example of Kaisheim monastery in Bavaria in the early modern period. Klaus Wollenberg, 'The Cistercian Monastery of Kaisheim: Aspects of Its Economic and Social History', a paper presented at the 36th International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, 3 May 2001.

[95] Gallagher, 'Conditions of land tenure', pp. 109-10.

After the death of Hugh de Malabisse in 1189 the leading position in the family was taken by his nephew Richard son of William Malabisse of Ancaster. Richard became a generous benefactor of several houses including Byland, Newburgh and Fountains, as well as Rievaulx, but achieved a status of significant notoriety for his leading role in the massacre of Jews in York in 1190.[96] Soon after this event he participated in the unsuccessful rebellion of Prince John against King Richard, which resulted in the disseisin of his properties and a fine of three hundred marks. His fortunes changed with John's accession; he received his lands back for a large fine, and the full payment was completed by Richard in 1207 with the help of a royal grant for temporary relief from his Jewish debts.[97]

Although Richard became a benefactor of Rievaulx, their relationship was not always smooth. The object of one recorded dispute, on 23 January 1200-01, was the border between Hawnby (near Helmsley) and Laueschales (present Laskill Pastures) and the right to Stainton granted by his uncle Hugh Malabisse. Richard quitclaimed all his demands to the said properties and abbot William, who was the plaintiff, paid £100 of compensation.[98] Although Richard Malabisse and the abbey had what appears to be a dispute it might have been a fictitious law-suit. Both parties might simply have wanted to legalise the status quo and to obtain a permanent record of an exchange or sale by the means of court record. This practice provided parties with a record of their holding from the king's court. It was employed by religious houses and lay people alike from the early thirteenth century and became common from the early reign of King Henry III. Joan Wardrop identified similar cases among the conflicts between Fountains abbey and its neighbours.[99] A fictitious law-suit seems to be rather plausible in the case of Rievaulx versus Malabisse, considering the substantial compensation paid by the abbot and Richard's generosity on other occasions. He also granted, with the consent of his son and heir John, to Rievaulx abbey more land in Oswaldenges partly corresponding to Hugh Malabisse's grant.[100] From the witness list it appears that the Richard's grant was probably made between 1193 and 1203.[101] He also donated to the abbey, for the

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[96] Dobson, R. B, *The Jews of Medieval York and the Massacre of March 1190* (York: St. Anthony's Press, 1974), p. 33.
[97] Wardrop, *Fountain Abbey*, p. 195.
[98] *Pedes Finium Regente Eboracensi Regente Johanne A.D. MCXCIX - A.D. MCCXIV*, Surtees Society 94 (1897), p. 7.
[99] Wardrop, *Fountains abbey,* p. 126.
[100] *Cartulary*, n° 74.
[101] Bodl., MS Dodsw. vii, f. 96; published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, p. 211.

salvation of his uncle and cousin Hugh's souls, Hangingbridge Holm in Scawton with a permission to make an enclosure.[102]

The third and fourth members of the Malabisse family who interacted with Rievaulx abbey had the same name — William. One of them is additionally identified as 'of Acaster', and must be a relative of Richard Malabisse, but not his father, as of the date of the charter, 1265, excludes such a possibility. William Malabisse of Acaster gave four acres of meadow in Acaster, also a privilege of free navigation on the river Ouse, between Lidgate and 'Gevemersc', a very useful grant for the abbey's wool trade, and the right of passage though his property for the abbey's carts. The witness list confirms once more the strong links between donor families. Among those listed as the witnesses are Lord John Ingram, Drogo Harum, William de Sproxton, all of whom were from the families of benefactors of Rievaulx abbey.[103]

The second William Malabisse, whose precise identity is not very clear, is known from the late confirmation by Edward III in 1332. There is no other charter, which would confirm the existence of the grant of the rent of vill of Raysdale, but an entry in the Patent Rolls adds some more information to the involvement of William Malabisse. The royal confirmation pronounces:

> The release and quitclaim that William de Malabisse [...] gave to God [...] concerning the annual rent of half a mark, which he customarily received from William de Mowbray for the vill of Raysdale. [104]

This confirmation might have been preceded by the conflict between William de Mowbray, the lord of William de Malabisse, and the abbey. The agreement between them in 1251-52 stipulated, among other decisions, a payment by the abbey to William Malabisse and his heirs of half of silver mark for all the services from the Manor of Little Raysdale.[105] If this chronology is correct William de Malabisse granted this rent to the abbey sometime after 1251-52.

Another associate of Richard Malabisse and one of the leaders of the massacre of Jews in York in March 1190 was Marmeduke Darel I, who also became a benefactor of Rievaulx abbey, although the dating of the charter, between 1180 and 1190 does not

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[102] Bodl., MS Dodsw. vii, f. 107; published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, p. 213.
[103] Bodl., MS Dodsw. vii, f. 175; published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, p. 237; *CPR 1330-1334*, p. 316; published in the *Cartulary*, p. 302.
[104] 'Remissionem insuper et quietam clamantiam quas Willelmus de Malebisse [...] fecit Deo [...] de annuo redditu dimidie marce quem solebat recipere de Willelmo de Moubray pro villa de Reythisdale.' *CPR 1330-1334*, p. 316; published in the *Cartulary*, p. 279.
[105] *Feet of Fines for the County of York from 1246 to 1272*, ed. John Parker, Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Record Series 82 (1932), pp. 59-60.

indicate if the donation proceded or just followed the massacre. Marmeduke granted, with the consent of William and Marmeduke his sons the land in the vill of North Holme which was on the north side of the road from Crossswath to Bowforth and a right of passage through his land.[106]

Among the holders of the honorial offices, Peter of Thirsk, a constable of Roger de Mowbray's in the 1140s, became a benefactor of Rievaulx abbey, on a relatively small scale. Peter (known also as Peter de Hoton and Peter of Sand Hutton) was a tenant of Roger de Mowbray and the land which he granted to the abbey was probably held by him as a subtenancy.[107] It is very likely that the confirmation of the common pasture on the moor between Arden and Hesketh (parish of Felixkirk) given by him was issued as early as 1154.[108] Although he did not have large land holdings, Peter of Thirsk founded, with the permission of his lord Roger de Mowbray, between 1147 and 1169 a nunnery at Arden.[109]

Moving on to a more significant family, Roger de Flamvill, one of the more important knightly tenants of Roger de Mowbray established the fortune of the family. His son Hugh de Flamvill (d. 1212) succeeded him no later than 1169 and witnessed several charters of Roger and Nigel de Mowbray between 1180 and 1189.[110] Hugh granted to Rievaulx abbey a mill in Fryton called Poketo (parish of Hovingham), some land on the sides of a canal to improve the flow in the pond, and gave a permission to use his forest in the same vill to obtain material for reparation of the mill.[111] Since Hugh de Flamvill did not leave an heir, his sisters Maude de Hastings and Agnes de Percy inherited his holdings. In the next generation, Walter de Percy, the son and heir of Agnes disputed Rievaulx abbey's rights to the mill in Fryton given by his great-uncle, but the matter was settled in 1224 when Walter confirmed the abbey's possession of the mill with the monopoly in the vill of Fryton.[112]

Similarly to the Malabisse family, members of the Daiville family were a part of the Mowbray's retinue for four generations. Robert accumulated one of the largest fiefs in his lord's honour (four fees) and was also the most frequent attester of Roger de

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[106] *EYC*, vol. 1, n° 639.
[107] *Charters of Mowbray*, pp. lx, n° 165.
[108] *Cartulary*, n° 58; *Charters of Mowbray*, n° 240; between 1142-1157, probably in 1154.
[109] Burton, 'Origins and development', pp. 246-7; L. Beckett, 'Arden Priory', *The Rydale Historian* 8 (1976), 10-8.
[110] *Early Yorkshire Families,* ed. C. Clay, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series 135 (1973), p. 30.
[111] Bodl., MS Dodsw. vii, ff. 116v-117; published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, p. 218.
[112] *Early Yorkshire Families*, p. 31; *Cartulary*, p. 219n.

Mowbray's charters (eighty appearances) and benefactor of both Rievaulx abbey and Byland.[113] He married first a sister of Robert II de Stuteville and then Juliana a daughter of Thurstan de Montfort.[114] According to Oscar de Ville Robert III Daiville was also a benefactor of the abbey, but he does not specify the source of this information.[115] Only in the later generations does contact with the abbey became clear. One of Robert's descendants, John Daiville II, held among other lands three carucates in 1284-85 in Nawton.[116] With the consent of his mother Denise, John gave to the abbey five bovates with tofts in Nawton which Denise bought from William brother of William, which had been held by the said men from the Daivilles.[117] John then confirmed and quitclaimed all his rights to the three carucates in Nawton in a charter which specified which tenant of his was holding which portion of the said land. His mother Denise also attached her concession and confirmation to this act.[118]

The tenants of Roger de Mowbray not only gave land to the abbey, but also tried to dispute its possession on numerous occasions. The most spectacular conflict over Welburn illustrates well the weakening position of the lord towards his knightly tenants and the growing cost of being a protector of the abbey. The dispute between Roger Mowbray himself and his tenant Alan de Ryedale over the stretch of moor between Welburn and Bowforth and towards Cowldyke, which was a common pasture for the vills of Welburn, Hoveton and Bowforth lasted for several years. Between 1160 and 1169 Roger de Mowbray made a notification of the perambulation made by him, unspecified barons, his men and neighbours of the moor before Bowforth. According to their testimony this moor was a common pasture for the vills of Welburn, Hoveton and Bowforth. It had been given by Roger to Rievaulx abbey and the lord again explicitly forbade, on this occasion, Alan de Ryedale or anybody else to 'trouble or oppress' this property.[119] Alan claimed that this pasture was a part of his demesne and his lord insisted that it was a common pasture on the moorland which he had given to Rievaulx abbey. When Alan started to obstruct passage for the monks to the moor, Roger took the side of the abbey. He called Alan to his court to resolve the conflict in the presence of

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[113] Thomas, 'Vassals, heiresses, crusaders', p. 31; *Early Yorkshire Families*, p. 23. For a detailed history of the early generation of the family see: Oscar de Ville, 'John Deyville: A Neglected Rebel', *Northern History* 34 (1998), 18-22.
[114] *Early Yorkshire Families*, p. 23.
[115] de Ville, 'John Deyville', p. 38.
[116] *VCH*, vol. 1, p. 519.
[117] Bodl., MS Dodsw. vii, f. 137v; published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, p. 223.
[118] Bodl., MS Dodsw. vii, f. 138; published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, p. 224.
[119] *Cartulary*, n° 61; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 158.

his knights, neighbours and royal officials. Among the neighbours listed as witnesses there were several benefactors of the abbey, also some of the members of Roger's court, particularly Hugh Malabisse, and relatives of the benefactors: Peter Surdeval, Robert Sproxton, Thomas de Colevilla, and Robert de Buscy.

This dispute was solved by trial of battle. When Roger's champion started to win, Alan's friends persuaded him to abandon his claims to his lord's grants to Rievaulx abbey. In return, Roger put the case into the judgement of twelve knights from the neighbourhood to decide whether or not the moor should be common. These men decided that the moor was indeed common, but they declared that the unspecified constructions on the moor erected by Alan should be left standing there.[120] Hugh Thomas concludes that the inclusion of the people from outside the Roger's court was intended to prevent any accusations of favouritism.[121] However it may also indicate the weakening position of the lord's court as a legal authority for his tenants and the importance of the local community to establish correct running of the borders, by the consensus of the neighbourhood not by the sole decision of Roger de Mowbray. Since the abbey was a part of the community, it had to find its place within it, not act against it.

As a donation created a tenurial relationship between the grantor and recipient, the lord's court was a place to solve all the disputes related to it.[122] In consequence, the lords could become, as this example illustrates, sometimes more a go-between their tenants than the final authority. The case of dispute over Welburn shows that the lord might have been put in a difficult position as a benefactor of an abbey when one of his men decided to dispute a particular grant. If he wanted to remain loyal to his object of the patronage yet did not want or could not be harsh to his tenant he might be forced to make a compromise which would undermine his own position. In the opinion of Thomas, Roger had to make 'a compromise at his own expense' even after winning the trial and the arbitration of the neighbours.[123]

Ten years after the case in Roger's court, which obviously did not resolve conflict over Welburn's common pasture, came another final settlement, made in the

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[120] *Cartulary*, n° 153; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 157. This charter was discussed by V. H. Galbraith, 'The Death of a Champion', in *Studies in Medieval History presented to Frederick Maurice Powicke,* ed. R. W. Hunt, W. A. Pantin, R. W. Southern (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1948), p. 290.
[121] Thomas, 'Vassals, heiresses, crusaders', p. 46.
[122] Thompson, 'From Alms', p. 242.
[123] Thomas, 'Vassals, heiresses, crusaders', p. 46.

presence of Gregory, prior of Bridlington, in Nottingham on 24 March 1175-76.[124] The choice of the authority to settle this long-lasting dispute was not accidental. Bridlington priory was among the houses benefiting from the Mowbrays' generosity and from this priory came the first canons to live in Newburgh priory, a house founded by Roger de Mowbray.[125] On the same day and place, Alan de Ryedale and his wife Maud quitclaimed to Roger de Mowbray, their lord, any claims which Alan, Maud or their heirs may have to the property of Rievaulx abbey in Welburn. A very dry wording of this document reveals that Alan was acting in this way as the last resort:

> Let it be known that I, Alan de Rydale and Mathilda my wife, by faith, quitclaim free for ourselves and our heirs to our lord Roger de Mowbray and the monks of Rievaulx whatever we had by law and concerning which we made a claim against the above said monks concerning land and other things which are contained within the boundaries, which are named in the donation charters of our aforesaid lord Roger to the monks.[126]

In response, Roger released Alan and his heirs from paying ten shillings of annual rent from Bowforth. Alan was to pay only a pound of pepper per year for all the services.[127] Roger de Mowbray was forced again to make a concession on his own expense to secure peace between his tenants and the abbey.

In the area of Welburn, Walter son of Asketil de Grimston quitclaimed between 1162 and c. 1176 any rights which he or his heirs might have to Welburn, granted by his lord to Rievaulx. His charter, however, contains an interesting phrase:

> Let it be known to you that I gave and quitclaimed to God and the monks of Rievaulx from me and my heirs [...] for the love of God and for the charity, which these monks gave me.[128]

This unspecified charity of the monks for Walter may indicate some form of compensation, although many other charters of quitclaim spell out any compensation given by the abbey, this charter merely suggests it.

Although Alan de Rydale was one of the most troublesome neighbours of the abbey, his wife came from a family of early benefactors. Her father Gervase and brother

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[124] *Cartulary*, n° 133; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 159.
[125] Burton, *Monastic Order*, p. 192.
[126] 'Sciatis quod ego Alanus de Ridale et Matilda uxor mea fide interposita quietum clamavimus de nobis et heredibus nostris domino nostro Rogero de Molbrai et monachis Rieuallensibus quicquid juris habuimus vel unde calumpniam movimus predictis monachis de terris et aliis rebus que continentur infra metas que in cartis eorum monachorum de donatione predicti domini nostri Rogeri nominantur.' *Cartulary*, n° 132; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 160.
[127] *Cartulary*, n° 132; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 160.
[128] 'Notum sit vobis me dedisse et quietum clamasse Deo et monachis Rieuallis de me et heredibus meis [...] pro Dei amore et pro caritate quam monachi dederunt michi.' *Cartulary*, n° 59.

Benedict (with Hugh de Tuit) gave the meadow of Rokesbergh between 1145 and 1152.[129] Benedict son of Gervase was a tenant of the Mowbrays and his charters are copied in the cartulary near his lord's. Benedict alone had shown considerable generosity to the abbey. His grant of part of Wombleton with buildings, ten and a half acres of plough land and the common pasture of the vill, was confirmed by his lord Roger de Mowbray between 1142 and c. 1152.[130] This charter confirmed an important clause of protection for peasants living in Wombleton with particular respect of the common pasture. The grant protected the legal extent of 'the common pasture of that vill, according to legal consideration, so that the people of that vill are not to be harmed'.[131] This short passage gives an insight into the practical side of the abbey's coexistence as the user of the common pastures. The clause indicates an attempt to stop the stronger side, in this case the abbey, from pushing the weaker party, in this case peasants, out of the common pasture. This must have been more acute in the case of the common pastures located near the vills or on the low-lands than on the pastures on the moors which had a much bigger capacity.

Another charter of Benedict entitled 'Carta Benedicti de Wimbeltona prima', issued between 1145 and 1152 indicates that he must have given more grants, although 'carta secunda' is nowhere to be found.[132] This is an important entry in many ways. The witness list opens with the name of Walter Espec, the founder of the abbey. Parts of the grant, namely one tillage in Wiresdale, were given at the special request of Benedict's wife Helewisa. The grant consists of land in Wombleton where the abbey's buildings stood ('ubi domus et aedificia monachorum Rievallis construuntur'), which must have meant the buildings of the grange, not the monastic precinct which was located in some distance from Wombleton. Benedict gave also twelve perches of land in Spelcrose (Stony Cross), four perches in Skiplam, meadow at Rook Barugh and Muscoates, and the common pasture of Wombleton. Finally, Benedict's brother-in-law Alan de Ryedale and his sister Maud confirmed between 1160 and 1175 Bernard's grant in Wombleton and all the other grants of Bernard and his father Gervase.[133] The example of Matilda's relatives indicate that even within one family very different attitudes could occur. Her

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[129] This is known from 'Iste sunt possessiones', BL, MS Cotton Julius D I, f. 15v [f. 19v]; identification of persons in the *EYC*, vol. 9, p. 228.
[130] *Cartulary*, n° 63; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 146.
[131] 'et communem pasturam ipsius ville secundum legalem considerationem, ut homines illius ville non graventur.' *Cartulary*, n° 63; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 146.
[132] BL, MS Cotton Julius D I, f. 43 [f. 47]; *Cartulary* n° 69; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 228.
[133] *Cartulary*, n° 134.

father, uncle and aunt were generous supporters of the abbey, yet she and her husband became some of the most notorious enemies of it.

Parallel to Alan de Ryedale's conflict, other men of Roger de Mowbray tried to dispute other properties of Rievaulx, but subsequently quitclaimed any claim they might have. Between about 1160 and 1176 Ralph de Wath and his brothers, Richard, Gerard and Gervase, quitclaimed in the court of Roger de Mowbray, their lord, any rights they claimed to Welburn. Charles Clay suspected that brothers Ralph and Roger may be the same person as Robert and Ralph Vado and his brother mentioned in the papal letter of Alexander III reprimanding several people for damaging the abbey. If this identification is correct, this quitclaim might be a result of the papal intervention.[134] However, later on, Ralph de Wath developed closer and more pragmatic ties with the abbey. In the later part of Henry II's reign he exchanged five acres of land bordering the monastic grange in Skiplam for ten acres in Wombleton. Additionally as a part of the deal Ralph and his heir promised to go on the abbey's business within Yorkshire with their expenses paid by the abbey.

> Therefore I and my heirs will go acting in their business just as their brothers wherever the work shall be in Yorkshire at their expense even if [we have] no reason [ourselves to go]. [135]

This agreement is an interesting, but rare indication of the practical cooperation between the abbey and its neighbours. The type of business is not specified, but it might have been anything to do with the running of granges, selling produce and negotiating with the buyers. The majority of the day-to-day business of the abbey, which required contact with the outside world was conducted by the lay brothers, but the agreement with Ralph de Wath indicated that such tasks might have been performed by lay men as well. The abbey must have had considerable trust in the abilities and integrity of Ralph to entrust him with their business affairs. From his side, for proper compensation for his journeys on the abbey's behalf, he was prepared to undertake a journey in which he himself had no interest.

Welburn and Hoveton were particularly disputable properties among the abbey's estates because of the permanently uncertain property rights. Because both vills were included in the ten knightly fees which Roger de Mowbray was forced to return to Robert de Stuteville III in 1176, the security of the grant was endangered. When Robert

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[134] *Cartulary*, n° 152; *EYC*, vol. 9, p. 243.

confirmed the abbey's possession of Welburn and Hoveton between c. 1176-83, the document does not say that Robert Stuteville was not an original donor of this vills, but it clearly states that the confirmation was given by Robert de Stuteville for the salvation of his own soul, his father, mother, grandfather, and wife.[136] The fact that the original grantor, Roger de Mowbray was eliminated from this document is likely to reflect that this charter was an outcome of conflict between Rievaulx and Robert, who after acquiring ten fees from Roger de Mowbray, decided to reclaim some of the alienated properties. In such a case, prayers for Robert's soul were rather a moderate price to pay for the abbey to keep Hoveton and Welburn. Although this was not strictly a transaction because normally '[d]onors did not legally either demand or enforce the spiritual activities which would save them, as they would have done in a commercial transaction';[137] by this compromise the potential danger of losing an important property was diverted and Robert de Stuteville became a benefactor of the abbey and not its persecutor.

William, the brother of Robert Stuteville, granted to the abbey, relatively early and before 1158, a piece of land between the road from Hasketh and the vill of Boltby and a common pasture of Murton (parish of Hawnby). This grant was confirmed by Roger de Mowbray as his lord, and Clay therefore suggested that the grant was made after Roger was forced to give ten knights' fees to Robert III and his brother William in 1147.[138]

Despite their lords' peculiar relationship with Rievaulx abbey, the Stutevilles' tenants were no exception to the pattern of grant giving and also donated parts of their land to Rievaulx abbey. Between 1154 and 1183 Robert de Stuteville confirmed a grant to Rievaulx abbey from his tenant Hugh de Tuit (d. 1170), given to the abbey between 1145-52, of the meadow of Rook Barugh, in the parish of Normanby.[139]

The family of Boltby were also tenants of Robert de Stuteville in 1166 of ten carucates in Boltby, Ravensthorpe and Thirlby (parish of Felixkirk) and Borrowby

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[135] 'Ego autem et heredes mei ibimus in negotiis illorum agendis sicut fratres eorum ubicunque opus fuerit in Eboracensi sciria ad illorum expensas sine occasione tamen.' *Cartulary*, n° 129; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 148.

[136] *Cartulary*, n° 131; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 10.

[137] Thompson, 'From Alms', p. 237.

[138] *Cartulary* n° 89; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 19, p. 100.

[139] *Cartulary* n° 106; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 11 (confirmation) and *Cartulary,* n° 102; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 143. Hugh de Tuit was also a benefactor of little known nunnery in Keldholme. Burton, 'Origins and development', p. 260.

(parish of Leake) and gave a substantial amount of land to the abbey in these areas.[140] Odo de Boltby gave to Rievaulx, between 1142 and 1145 a grant of Hesketh, a part of the waste below Hasketh bordering to Boltby, wood and common pastures in his three vills of Boltby, Ravensthorpe and Thirlby. The donation was given with the explicit consent of his lord Robert Stuteville and his wife Helewise and for the salvation of Odo himself, his wife Judith, their fathers and mothers.[141] His son Adam de Boltby augmented between 1154 and 1160 his father's grant by giving to abbey land between Hesketh, previously acquired by the monks, and 'Guthalgillesiche'.[142]

Much later on 8 September 1178 the same Adam and the abbey of Rievaulx reached an agreement at Doncaster, before the royal justices, about the pastures of Boltby, Ravensthorpe and Thirlby, which Adam's father had given to the abbey. Adam confirmed Odo's grant according to his charter with the seal of Robert Stuteville their lord. Additionally, Adam confirmed the donation of common pastures in Boltby, Ravensthorpe and Thirlby with the capacity of 400 sheep and other animals (cows, bulls and oxen) and unrestricted entry and exit from these.[143] On the same occasion Adam confirmed his father's grant, by a separate document, as the text refers directly to Odo's charter as concerning pastures in Ravensthorpe and Thirlby, sealed by lord Robert de Stuteville.[144]

The interest in Rievaulx abbey filtered down among the Boltbys' tenants. The under-tenancy of Borrowby was held by the Borrowby family from the Boltby fee. In the early thirteenth century (between 1183 and 1203) Ralph son of Uctred de Borrowby granted eleven acres of meadow in Leake, located between the meadows of the bishop of Durham, and permission to make a channel for water from the spring on his land to the grange of Crosby. His overlord William de Stuteville, brother of Robert Stuteville III, gave his consent for the alienation as did Ralph son of Uctred's sons Roger, Richard and Nicholas.[145]

Among other tenants of Stutevilles, the family of Etton, supported these religious houses which were favoured by their lords. The Ettons branched out in the late twelfth century or early thirteenth century in two lines, one of Etton and the second of Gillings Castle. The first line held a tenancy under the Stutevilles and were recorded as

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[140] *EYC*, vol. 9, p. 162.
[141] *Cartulary*, n° 76; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 89.
[142] *Cartulary*, n° 77; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 90.
[143] *Cartulary*, n° 112; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 91.
[144] *Cartulary*, n° 113; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 92.
[145] *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 93; *VCH*, vol. 1, p. 412.

generous benefactors of Meaux abbey.[146] The confirmation charter to Rievaulx abbey of William Etton was witnessed by Ernald abbot of Melrose (the daughter-house of Rievaulx), and several members of the Etton family. The grant, originally given by William's father Walter, consisted of a meadow in Layerthorpe outside the city walls of York. The charter contains an interesting clause:

> If indeed, I or my heirs in any way get back our inheritance in Hamelton, for which we have, in exchange, the above said Layerthorpe, from the abbot and the monks of Selby and if we therefore demise that Layerthorpe with the meadow, we will give without delay to the monks of Rievaulx an exchange elsewhere to the value of the said meadow.[147]

Unfortunately there is no indication if William de Etton received Hamelton from Selby abbey or if he ever fulfilled his promise. Nevertheless this clause provides an indication of the pragmatic approach of both lay people and the monks who, on the bases of the earlier experiences, wanted to avoid possible disputes if the situation of the benefactor would change in the future. There are also indications that this area was important for the abbey. Holdings in Layerthorpe were augmented by Rievaulx abbey in the early thirteenth century. Rievaulx held a plot of land and a house there from the convent of St Andrews in York.[148]

Grants from barons were important to the abbey not only because their donations were larger, but because they helped to create connections with other people, mainly their tenants and sub-tenants. Lords would set a fashion for monastic benefaction among their knights and permit them to alienate their own lands. Although, as Green points out, the reasons and influences behind the grants from aristocrats were more likely to be explained in the charters than the motivations of the lesser men, it does not mean that the lesser men were motivated by only their affinities and not also by religious considerations.[149]

Spectacular generosity and extensive alienations of land were characteristic for the 'first generation' of the benefactors up until the late twelfth century. In the thirteenth century large grants became rare and the noblemen would rather confirm their predecessors' donations than alienate any more of their own land, but even this was highly valued. Disputes over land possession were a routine part of life and a protective

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[146] John Bison, 'Gilling Castle', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 19 (1906-07), 105-20.

[147] 'Si autem ego vel heredes mei aliquando recuperaverimus hereditatem nostram de Hameltona, pro qua habemus in escambium predictam Thorpe, ab Abbate et monachis de Selebi, et dimiserimus eandem Thorpe, cum prato, dabimus sine mora monachis Rieuallensibus alibi escambium ad valentiam predicti prati sui.' *Cartulary*, n° 166.

[148] *York Minster Fasti*, vol. 2, ed. C. T. Clay, The Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Record Series, 124 (1959), n° 75.

lord would have been a great advantage. In many cases though, the same people would be protectors at one time and would try to reclaim their previous grants at another, when their own situation changed. An important indication of the mutual dependence of the Cistercian abbeys and their baronial protectors is the entry in the Great Roll of Pipe for the year 1209:

> The abbots of Fountains and Rievaulx and Byland rendered account of £100 for having the advice of the king's court as to whether they should give help to William de Mowbray for acquitting himself against the king of the fine which he had made with the king when he was impleaded by William de Stuteville about the lands which he claimed against him. In the treasury, nothing; to the king himself in his chamber £100.[150]

The large sum of £100 paid by the monks of these three Cistercian abbeys to the king for advice as to whether they should help William de Mowbray whose lands were claimed by William de Stuteville indicates that they considered that their patron's fortune was important and could influence their own. The Mowbray family was exceptional in Yorkshire for the number and scale of their grants and the charters of protection to a variety of abbeys and priories. It is impossible to establish more precisely the motivation, particularly the non-materialistic aspect, of the request of the abbots of Rievaulx, Byland and Fountains, but it is safe to follow Joan Wardrop's opinion that:

> '[i]t also indicates the extent to which the fortunes of the cistercian houses of the north and those of their benefactors were, by the early thirteenth century, inextricably entwined. The powerful layman had his role in defending the rights of a religious house; the house too had a responsibility towards its benefactors, even if only from a sense of self-interest'.[151]

It is likely that the abbots were worried, on the basis of the experience of their predecessors, that if William de Stuteville took over, they might suffer losses and the new lord might reclaim grants made by the Mowbrays.

The slow disappearance of the great lords from the horizon of monastic houses coincided with the splitting of the great families into smaller branches, which continued to live in same the area and used the same names as their more powerful cousins. In the second half of the thirteenth century many of the lesser branches of the baronial

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[149] Green, *Aristocracy*, p. 413.

[150] 'Abbates de Fontibus et Riuall' et Beiland' r.c. de c. li. pro habenda consideratione curia regis utrum debeant auxilium facere Willelmo de Molbrai ad acquietandum eum versus regis de fine quem fecit cum regis quando inplaciatus fuit per Willelmum de Stuteuill' de terris quas adversus eum clamauit. In thes. Nichil. Et ipsi R. In camera sua c. li.' *The Great Roll of Pipe 11th year of John*, ed. Doris Stenton, Pipe Roll Society, vol. NS 24 (London: The Pipe Roll Society, 1949), p. 139.

[151] Wardrop, *Fountains Abbey*, p. 144

families, which had much more local interests than the great barons, also became benefactors and neighbours of Rievaulx abbey. There are indications that in the second half of the thirteenth century one of the branches of Mowbray family, settled locally in Easby, interacted with Rievaulx abbey. Their documented conflicts with the abbey originated mainly from the overlapping of the areas of their economic interest. This offshoot of the Mowbray family, with more local interests and much less political significance than the main baronial family, also showed modest attempts to become the benefactors of Rievaulx abbey, but they were first and foremost quarrelling neighbours. Some of their dealings were rather complex due to the frequent changes of possession.

The manor of Foxton was given by William de Mowbray in 1241 to William de Grey the husband of Agnes, a widow of William Taunton, (an uncle of Walter Mowbray) a former tenant of this property. Then, the couple granted this property to Rievaulx abbey in 1246, for the yearly rent of two shillings and an obligation of forinsec service. Agnes, who was also present in the court, quitclaimed her rights to the manor and the abbot gave the couple 100 marks of compensation.[152] On the same day Abbot Adam and the Greys resolved another of their disputes over the manors of Ryedale and Busby. Both manors were given to the abbey in exchange for forty shillings yearly, for the term of Agnes's life and which afterwards should be returned to Walter de Mowbray.[153] But in 1252 Foxton was returned to William de Mowbray by the abbey in a complicated exchanged for the manors of Great and Little Ryedale and three tofts in Little Busby.[154]

Similarly to their more powerful relatives, the Mowbrays of Easby also influenced their tenants who gave several small grants in Busby. In 1286 William de la Haye and his wife Ellen exchanged with the abbey one messuage, fourteen bovates in Little Busby for 100 acres of land in Stainborough, twenty acres in Pilley and two smaller properties elsewhere. The location of exchanged property is rather significant. Busby in Cleveland was located on the opposite ends of the abbey estates to the properties exchanged in the West Riding. This may indicate some intention of restructuring Rievaulx's holdings. In roughly the same time-span William de Thorton

[152] *Feet of Fines from 1232 to 1246*, pp. 165; Bodl., MS Dodsw. xcviii, f. 138; published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, p. 249.
[153] *Feet of Fines from 1232 to 1246*, pp. 165-6.
[154] *Feet of Fines from 1246 to 1272*, pp. 59-60.

granted further ten oxgangs in the same vill of Busby augmenting the newly acquired land.[155]

Another source indicates that the economic interactions between the Mowbrays of Easby and Rievaulx continued and that the abbey tried to consolidate its holdings in Cleveland. In 1277 the abbot of Rievaulx brought a plea against William de Mowbray junior (son of William de Mowbray of Easby) who held a tenement from him in Busby that he should pay services from it.[156]

These later contacts with the non-baronial branch of the Mowbray family indicate that Rievaulx abbey became much more liberal in terms of entering economic relationships with the lay people than in the twelfth century. The land which would be previously accepted by the abbey only as a grant was either wrestled from the neighbours or held for rent. Once the core of the abbey estates was formed by the late twelfth century, the later accessions, on the fringes of the existing granges, would be smaller and more transient and often held in return for some form of payment and for limited periods of time.

Another branch of the family, the Mowbrays of Tameton who were tenants of the de Vere family had a rather complicated relationship with the abbey. Sibilla de Kyme, who was a wife of Simon de Vere, found herself after the death of her husband in 1213-14 under pressure from her neighbours who were encroaching on her dower. Among the aggressive neighbours were both lay people and heads of monastic houses — the abbots of Thornton, Bardney and Rievaulx. Conflict with Rievaulx abbey started in 1213 and the disputed property consisted of a half of carucate in Brocton.[157] In 1214 Sibilla sued Abbot Elias who failed to appear in the court and a new date was set. Finally the disputed property was taken into the King's hand and the next date for the plea appointed.[158] Unfortunately there is no indication how the conflict was resolved. When Sibille's son Simon came of age in 1229 he continued his mother's disputes with the abbey, but by then the situation was more complicated. In 1251 Simon supported the side of his tenant William de Mowbray of Tameton in a plea by Adam abbot of Rievaulx. The object of conflict were the manors of Great Rythesdale and Little Rythesdale, a half carucate and three tofts in Little Busby which were held by the abbot

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[155] *Feet of Fines for the County of York from 1272 to 1300*, ed. F. H. Slingsby, Yorkshire Archaeological Record Series 121 (1955), p. 77; VCH, vol. 2, p. 305; oxgang was a measure of land usually equal to a bovate.
[156] De Banco, 5 Edward I, m. 24, in *Notes on the Religious*, vol. 1, p. 178.
[157] *CRR*, vol. 7, p. 1.
[158] *CRR*, vol. 7, pp. 131, 177, 250.

for the term of his life from William and Agnes Grey. These properties were Agnes' dower, an inheritance from William Mowbray of the freehold of William of Taunton her former husband.[159] This dispute was resolved by the means of a complicated deal. The manors in Rythesdale should be returned to the abbot after the death of Agnes to be held from William Mowbray for half of carucate with forinsec service and another payment of eleven shillings and eight pence to Simon de Vere the lord. Another yearly payment of service of half mark from the same manors was due to William Malabisse. The abbot quitclaimed to William de Mowbray the manors of Foxton in Cleveland.[160]

The dispute over the particular plot in Bilsdale between abbey and William Mowbray of Tameton which he held from Simon was officially ended in 1257 by a formal charter between William and the abbey which was resolved by the arbitration of John, Abbot of Peterborough, and John de Wyville, an itinerant justice. William quitclaimed his rights to the said property in Bilsdale while Abbot Adam de Tilletai promised to pay two shillings yearly and dropped all the other claims against William.[161]

The original conflict between Simon de Vere and the abbey, was finished formally in 1260. He quitclaimed to the abbey the manor in Great Rythesdale (including Crosslets and Staindale) granted to the abbey by Simon's tenant, William de Mowbray of Tameton, and also the manor of Little Raysdale. Additionally Simon quitclaimed pasture and mineral rights in Little Raysdale. In turn, the monks promised eleven shillings and eight pence yearly of the service payment.[162] This agreement was also copied in to the Kirkham cartulary which had a large holding in Bilsdale, directly bordering with Raysdale.[163]

William son of Walter de Mowbray, the father of William of Tameton was also a tenant of Rievaulx. He undertook an obligation of two shillings yearly or a sparrow-hawk for the service from certain property in Thornaby which he held from the abbey.[164] There is nothing unusual about this grant, but the presence of the hunting bird suggest that the abbots of Rievaulx pursued the activities of noblemen, not Cistercian monks. Their continuing conflict with William de Ros about hunting rights in Helmsley forest indicates that the abbot was interested in securing such an option for the abbey.

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[159] See above on p. 106.
[160] *Feet of Fines from 1246 to 1272*, pp. 59-60.
[161] Bodl., MS Dodsw. vii, f. 143; published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, p. 227.
[162] Bodl., MS Dodsw. vii, ff. 140- 140v; published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, pp. 226-7
[163] Kirkham Cartulary, Bodl., MS Fairfax 7, f. 51v; published in *Cartulary*, pp. 254-5. For a discussion on this issue see pp. 176-7.

The presence of the sparrow-hawk suggests that some members of the monastic community would in fact go hunting, unless of course this bird of prey was for sale. Hunting rights were held by other religious houses in the area, notably Fountains abbey, to whom these privileges gave considerable profit.[165]

The great complexity of these conflicts with Simon de Vere and the Mowbrays of Tameton indicates several issues. Firstly, it shows how fragmented were fees by the late twelfth century and how complicated were the land holdings. One individual usually held lands from several people with whom he or she might be also related, causing additional rights and obligations. Secondly, the abbey by then, had abandoned its strict rules of separation from the lay world and held these lands with secular obligations, often for a term only. As a result, Rievaulx abbey became entangled with several families, their lords and tenants and participated in the quest for more land and rights, even if the stake was relatively small. Parts of the abbey's possession became much more transient than its core estates acquired in the twelfth century. Land might be held for a limited time, under the obligation of secular services or easily exchanged for more useful plot of land elsewhere to augment particular granges and streamline existing landholdings.

This changed practice of land holding did influence the abbey's relation with it neighbours, but continuity remained as the central issue in the benefactor-recipient relationship. The donations alone were worth much less if there was no hope for continued confirmations to follow. Thus, the continuity within one family, such as displayed by the baronial branch of the Mowbray family was very much sought after. Benjamin Thompson interpreted it in the terms of tenure:

> 'Religious houses, like other tenants, depended upon the renewal of the relationship between them and their founders' and benefactors' heirs (although clearly it would be much less easy for an heir of a founder to remove his support from a religious house, and thus destroy the institution, than for the heir of a minor donor to do so).'[166]

The 'first generation' of aristocratic donors represented by Roger de Mowbray was generous and they alienated large chunks of their land, but the 'second generation' represented by his son and grandson, was no less important as they provided confirmations for what was given by their fathers and grandfathers and guaranteed the

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[164] Bodl, MS Dodsw. vii, f. 142; published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, p. 231.
[165] Wardrop, *Fountains Abbey*, p. 109.
[166] Thompson, 'From Alms', p. 243.

abbey's rights to its lands. Similar patterns can be see among other aristocratic benefactors.

2. THE GANT FAMILY AND THEIR TENANTS

The Mowbrays, although very generous to Rievaulx abbey, were not the only benefactors of baronial status. Other important benefactors, coming from the highest stratum of Anglo-Norman society, were Gilbert de Gant earl of Lincoln (who was also a brother-in-law of Roger de Mowbray), his daughter Alice, married to Earl Simon de St. Liz, and his nephew also called Gilbert. The fortune of the Gants has been established by the earl's grandfather and father, but Gilbert was the first one to obtain the title, from King Stephen in 1149, and further expand the family estates. His wife Rhodesia, daughter of Richard son of Gilbert, came from the prominent family de Clare. Their only child Alice married Simon de St. Liz, earl of Northampton, but they died without any issue (Simon in 1184 and his wife in the following year). The family inheritance passed to Robert, brother of earl Gilbert de Gant and after his death in 1191 to his son Gilbert, who took the title of earl of Lincoln in 1216.[167]

The first member of the Gant family to make a donation to Rievaulx was Walter Gant (d. 1139). The only remaining record of his grant is an entry in the list 'Iste sunt possessiones' from the cartulary:

> In the year of Lord's incarnation 1158 King Henry II gave us the waste below Pickering, in the exchange for Stainton, which Walter de Gant gave us for the purpose of the construction of the abbey.[168]

The mysterious 'for the purpose of the construction of the abbey' refers probably to the income derived from this property, which was then used for the building of the precinct, not for erecting any buildings in Stainton as such. It is also possible that this note indicates that Walter de Gant, might originally have intended to establish a daughter-house of Rievaulx there, an idea which was never accomplished.[169]

His son earl Gilbert de Gant was the patron of Bridlington priory (founded c. 1113 by his father Walter) and gave donations to Bardney abbey, the Augustinian canons in Thornton, the hospital of St. Peter in York and two Cistercian houses,

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[167] *EYC*, vol. 2, pp. 432-34.

[168] 'Anno ab Incarnatione Domini M° clviii dedit nobis Rex Henricus Secundus vastum subtus Pikering in escambio pro Steintona quam nobis dedit Walterus de Gant ad Abbatiam construendam ibi.' BL, MS Cotton Julius D I, f. 15v. [f. 19v]; *Cartulary*, p. 261.

[169] *Rufford Charters*, p. xxii; *VHC*, vol. 3, p. 149.

Rievaulx and Vaudey (Linconshire). Gilbert's grant to Rievaulx consisted of two bovates in Hunmanby given in 1147.[170] Some time later he confirmed this grant and also a grant of Ralph de Nevill of one carucate in Scrop.[171] There must have been more interaction between earl Gilbert de Gant and Rievaulx than this rather unimpressive grant of two bovates. An indication of the extent of the earl's grant in Hunmanby is another entry in the 'Iste sunt possessiones': 'At the time of Lord Ailred, the abbot, Gilbert de Gant gave us the grange of Hunmanby with all that belongs to it'.[172] Information about the creation of the grange was added *post factum*, but what it basically means, is that the earl's grant was large enough to establish the abbey's grange in Hunmanby.

Just before receiving his title from the king, Gilbert founded in 1146 or 1148, a Cistercian abbey in Rufford as a daughter house of Rievaulx. Firstly, the choice of the order and the mother house is a clear indication of his attachment to Rievaulx, and secondly, the time of the foundation coincided with his rise in status to become an earl, thus the foundation of Rufford is likely to be a manifestation of this advancement. The choice of the order might have also been motivated politically, as a gesture towards his powerful father-in-law Earl Ranulf of Chester who founded Pipewell abbey and Gilbert's step-uncle William de Roumare, earl of Lincoln, who established Revesby.[173]

In his role as the patron of the new abbey, Gilbert de Gant continued his relations with the community of Rievaulx, because the initial contingent of the monks was sent to Rufford from the mother-house.[174] Soon after the foundation, in 1149 or 1150, the new abbey had a conflict with Ralph son of Wichard, Gilbert's tenant, who claimed unjustly some property which was given by the founder to Rufford and generally harassed the monks. This conflict developed for some time, before Gilbert intervened; the monks at first looked for justice without consulting the patron. The reaction of the earl is a very clear indication of how a lord of high status saw his own position towards 'his monastery' and how he understood his own role of protector. In the

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[170] *Cartulary*, n° 78; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 1182.
[171] *Cartulary*, n° 79.
[172] 'Tempore Domini Ailredi Abbatis dedit nobis Gilbertus de Gant grangiam de Hundemandebi cum pertinenciis suis.' BL, MS Cotton Julius D I, f. 15v [f. 19v]; *Cartulary*, p. 260.
[173] *Rufford Charters*, vol. 1, p. xxiii. The Earl of Chester was one of the most prominent patrons of the Cistercian order in Britain. Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins*, p. 202.
[174] The close link between Rievaulx and the daughter house in Rufford is also acknowledged in the conformation charter of King Stephen: '[Ego] concedo et confirmo illam donationem [quam] Gilb(er)tus de Ga(n)t fecit deo et ecclesie Beate Marie Rievall(ensis) et monachis ibidem deo servientibus de manerio de Ruf(ford).' *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum 1066-1154*, vol. 3, ed. H. A. Cronne, R. H. C. Davis (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), n° 736.

charter issued by Gilbert de Gant between 1148 and 1150 he addressed the community of Rufford as 'my brothers of Rievaulx living in Rufford' ('fratribus meis de Rievalle apud Rucforda habitantibus') which indicates warm attachment, but at the same time, in the light of the rest of the document, a rather proprietary attitude towards the object of his patronage. Gilbert then went on to reprimand Ralph son of Wichard for interfering with his prerogative and forbade any encroachment on the land given by himself, as Ralph's lord, to the third parties, reminding Ralph that he also depended on Gilbert's generosity and the good will of his lord. The most important clause of this document refers to both sides of the conflict — Ralph and the monks:

> Thus I forbid the above mentioned Ralph, for the love of me and all that he holds from me, to act in any way against my generosity. Similarly I forbid the abbot and brothers to quarrel against Ralph or anybody else about my property or my generosity, but he should come to me and I will do justice.[175]

In this way Gilbert asserts his position as the authority over the abbey and ensures that he will not lose control over his property, which although alienated to the monastic institution, remained partly controllable via informal links with 'his monks'. His response to his tenant's encroachment on the abbey's property resembles to some extent Roger de Mowbray's position in the conflict between Rievaulx's abbey and his tenants over Welburn, although we do not know if Ralph son of Wichard was actually summoned to Gilbert's court.

Gilbert de Gant's daughter Alice had also shown interest in Rievaulx abbey, but completely ignored her father's foundation in Rufford. She confirmed grants of men holding lands from her to Rievaulx abbey: Ralph de Nevill and Ranulf son of Walter (in Hunmanby) between 1160 and c. 1175 and Henry de Willerby's grant and sale between 1170 and 1184.[176] Together with her husband earl Simon de St. Liz she gave permission to alienate land held from them by their men to Rievaulx abbey by sale or gift.[177] Independently from his wife earl Simon confirmed his father-in-law's grants and those of his men: Ralph de Nevill, Ranulf son of Walter de Greystoke to Rievaulx abbey

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[175] 'Quamobrem Radulfo predicto prohibeo super amorem meum et sicut diligit quicquid de me tenet quod nullo modo amodo se intromittat de elemosina mea. Et eciam abbati et fratribus meis predictis similiter prohibeo ne aliquam loquelam versus Radulfum vel aliquis alius calumpniatur aliquid de meo dominio vel de mea elemosina, coram me ipso veniat et plenum rectum ei teneam'. BL, Charter Harleian 83 E. 52.

[176] *Cartulary*, n° 159; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 1188; *Cartulary*, n° 160.

[177] *Cartulary*, n° 158; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 1232.

between 1160 and c.1175.[178] Simon's interest in the Cistercian order was so substantial that he founded a Cistercian house in Sawtry, as a daughter house of Warden.[179]

After Alice's and Simon's deaths, the family inheritance went to Gilbert's brother Robert and then his son Gilbert (died c.1241), who continued the tradition of supporting Rievaulx abbey. Gilbert gave pasture in Grinton together with several rights in Swaledale with specific privileges (sheep folds, hunting, building lodging for the staff) including a right to catch wolves by any method.[180] This was then confirmed by his son, also called Gilbert, in the second half of the thirteenth century.[181]

The tenants of the Gants, just like those of the Mowbrays, followed the example of their lords in supporting Rievaulx abbey, and this connection has been clearly recognized by the abbey. The copies of the charters of the Gants' men followed in general those of their lords in the cartulary. The status of many of those men was relatively high at the time of donations, but changed over the time after they became benefactors of Rievaulx. The Nevill family was clearly rising in status, while the Willerby family became too generous to Bridlington Priory, their lord's foundation, alienated most of their lands, and lost their position in consequence.

Henry Willerby served as a hunting master to Walter de Gant, father of earl Gilbert. Henry made a grant of several pieces of land in Willerby near Scarborough to Rievaulx in 1152 and renewed it in 1172. This donation, with the consent of his sons Adelard and Henry consisted of five acres in Willerby lying by the road to Foxhole, two plots of two and a half acres; the first lying towards the boundaries of Fordon (held by Nevills) and the second below Crostdic and a separate half-acre plot in Greindeslac (west of Midelberg) for the purpose of building a sheep-fold. Henry gave also a pasture for 300 sheep in Willerby and one messuage of land in Kornedale, for the purpose of housing lay brothers and paid workers.[182] This was not the only grant to Rievaulx given by Henry because the confirmation by his lord earl Simon and countess Alice in c. 1170-84 of his unspecified grants and sale to Rievaulx indicates several transactions of grant and sale:

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[178] *Cartulary*, n° 80; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 1187.
[179] *Rufford Charters*, vol. 1, p. xxi.
[180] *CPR 1330-1334*, p. 316; published in the *Cartulary*, pp. 304-5 and 307.
[181] *CPR 1330-1334*, p. 316; published in the *Cartulary*, p. 305.
[182] 'ubi poterunt edificare domum ad habitandum fratribus et familie sue'. *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 1228, from Cartulary of Bridlington, BL, Additional MS 40008, f. 86.

> every donation and sale which Henry de Willardeby made to them, holding freely and quit just as it is contained in the charters and agreements of the said Henry.[183]

Henry de Willerby's son Alard continued his father's generosity to Rievaulx abbey. After Henry's death between 1172 and 1175 Alard confirmed his grants and added three and half acres in Willerby.[184] Another indication of Henry's and Alard's generosity to the abbey, and the importance of these properties, is the confirmation by pope Alexander III issued for abbot Silvan of Rievaulx. In this confirmation dated between 1174 and 1178, copied in the cartulary, the pope confirmed unspecified fisheries given by Bernard de Balliol and even more vague properties ('possessiones') given by Acharis de Tunstal, Henry de Willerby and his son Alard.[185]

Another family connected with the Gants by the tenurial holdings were the Greystokes. They were a family of some standing in Yorkshire since the first recorded member of the family Forne son of Sigulf, held in Yorkshire, in the second decade of Henry I's reign and received a small fee in Nunburnholme and Greystoke.[186] They were tenants of the Gants in Folkton. Forne's son Ivo inherited his father's land in 1130, but died no later than 1156. Both father and son were benefactors of St Mary's York and Hexham priory.[187] This interest in the pious donations continued in the next generation, although it shifted from Benedictine to Cistercian houses. Walter son of Ivo de Greystoke gave at least two grants to Rievaulx as is testified by the charters of his son Ralph (d. c.1190) and his widow Beatrice which were copied in the cartulary. In 1158 Walter gave a half of carucate of land in Folkton near Scarborough to the abbey and his son added to this, between 1162 and 1175, the tillage of Rainsdale, a pasture for 1000 sheep and the animals plowing that land.[188] Beatrice, the widow of Walter confirmed after his death between 1162 and c.1175 a grant of land and pasture in Folkton.[189] This large pasture grant was very valuable for the abbey, which was in the process of creating and expanding its pastoral granges. To make their possession more secure, Robert dean of York issued a confirmation between 1175 and 1186.[190] The second of

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[183] 'totam donationem et venditionem quam fecit eis Henricus de Willardebi, libere et quiete tenendam sicut in cartis et cyrographis ejusdem Henrici continetur'. *Cartulary*, n° 158; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 1232.
[184] *Cartulary*, n° 147; EYC, vol. 2, n° 1229; also copied in the Cartulary of Bridlington, f. 86d.
[185] *Cartulary*, n° 266 (on p. 378); *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 1231; *PU*, vol. 1, n° 131.
[186] *EYC*, vol. 2, p. 503-4.
[187] *Early Yorkshire Families*, p. 38.
[188] *Cartulary*, n° 82, 161; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 1247, 1248.
[189] *Cartulary*, n° 162; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 1249.
[190] *Cartulary*, n° 233; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 1252.

Walter's grants was in Folkton as it is known from the charter of his son Ralph. A half carucate in Folkton given by Walter to the abbey was exchanged later by his son with the abbey, between 1162 and 1176, for a plot of land in Dedhilledale.[191]

The interest in donating land to Rievaulx filtered down even lower in the tenurial web to the sub-tenants who were holding land from Greystokes. Similarly to his overlords the Gants, Ranulf de Greystoke gave permission, between 1162 and 1175, for the transaction between his tenants and the abbey, However he cautiously gave consent not for the permanent alienation, but for a lease or a grant for a limited time only.[192] Some of the lesser men were given compensation by the abbey, but this was not usually very substantial. The wealthy aristocrats, such as Gundreda de Mowbray or Gilbert de Gant could afford substantial alienations, but for the lesser knights this was not possible without losing their status and income. Between 1162 and 1167 William son of Theobald granted sixteen acres of land in Folkton in three separate plots: four acres in Camb in Witefield, seven acres in Aldefeld and the rest in Sternekelde. In fact, eleven acres of this grant was a part of his wife's marriage portion. In return the monks paid eight marks to William who also compensated his wife:

> And because there were eleven acres from the endowment of my wife, I have given an exchange to the value of these eleven acres of my wife, so that the whole above said land would remain in the house of Rievaulx free from all the secular services and secular customs, except that each year the monks should give me or my heirs one pound of cumin each year as recognition of their tenure.[193]

Ralph son of Walter confirmed, between 1162 and 1167, this grant of sixteen acres of land in Folkton by William son of Theobald, his man. Because there was service due from this land to Ralph, he agreed that if William failed to pay it, he would not bother the monks, but claim this payment directly from William.[194] This agreement, between Ralph and the abbey was, in Paul Dalton's interpretation, a clear indication of the erosion of the lord's power over his tenant and the relatively strong position of the abbey. Rievaulx secured firm possession of Folkton, confirmed by Ranulf and the

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[191] *Cartulary*, n° 161; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 1248.
[192] *Cartulary*, n° 83; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 1245.
[193] 'Et quia de dote uxoris mee erant xi acre, dedi excambium uxori mee ad valentiam ipsarum xi acrarum, ut tota terra predicta quieta remaneret domui Rievallis et libera ab omni servitio terreno et seculari consuetudine excepto quod singulis annis dabunt michi monachi vel heredibus meis libram unam cimini pro recognitione ejusdem tenure.' *Cartulary*, n° 84; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 1250.
[194] *Cartulary*, n° 148; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 1251.

canons of York, and was obliged to pay only a nominal service.[195] The cost of the transfer of this property into the hand of Rievaulx abbey was borne by the lord, not his tenant, who in fact was the benefactor in this case.

Another family connected to the Gants who also became benefactors of Rievaulx was the Nevill family. From relatively low starting points the Nevills achieved the level of barons at the beginning of the fourteenth century. Ralph de Nevill, being himself of some standing, held from Walter de Gant, the earl's father, lands in Fordon, Filey, Muston and Righton. This tenurial relationship continued in the next generation, the Nevills of Muston continued to hold six manors from the Gant family which were valued for the service of two knights. They also held substantial lands from Adam de Brus and Arnold de Percy and with their permission, Ralph de Nevill, husband of Havise de Percy, founded, before 1162, Hutton Rudby priory with the land belonging to his wife's dowry.[196]

Ralph de Nevill gave one carucate in Scrop and some land in Hunmanby known from the confirmations of Gilbert de Gant and earl Simon and countess Alice.[197] The only original charter of Ralph copied to the cartulary is his grant, between 1148 and 1156, of one carucate in Reighton near Bridlington which Aluric, his tenant held of him.[198]

The Nevills were also the principal heirs of Adam son of Swane, who was an important tenant of the Lacy fee.[199] Adam's brother, Henry son of Swane gave to the abbey two acres of land in the vill of Pilley with permission to build on its southern part, but without permission to establish a mill on the river.[200] Apart from the grant to Rievaulx abbey, they were also benefactor of the Lacy's foundations in Pontefract and Nostell. In 1153-54 Adam son of Swane founded Monk Bretton Priory, a daughter house of Pontefract priory. Matilda, daughter of Adam son of Swane, confirmed the grant of her uncle Adam son of Peter to Rievaulx abbey of these properties which he had held from Adam son of Swane in Worsborough, Stainborough and Pilley.[201] Significantly for the abbey, this connection between the Nevills and Adam son of Swane was not recognized as important in the cartulary. The charters of Adam son of

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[195] Dalton, *Conquest*, p. 287.
[196] *Peerage*, vol. 9, p. 476; Thomas, 'Vassals, Heiresses, Crusaders', p. 257.
[197] *Cartulary*, n° 159; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 1188.
[198] *Cartulary*, 81; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 1209.
[199] *EYC*, vol. 3, p. 339; *EYC*, vol. 7, pp. 177-8.
[200] *Cartulary*, n° 110.
[201] *Cartulary*, n° 107; *EYC*, vol. 3, n° 1680; dated 1172-81.

Swane are placed together with other charters related to land in Pilley, not with the charters of the Nevills.

Another family of benefactors who held land from the Gants were the Chambords. Simon's and Alan's brother Robert is known to have held a half of a knight's fee from Robert de Gant in 1166 in Great and Little Barugh.[202] The grant of Simon and Alan de Chambord of two bovates of land in East Cowton was made in the mid-twelfth century, but for some reason it was not copied to the cartulary. The grant was then exchanged by the monks, between 1195 and 1208, with Agnes prioress of Marrick for forty-four acres of land and common pasture for 100 sheep in East Harlsey.[203] Robert Chambord issued, in the time of Henry II a confirmation charter of his brother's grant, which survived in the original form, but was not copied to the cartulary either.[204] This omission is rather puzzling, particularly that Robert Chambord witnessed other charters for Rievaulx abbey.[205] Several members of the Chambord family made grants to Bridlington priory, acts which indicate the influence of the Gants, the hereditary patrons of Bridlington.

The example of the Gant family and their tenants indicates how intertwined were tenurial connections in the spread of patterns for pious donations. It was very common to hold land from several lords, often each of the land portions being relatively small, and it may not be clear which of these connections provided an individual with the idea of becoming a benefactor of Rievaulx. Walter son of Asketill de Grimston held land from Robert de Gant, but also parts of the Bulmer fee, and members of these families were also benefactors of Rievaulx. Similarly, the Colvills held lands from both Gants and Mowbrays, but only one member of the Colvill family, Philip made a donation to Rievaulx.[206] Having many lords might give a kind of choice about which house, or which lord's foundation to support, but ultimately the decision would be influenced by a mixture of reasons imbedded in the local politics. Indeed, many historians point out that the patterns of religious benefactions do not correspond with the pattern of tenurial landholding, that those who held land from a number of honours did not make donations to all the religious houses of their lords. Decisions about religious benefaction were not based simply on arithmetic, that is the amount of land held from one lord did not always

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[202] *The Red Book*, vol. 1, p. 433.
[203] *Collectanae Topographica et Genealogica*, vol. 5 (London, 1838), p. 110. This charter was dated by Clay, *EYC*, vol. 5, p. 283; see also p. 184
[204] BL, Add. Ch. 20564; published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, p. 253.
[205] *Cartulary*, n° 43, 162; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 1249.
[206] Bodl., MS Dodsw. xciv, f. 137v; published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, p. 248.

pre-determine pious donations, often the location of the religious houses in relation to the held property mattered more.[207]

3. THE VESCY FAMILY AND THEIR TENANTS

Another important aristocratic benefactor of the abbey with many levels of connections was William de Vescy, a son of Eustace Fitz-John and Beatrice de Vescy. Eustace, another of the new men, was a royal justice of the north, working closely with Walter Espec. Similarly to Espec, he was also a benefactor of several religious houses, the founder of a Premonstratensian house in Alnwick, Gilbertine houses in Watton and Malton and an early benefactor of Fountains abbey. His son William marriage to Burga, a daughter of Robert de Stuteville, brought another set of high connections and was in fact an alliance between two powerful and antagonistic tenants of the Mowbrays. William de Vescy was the sheriff of Northumberland (1150-70) and held the Honour of Lancaster (1160-70). He is known to be a benefactor of many religious houses: Brinkburn, Selby, Alnwick, and Old Malton.[208] Unfortunately it is not known what exactly William de Vescy granted to Rievaulx abbey because only the confirmation by the Archbishop Roger of York survives, issued between 1164 and 1174.[209] William's own charter copied in the cartulary is a quitclaim of his rights to the waste below Pickering, issued between c. 1159 and 1174, except the pasture which he had given to Malton Priory.[210] It is very likely that the confirmation of the archbishop of York and this quitclaim does not refer to the same grant because the wording of the confirmation refers to the donation, not the quitclaim.

A manifestation of the continuing relationship between the Vescy family and the abbey, as neighbours, is the memorandum of an agreement between William Vescy (d. 1253) and Abbot Adam de Tilletai (1240-1260) copied into the cartulary in the thirteenth century.[211] This William was a grandson of William discussed in the previous paragraph and a son of Eustace de Vescy (d. 1216). William de Vescy, as many other

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[207] Cownie, *Religious Patronage*, p. 176.
[208] *EYC*, vol. 3, p. 199; *Peerage*, vol. 12, pt. 2, p. 275. Analysis of the political background of William de Vescy, see: Paul Dalton, 'Eustace Fitz John and the Politics of Anglo-Norman England: the Rise and Survival of a Twelfth-Century Royal Servant', *Speculum* 71 (1996), 363-80.
[209] *Cartulary*, n° 237; dating in *EEA*, vol. 5, n° 82, pp. 93-4.
[210] *Cartulary*, n° 190; dating in *EEA*, vol. 5, p. 93.
[211] This abbot is incorrectly identified as abbot Ailred by the editor of the cartulary; *Cartulary*, n° 279

noblemen, was concerned about securing appropriate hunting grounds and to have the animals there protected from poaching. According to this document the abbot gave permission to William to enclose a park in Castle Ings ('Eduimersch') within the waste below Pickering:

> Let it be known, that we without a claim and any lawsuit or any charge in future, have granted to the lord William de Vescy and his heirs a free park to be enclosed wherever they wish of the length of sixty feet and the same breadth, in his meadow of Castle Ings on the little hill next to the border of the meadow, opposite the bridge of Houm, so that the park has two exits, in which it was legitimate for him and his heirs to empark it according to what is contained more fully in the document of agreement made between us.[212]

This memorandum was copied in the final sections of the cartulary, in the cursive thirteenth century hand and was an outcome of a conflict, which is suggested by the wording of this document. The text of this memorandum was also copied into the Malton cartulary, a house founded by Eustace FitzJohn, which had holdings in the same area.[213] On the same folio in the volume from the Malton priory is a copy of another agreement between the priory's patron William de Vescy and Rievaulx abbey dated 22 March 1244 settling their conflict over the abbey's right of the common pasture in Castle Ings. It was agreed that the pasture should be unavailable to both parties between 1 March and 22 August, but after that until the following March, the abbey's flock should be given common pasture elsewhere and the enclosed pasture should be used by Vescy's demesne cattle. This routine should be repeated yearly. The parties also set up a procedure how to resolve future problems, if for example abbey's cattle should graze on the Castle Ings pasture during the close time.[214] This agreement was not copied in to Rievaulx cartulary and follows, in the Malton volume, after the memorandum about the emparkment in the Castle Ings. Despite this evidence, it appears that the agreement concerning the park set up by William Vescy was later than the document regarding common pasture there. It is unlikely that the detailed agreement about common pasture would ignore the Vescy's park located within that pasture.

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[212] 'Noveritis nos, absque reclamatione et ullius objectione calumpnie in futurum, concessisse Domino Willelmo de Vescy et heredibus suis liberum parcum undecunque voluerint includendum, longitudinis sexaginta pedum et ejusdem latitudinis, in prato suo de Eduiemersc in monticulo juxta divisam ejusdem prati versus pontem de Hou, ita quod parcus ille duos habeat exitus, in quo licebat illi et heredibus suis rationabiliter inparcare secundum quod in scriptis conventionis inter nos confectis plenius continetur.' BL, MS Cotton Julius D I, f. 174 [f. 191]; *Cartulary*, n° 279.

[213] Malton Register, BL, Cotton Claudius D. xi., f. 37v-38; published in *Honor of Pickering*, pp. 185-186. For the discussion of the conflict between Rievaulx and Malton see pp. 189-91.

[214] Malton Register, f. 38, publ. in *Honor of Pickering*, pp. 186-8.

Like the tenants of other great lords discussed in this chapter, several of the Vescy's men became benefactors of Rievaulx abbey. Roger de Clere, from a substantial knightly family had tenurial connections with Eustace Fitz-John and his son William de Vescy held Brompton, Westhorpe and Snainton (of the fee of Bigod) from Roger.[215] As to the contacts between de Cleres, Roger de Clere quitclaimed to the abbey a ditch made by the monks and all the land between the waste below Pickering and Roger's vill of Wilton. This charter documents an outcome of a case, tried by royal justices, between the abbey and Roger de Clere, who were in conflict over that land for some time before 1180. Among the witnesses of this quitclaim were several prominent noblemen and aristocrats who were benefactors of the abbey: Roger de Mowbray, William de Vescy, Roger de Stuteville, William de Stuteville, Everard II de Ros, the abbey's patron and some lesser men from the families of the abbey's donors: Robert de Surdeval, Willliam Harum, and Simon Sproxton.[216]

Helewise de Clere, who was either Roger's mother or sister, was married at some point to Jocelin Arecy. This couple also had a conflict with the abbey about their possession of Loftmarais and Theokemarais within the waste below Pickering. The abbey's right were not that clear in this case, or Jocelin pressed a hard bargain.[217] Their quitclaim was on the condition that the monks give Jocelin fifteen marks. His wife Helewise, a founderess of Yedingham priory (also known as Little Mareis), was an ardent supporter of monasteries, but after her death, the monks were concerned that Jocelin might start the conflict again, so they gave him two calves, twenty shillings and one cow to secure his goodwill. Also, as a part of the agreement, conducted in public, he promised not to cause any damage to the abbey's property. In return, the monks promised to pray for Jocelin after his death as they would for a monk or a lay brother of the abbey. The charter finishes with such declaration:

> I, Jocelin, swear in the presence of Dean Robert and many other clerical and lay people, by my own hand that I will never make any claim or change in future against the said monks concerning that land, or these agreements, either for myself or others, but I will support them just as a faithful and devoted brother of this house and I will stand with them loyally and faithfully in their law-suits and business.[218]

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[215] *EYC*, vol. 1, p. 480.

[216] *Cartulary*, n° 163; *EYC*, vol. 1, n° 610.

[217] For the discussion of the conflicts over the waste below Pickering see pp. 146-52.

[218] 'Ego vero Gocelinus coram Roberto decano et multis aliis clericis et laicis propria manu affidavi quod nunquam in posterum movebo adversus prefatos monachos de terra illa vel de illis conventionibus, aliquam querelam vel calumpniam, vel per me vel per aliquem alium, sed sicut frater domus illius fidelis et benevolus juvabo illos et stabo cum ipsi legittime et fideliter in eorum causis et negotiis.' *Cartulary*, n° 181; *EYC*, vol. 1, n° 611.

Somehow the fact that the forced prayers might not be particularly effective did not bother Jocelin. In fact, the acceptance to a fraternity was often seen as a legitimate return on a grant.[219] Also, it remains unanswered if and how the monks used Jocelin's help declared by this charter.

In the course of the discussion of the great lords who became benefactors of Rievaulx it appears that the abbey attracted only a relatively small number of great lords and none of them appeared to choose this abbey as a favourite house and be buried there to indicate a special attachment. The most striking characteristic of this group was not the amount of land given, but the great number of donations from their tenants and sub-tenants. These small grants were almost always located close to each other or even bordering, which helped the abbey to built compact estates. This tendency became even more pronounced in the case of a group discussed below.

4. OTHER BARONIAL FAMILIES AND THEIR TENANTS

Among other leading northern families, namely the Lacyes, Bruses and Aumâles, there were hardly any benefactors of Rievaulx abbey except on a very small scale; instead their generosity was directed towards different monastic houses. Nevertheless representatives of these families are discussed here due to their tenants' contacts with Rievaulx abbey.

Henry de Lacy was one of the important Yorkshire noblemen, who stood by Stephen against the empress Matilda and became one of the most prominent barons of the realm after the battle of Lincoln in 1141. He was not, however, particularly generous to Rievaulx abbey, but actively supported other foundations, including Cistercian houses.[220] Two of these were family foundations, the Cluniac house in Pontefract and the Augustinian one in Nostell. In 1147 Henry de Lacy himself founded a Cistercian house in Kirkstall of which he was a generous patron, but Rievaulx was beyond the area of his influence and interest. There is only one charter issued by him for the abbey, copied into the cartulary. It is a confirmation of a grant made by his man Adam son of Peter de Birkin of Oggethwaite of land with the iron ore and dead wood for smelting near Stainborough.[221] This confirmation was issued between 1158 and 1177 and was

[219] Thompson, 'From Alms', p. 237.
[220] *EYC*, vol. 3, p. 49.
[221] *Cartulary*, n° 98; *EYC*, vol. 3, n° 1507.

placed by the creator of the cartulary together with other charters of the Birkin family. Adam son of Peter de Birkin, unlike his lord, was one of the most generous benefactors of Rievaulx and he will be discussed later in more detail.

Another important Yorkshire family, known as generous patrons of Guisborough priory, the Brus family, also interacted on a limited level with the house of Rievaulx.[222] Parts of their extensive honour were held by a great number of knights of various standing, including important benefactors of the abbey: Lasceles and Ingrams among others. There are two confirmation charters by Adam II de Brus in the cartulary. One of them was a confirmation of the grant by his tenant Richard de Losth of thirty-three acres of land in Normanby with Saltcote-hill and fisheries in the Tees, which was issued between 1175 and 1185.[223] Adam II de Brus also confirmed his grant of fishery in Normanby with eight acres of land also between 1175 and 1185.[224] Richard Losth, had also family links with Rievaulx. His uncle Richard son of Thurstan de Normanby granted to Rievaulx an important property in Normanby, earlier than his nephew's grant, between 1170 and 1180. It consisted of a tillage at Saltcote-flat in Normanby, the water of Tees in his fee in Normanby for making fisheries and pasture for carriers' horses and the right of way through his property in Normanby.[225] His son, Robert, a cousin of Richard Losth, confirmed his father's grant soon after.[226] Between 1185 and 1195 Robert gave a stretch of land in Normanby lying between the property which the abbey held from Richard Losth, Fleet and 'domum monachorum', meaning probably buildings of the grange, and the river Tees.[227] Later on, he also confirmed agreements of lease of the fisheries, between 1189 and 1199, made by Walter priest of Eston with the abbot Ernald.[228]

Richard Losth himself added a missing part of the puzzle of the property in Normanby namely his inheritance bordering with those of his uncle. This donation consisted of several small grants helping the monks to round off what they had already accumulated in the area: thirty acres of land in Saltcote Flat in Normanby, lying between land which Richard son of Thurstan, his uncle, gave them and the river Tees, and between Wrange Flat on the east and Saltcote-hills on the west and in five other

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[222] Guisborough was founded and richly endowed in 1119 by Robert de Brus.
[223] *Cartulary*, n° 119; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 744.
[224] *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 664.
[225] *Cartulary*, n° 116; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 739.
[226] *Cartulary*, n° 117; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 740.
[227] *Cartulary*, n° 169; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 742.
[228] *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 741; for the reasons behind the lease see, pp. 179-80.

places; also his land in Saltcote-hills, his part of the water of Tees for fisheries, and pasture for 100 ewes. Richard's sons Roger and Ernald gave their consent for this alienation.[229] Afterwards, between 1175 and 1190, Richard Losth gave, again with the consent of his sons, one bovate of land and one acre for building purposes in Normanby.[230]

Another confirmation charter, between 1178 and about 1190, issued by Adam II de Brus is his confirmation of a substantial grant by William Ingram, from the family of the active benefactors of Rievaulx. This donation consisted originally of five bovates in Welburn, the site of a sheep-fold and pasture for 500 sheep and a meadow below Arncliffe.[231] In this case though, Brus's charter is copied among other grants of the Ingram family. This manoeuvre indicates that the Ingram family, although of lower standing, were more important as benefactors and their connections with the abbey were more important than their tenancy of Brus. Therefore the compiler of the cartulary grouped the Ingram charters in a distinctive set and was not concerned with their tenurial connections with the Bruses.

If we look at the distribution of the charters discussed above in the cartulary it is clear that the abbey was aware of the connections between those individuals, both within families — Richard son of Thurstan, Robert son of Richard and Richard Losth — and tenurial relations — Adam II de Brus and Richard Losth. Connections acquired via marriages, cousins and siblings, were recognised by the compiler of the cartulary by placing charters of the related individuals together. Similarly, the confirmation charters granted by tenants accompany donations of the lords. In some of these cases the donated properties were adjacent, but often they were simply located in the close vicinity.

By the mid-thirteenth century the generosity of the richest men was very much restricted, rarely stretching beyond confirmations or small value grants. In 1233 Peter III de Brus son of Peter confirmed several grants of his tenants, mainly to Guisborough priory but among them also a grant of Stephen and Richard and Dionisius de Eston originally given by his father Walter of two carucates of land in Cargo Fleet, York. Peter de Brus, as their overlord rendered to the abbey two shillings yearly due to him from the said property.[232]

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229 *Cartulary*, n° 118; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 743.
230 *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 745.
231 *Cartulary*, n° 121; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 121.
232 BL, Add. Char. 20578.

The last of the great barons, discussed here, who were connected to Rievaulx abbey was William, Lord of Holderness and the earl of York, one of the most powerful magnates in the North during the reign of King Stephen. William Aumâle was the overlord of the Ros family, hereditary patrons of Rievaulx abbey. As a benefactor of the religious houses he particularly favoured the Cistercian order and founded two daughter houses of Fountains abbey in Meaux and Vaudey (Lincolnshire). William's involvement with Rievaulx abbey was limited to only one quitclaim of his rights to 'Miclaholm'. This charter was copied to the cartulary together with the other documents related to the waste below Pickering, thus the involvement of William was motivated, in the compilator's understanding, by the economic conflict rather then any possible links through the Ros family, although the earl took the abbey into his special protection: 'Therefore I have taken the said House into my protection and custody, and similarly the monks and lay brothers of this House, just as my brothers.'[233] None of the other quit-claimants of the waste below Pickering made similar gestures. There are several possible explanation for this special relationship. Firstly William Aumâle as the founder of Meaux and Vaudey abbeys had a special interest in the Cistercian order; secondly as a great lord, he was expected to be protector of religious houses; thirdly the favour shown to Rievaulx might have been motivated by the tenurial links with the Ros family (although this last explanation is least likely considering that the hereditary patrons of Rievaulx were very reluctant benefactors themselves).

The only daughter and heir of William Aumâle, Hawise, married William de Mandeville earl of Essex in 1179/80.[234] Through his wife the earl acquired a claim to Thornton Dale, near Pickering which subsequently led to his contact with Rievaulx abbey. In 1181 William de Mandeville made a grant before the royal justices at Westminster of the ditch made by the monks and located between the waste of Pickering and his land in Thornton Dale and also the land between the ditch and the waste.[235] After he died, his widow Hawise married William de Fors who then became also earl of Aumâle. Some time after they got married in 1190, the new earl confirmed the grants of his predecessor. Among these was his confirmation of Earl William's quitclaim of 'Miclaholm' within the waste below Pickering issued between 1190 and 1195. Although this document is almost contemporary to the cartulary is was not copied

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[233] 'Ego etiam recepi eandem Domum in meam protectionem et custodiam, et monachos et conversos ejusdem Domus similiter, sicut fratres meos.' *Cartulary*, n° 185.
[234] *Peerage*, vol. 1, p. 353.
[235] *Cartulary*, n° 165; *EYC*, vol. 1, n° 617.

in this volume. The original surviving charter is the copy from the monastic archive and has a shelf-mark, indicating its location there. [236]

Almost sixty years later one of his successors, William of Fors earl of Aumâle became engaged in conflict with the abbey. On 18 November 1251 the abbot brought a case against the earl who demanded, on behalf of his tenants William and Beatrice of Aton, customs and services for eight tofts and one carucate of land in Ledbreston and one toft and one carucate in Angodeby, which the abbot held from him.[237] The conflict was resolved by a compromise, the abbot promised to do scutage, but not other services and paid twenty marks to the earl. In return William confirmed the abbey's possession of the land and dropped all claims he made on behalf of his tenants.

The cartulary provides excellent evidence that, in the first hundred and fifty years of its existence, Rievaulx abbey secured the patronage of several prominent aristocrats, earls and barons, of whom Roger Mowbray and Gilbert de Gant were the most generous. In contrast to Fountains abbey, this monastery had fewer benefactors from the top stratum of society, but even those who were benefactors, were important for Rievaulx. Fountains abbey had built the core of its estates on grants from the Percys, Mowbrays, Rumillies and Stutevilles, but like Rievaulx, the multitude of donations from knights gave this house its extensive estates.[238] Even if the wealthiest benefactors of Rievaulx were not particularly generous themselves, some of their tenants often were, and the lords, if not encouraged, at least did not object to these alienations. Some of the donors clearly favoured certain orders, such as the Gant family who preferred Cistercian monks as the recipients of their grants; others such as the Bruses spread their grants over several orders; but in all cases Rievaulx benefited from the donations of their tenants. However generosity towards monastic houses was not a characteristic exclusive to aristocratic families, in fact, many of the wealthy knights who were unconnected to the great families gave more to Rievaulx with much greater loss for themselves.

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[236] Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Reports on Manuscripts in Various Collections*, vol. 2 (London: HM Stationary Office 1903), p. 11.
[237] *Feet of Fines from 1246 to 1272*, p. 43.
[238] Wardrop, *Fountains Abbey,* pp. 133-70.

B. KNIGHTLY FAMILIES AND RIEVAULX ABBEY

The middle rank of benefactors played tangible role in the development of the abbey's estates as these people constituted the majority of the abbey's benefactors and often surpassed the generosity of the barons. Knights were based locally and were more accessible than the great lords who often spent considerable time with the royal court and were engaged in the political and military campaigns far from their northern estates. Knights' status, below the aristocrats discussed in the earlier part of this chapter, was defined by the possession of a knight's fee or fees; holdings could vary in size, from several, often held from a number of lords, to a fraction of a fee. Similarly to their lords, knights were often sub-infeudating their holding to other people, and building their own networks of tenants. Knights were a very diverse social stratum and the status of many families changed over the generations by the means of advantageous marriages, which could boost the economic power of the family. In Yorkshire there were several locally important families, many of them connected to each other by kinship and marriages.[239] Over the years many families acquired substantial holdings and political significance and broke though to the baronial level, others would lose their status altogether due to excessive alienations or other misfortunes. In their quest for social advancement, many knightly families tried to emulate those above them. Since religious patronage was so widespread among the aristocrats, knights were, increasingly in the twelfth century, following their example. However, this does not mean that all the grants from knights were given purely for the sake of social elevation, as other reasons, such as piety or personal motivations, also played an important role. The participation of knights in the foundation of and donation to Cistercian houses was common throughout Europe and significantly helped the expansion of the order.

1. THE BIRKIN FAMILY AND THEIR TENANTS

Among this stratum of donors one family in particular displayed an unparalleled generosity. The Birkin family remained generous benefactors to the abbey for four generations, although there was no clear tenurial reason for the grants.[240] The Lacy family who were their lords founded, among other houses, Pontefract Priory and Kirkstall Abbey, but had no interest in Rievaulx. The first member of the Birkin family

[239] Green, *Aristocracy*, p. 414.

who interacted with Rievaulx abbey was Emma, wife of Peter, (sister of John de Lasceles). Her favourite monastic house was Selby, but she also granted to Rievaulx two carucates in Shitlington and Flockton (south-west of Wakefield) with their respective common pastures between 1145 and 1160.[241]

Her son Adam son of Peter married twice, firstly with Matilda, probably a sister of Adam son of Swane, also a benefactor of Rievaulx. Their son Robert died without an heir. From the second marriage, also to a woman called Matilda, who was a co-heir of Robert de Caux, there were five children: John (the heir), Peter, Roger, William and Juliana.[242] When Adam son of Peter died in 1184 John succeeded him in the office of the forestership of Sherwood.[243]

Although Adam son of Peter was a benefactor of several houses: Selby, Monk Bretton, Pontefract, Kirkstall, Headley, Esholt and Hampole, due to tenurial and family connections (with the first five houses and physical proximity with the last two houses) his donations to Rievaulx appear to be motivated by strong personal choice.[244] His charters also have an individual touch. Apart from the conventional request for the salvation of the souls of his relatives and his own, there is a special request for salvation of those who 'may have sinned for me and because of me'.[245] Although, the phrase in itself is conventional, it did not appear in the charters of any other benefactors of Rievaulx abbey. It might have been suggested by the scribe of Adam son Peter's charters, but it is unlikely that the scribe would do it without Adam's request for a wording somehow reflecting his concerns. There was clearly something in his past, something which he had done, which he deeply regretted and these donations to monasteries had strong expiatory overtones. It likely that the unknown sins of Adam son of Peter were related to the unstable years of King Stephen reign, a difficult time in the northern peripheries, marked by violence and fast-changing alliances.[246]

The charters of Adam copied in the cartulary are numerous and consistently placed together with other documents issued by members of his family. The first

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[240] For the family tree see: *EYC*, vol. 3, p. 359.
[241] *EYC*, vol. 3, n° 1724.
[242] *EYC*, vol. 3, pp. 358-9.
[243] *EYC*, vol. 10, p. 170.
[244] Burton, *Monastic Order*, p. 212.
[245] 'illiorum qui peccaverit per me et pro me'
[246] On the influences on the phraseology and composition of the charters see: David Postles, 'Country *Clerici* and the Composition of English Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Charters', in *Charters and the Use of the Written Word in Medieval Society*', ed. Karl Heidecker, Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy vol. 5, (Thurnhaut: Brepols, 2000), pp. 27-42. I would like to thank Dr Janet Burton for her suggestions concerning this peculiar phrase.

charter, dated between 1142 and 1150, comprises the grant of a smithy in Stainborough (near Barnsley) by the river Dove (in Farndale), a ridding called Oggethwaite with the right to extract iron ore, dead wood for charcoal and a common pasture there.[247] The next charter, issued before 1160, indicates how competition for the grants and benefactors had intensified between the religious houses. In this document, Adam son of Peter promised that he would not grant any property to any monastic house other than Rievaulx in the places where he has already given them some land:

> Let it be known that I have granted and established and confirmed, [...] that I and my heirs will never accept any other men of any other religious order in any vill, or land, or pasture, wherever I have given them land or pasture or mining rights, except the said monks of Rievaulx.[248]

Although Adam was exceptionally generous to Rievaulx abbey this particular promise was not fulfilled as he gave land there to many other houses, including Byland abbey.

In the next charter (1170-85) Adam gave, with the consent of his second wife Matilda and son Robert land in the territory of Shitlington consisting of ten acres in Breary Royd and twenty acres of forest in Little Midgley, in return for five shillings of yearly service-payment.[249] The next charter specified use of the land granted in Faweather (Rumbolds Moor, parish of Bingley) and in Stainborough — for building smithies and wood for making charcoal, essential in iron production.[250] Similarly another of Adam's charters is also concerned with an 'industrial' grant. He gave Blacker (Upper Hoyland) for the site of iron smithies, the iron ore in his part of Shitlington and Flockton, the right to collect dead wood for making charcoal there, twenty acres between Little Midgley and the stream of Elmley, a pasture and a permission to build a mill at Blacker.[251] Another important grant given by Adam, with the consent of his mother and brother, was a site for a grange in Shitlington with two carucates of land and a common of pasture of Flockton, and also material for buildings and fuel.[252]

The exclusivity of mining rights was very much sought after by the monasteries and Adam son of Peter promised just that in his grant of iron and dead wood in Halton (a lost vill), Bingley, Shipley, Heaton and Chellow in the parish of Bradford:

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[247] *Cartulary*, n° 91; *EYC*, vol. 3, n° 1725.

[248] 'Sciatis me concessisse ac statuisse, ac confirmasse (...) quod ego et heredes mei nunquam recolligemus alicujus Religionis homines in villa aliqua, vel terra, vel pastura, ubicunque dedi eis terram vel pasturam vel mineriam, preter eosdem Monachos Rievallenses.' *Cartulary*, n° 92.

[249] *Cartulary*, n° 93; *EYC*, vol. 3, n° 1722.

[250] *Cartulary*, n° 94; *EYC*, vol. 3, n° 1726; dated 1150-1160.

[251] *Cartulary*, n° 95; *EYC*, vol. 3, n° 1728; dated 1150-1170.

[252] *Cartulary*, n° 99; *EYC*, vol. 3, n° 1727; dated 1150-1160.

> I have given (...) all the dead wood and the whole minerals rights in Halton and Shipley, and in Heaton and in Chellow, so that nobody in these above said places should build forges, except the said monks.[253]

Between 1173 and 1185 Adam son of Peter increased, with the consent of his sons John, Peter, Roger and William, his previous grant of smithies in Stainborough, with smithies for the production of iron, located by the river Dove. He also gave the ridding called Oggethwaite, twelve acres of land to the north of their smithy, all the iron ore in the town and wood for charcoal and a common pasture for four horses, eight oxen, five cows and their calves.[254]

In the area of Adam's previous grant to Bolton Priory, he also gave to Rievaulx the whole vill of Halton between 1166 and 1185 with the exception of one carucate which he granted previously to Bolton convent. The abbey of Rievaulx promised to pay six shillings of the annual service, which were previously paid by William de Kasteleia and Thomas de Mohaut. The grantor added also an annual pittance of bread and fish to be given on the anniversary of his death.[255]

The generosity of Adam son of Peter was shared by other members of his family as Adam's younger brother, Roger, was also a benefactor of Rievaulx abbey. He confirmed his brother's grant of fifteen acres in Blacker.[256] Roger is also known to give some land in Shitlington and Flockton, which was confirmed by his brother.[257] Uncharacteristically for many other families, the first dispute between Rievaulx and Birkins occurred only in the early thirteenth century. The younger son of Adam Birkin, Peter de Birkin, sued in 1204 his brother Roger in an assize of mort d'ancestor and the abbot of Rievaulx as Roger's tenant for one and a half carucates in Shitlington. The case remained unresolved because Peter and Roger were brothers from the same parents, but Peter was allowed to seek a writ of right and the abbot a separate writ.[258]

Adam's son and heir, John de Birkin (d. 1227) appeared in numerous charters of his father, giving consent to the alienation of family property. He also gave a donation after his father's death for the salvation of his soul, his mother's and all his relatives. The

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[253] 'me dedisse (...) totum mortuum boscum et totam mineriam de Hageltune et Schipeleia et de Hetune et de Chelleslawa, ita ut nullus in his predictis locis favercam faciat nisi predicti monachi'. *Cartulary*, n° 100; *YD*, vol. 1, n° 210; dated 1166.
[254] *EYC*, vol. 3, n° 1737.
[255] BL, Eg. Ch. 2247; for an English summary of this charters see, *YD*, vol. 1, n° 211. There were further accessions in the vill of Halton at the end of twelfth century, for example a grant of Walter Grimet later confirmed by his widow Johanna. BL, Eg. Ch. 2248.
[256] *Cartulary*, n° 96.
[257] *Cartulary*, n° 97.

grant, between 1207 and 1227 consisted of a wood in Harden for the purpose of making charcoal and minerals there, also a right to pasture at Hadelton from Michaelmas to Martinmas, and for a limited number of animals outside at that time. Similarly to his father's grant he restricted the building of forges in Harden to Rievaulx abbey only.[259]

The Birkin family was exceptional also in the fact that their generosity continued beyond the first two generations, allowing the abbey to strengthen its holdings in the West Riding. The grandson of Adam son of Peter, a son of John, Thomas de Birkin (died in 1230) granted to the abbey his lands and wood in Harden located between Halton and Cullingworth between 1227 and 1230.[260] His sister and heiress, Isabel, married Robert Everingham and they also confirmed, between 1230 and 1235 grants of Adam and John de Birkin of Halton vill, wood in Harden, twelfth bovates in Cullingworth, three bovates in Fagheder (present day Faweather), and all their grants in Rumbolds Moor and common pasture in Stainborough (near Barnsley).[261] The same couple confirmed the right of the abbey in 1235 to hold the vill of Halton given previously by Adam son of Peter, grandfather of Isabel, sixteen bovates given by John de Casteleya, nine bovates and the mill in Cullingworth (a gift of Robert Meinil), three bovates there given by Esholt nunnery, as well as other properties in Rumbolds Moor and Steiborough (common pastures) and wood in Harden, which Adam and his son John had donated to the abbey.[262]

Contact between the Birkin family, their tenants and Rievaulx continued beyond the first three generations. In 1228 the abbot sued John de Casteleya by an assise of novel disseisin for the common pasture in Harden.[263] As a result of the law-suit, two years later, in 1230 John de Casteleya sold to the abbey the land in Harden for six marks. This property was held by him from John de Birkin (who cannot be the same person as the son of Adam son of Peter, because this John died in 1227). In order to make the sale more secure John de Casteleya and his brother Richard made a guarantee by John de Hoilbire (probably from the cell of Benedictine house of St. Werburgh's, Chester) who was then a guest in the abbey, that they would never challenge the abbey's rights to the above said land.[264] These promises were not as strong as the grantors

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[258] *Yorkshire Assize*, p. 23; also published in *Pleas before the King or his Justices 1198-1212*, Selden Society vol. 83, ed. Doris M. Stenton (London: Bernard Quavritch, 1967), n° 1007.
[259] *YD*, vol. 1, n° 212.
[260] BL, Eg. Ch. 2249; for an English summary of this charter, see *YD*, vol. 1, n ° 213.
[261] BL, Eg. Ch. 2250; for an English summery of this charter, see *YD*, vol. 1, n ° 214.
[262] *The Feet of Fines 1232 to 1246*, pp. 39-40.
[263] *PR, 1225-32*, p. 222.
[264] BL, Eg. Ch. 2251; for an English summary of this charter, see *YD*, vol. 1, n ° 215.

believed. In 1234 Amabel the widow of John de Casteleya quitclaimed to the abbey of Rievaulx with her second husband, Robert le Bulur, sixteen acres in Halton, seventeen acres of wood and three assarts in Harden and received a compensation of forty shillings.[265] These grants in Halton formed one of the important 'industrial' granges of Rievaulx abbey which operated a number of iron works.[266] The security of its holdings there were worth all the compensation money given to the dissatisfied heir.

Fragmentation of the vill of Harden and the great number of people having possession or various rights there resulted in a number of conflicts or potential conflicts in the first half of the thirteenth century, which are documented by the number of quitclaims. Thomas de Harden issued two quitclaims to Rievaulx abbey of his rights to Harden. After 1234 he dropped his claims to the common of the woods in Harden, Drieclogh and Redimire.[267] Then, probably in 1240s, he quitclaimed specific rights to the wood of Harden — the right to collect wood, and free pannage for his swine in the freehold at Cullingworth. The abbey paid ten marks for these rights, also Thomas de Hedne and his men retained right of common pasture in the wood for the cattle from Cullingworth.[268]

Conflicts between the abbey and its neighbours in the area continued. In 1267-68 the lay employees of the abbey from the Halton grange attacked the men sent by de Lacy's steward, Robert de Ripariis, to impound the abbey's cattle from the grange because they were grazing on the common pasture of the vill of Bradford to which the abbey had no rights. While grange workers tried to rescue the cattle one of the steward's men was seriously injured in a fight and died soon after.[269] This example of the abbey's violent clash with its neighbours, is however, not isolated, and shows that pasture rights continued to be a vexatious issue throughout the discussed period.

The grants of the Birkin family and their tenants were the bases of the extensive iron works of Rievaulx abbey in Chellow, Flockton, Halton, Harden, Heaton, Shipley and Shitlington. These areas, all in West Riding, were at a considerable distance from Rievaulx, but this was not a deterrent for the abbey which recognised their commercial value. Other houses, Byland (Bentley and Denby granges) Fountains (Bradley and

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[265] *The Feet of Fines 1232 to 1246*, pp. 7-8.
[266] Stephen Moorhouse, 'Monastic Estates: their Composition and Development', in *The Archaeology of Rural Monasteries*, ed. Roberta Gilchrist and Harold Mytum, British Archaeological Reports vol. 203 (Oxford: B.A.R., 1989), p. 31.
[267] BL, Eg. Ch. 2252; for an English summary of this charter, see *YD*, vol. 1, n ° 217.
[268] BL, Eg. Ch. 2253; for an English summary of this charter, see *YD*, vol. 1, n ° 216.
[269] Tower Assize, n° 37, m. 6d, in *Notes on the Religious*, vol. 1, pp. 177-8.

Ainley granges) and Selby (Chellow grange) also established their iron works in close proximity to each other in this area.[270]

2. THE FAMILY OF SAXE OF HORBURY

Another knightly family with substantial holdings in the Shitlington area were the descendants of Saxe of Horbury (parish of Thornhill). Saxe received Middle Shitlington from William earl Warenne between 1118-1130 and the family increased their holding there in the course of the twelfth century.[271] Saxe's son was one of the early benefactors of Rievaulx and then his son and grandsons continued to support the abbey. Matthew son of Saxe (born about 1130) granted to Rievaulx abbey between 1155 and 1160, an 'industrial' site in Blacker with iron and dead wood for making charcoal, and also his part of a wood in Flocton and Shitlington with common pastures and the licence to make a mill-pond on the stream in Blacker.[272] His younger brother Philip son of Saxe gave the abbey of Rievaulx land in his part of Shitlington in Flocton, but this grant is known only from the papal confirmation of Alexander III.[273] Mathew's older son and heir Thomas, steward of the Warenne fee in Yorkshire, confirmed in 1199 his father's grant of Blacker, Shitlington and Flocton to Rievaulx.[274] The parties continued to be neighbours and some more re-adjustments of borders took place between them. In 1199 Abbot Ernulf of Rievaulx quitclaimed to Thomas the right to a house standing on the western side of Blacker and made an agreement about dead wood and iron there.[275] Mathew's younger son Jordan (born c. 1155) granted to Rievaulx, between 1190 and 1204, his part of arable land in Flocton (called Cockesclough) and the right of passage through Jordan's land to it.[276] This string of grants allowed the abbey to create a compact and secure holding of variable use, partly agricultural and partly industrial.

Rievaulx abbey was very successful in securing substantial grants in south-west and west Yorkshire. This area, rich in minerals, particularly iron, had been coveted by

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[270] *West Yorkshire*, vol. 3, p. 779.
[271] *West Yorkshire*, vol. 2, p. 502.
[272] *Cartulary*, n° 101; *EYC*, vol. 3, n° 1753; dating of the charter after C. T. Clay, 'Notes on the early Generations of the family of Horbury', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 26 (1922), 341. This grant was confirmed among other donations by Pope Alexander III in 1167-69; *Cartulary*, n° 252; *PU*, vol. 1, n° 105.
[273] *Cartulary*, n° 252.
[274] *EYC*, vol. 3, n° 1754.
[275] *EYC*, vol. 3, n° 1755.

many monastic houses, but Rievaulx abbey was particularly effective in obtaining a monopoly for its industrial granges. Most of the 'industrial' grants in the West Riding were received from members of the Birkin family and their tenants, but in other areas, Rievaulx also benefited from the generosity of other wealthy knightly families, among them descendants of Saxe de Horbury.

3. THE BULMER FAMILY AND THEIR TENANTS

Among the knightly benefactors of Rievaulx abbey the Bulmers were certainly the wealthiest and most prominent family. The first noted member of this family was Ansketil (died about 1129) a native Anglo-Scandinavian landowner, who secured a sheriffdom and royal grants, held mainly in chief and occupied also a number of sub-tenancies from the Rumilly and Mowbray families. Ansketil, although native to the north, belonged to the group of new men benefiting from the royal patronage.[277] His son Bertram de Bulmer became sheriff of York in 1130 and then between 1155 and 1163. He held, besides what he already inherited from his father, the tenancy of the honour of Skipton and probably some subtenancies of the Percy fee.[278] Following the example of many other people of his standing and above, Bertram founded an Augustinian house in Marton during the reign of King Stephen, and he was also a benefactor of Byland abbey. His marriage to Emma, a daughter of Robert Fossard brought very desirable connections for the family keen to preserve and advance its position. Bertram's sister Sibil married Stephen de Meinil I, who was present at the foundation of Rievaulx abbey and later became its benefactor.[279]

The Bulmer family was closely associated with Rievaulx abbey in a number of ways. Stephen de Bulmer, who died in 1171-72, brother of Bertram de Bulmer, not his grandson as the editor of the cartulary suggested, was the first member of this family to be connected to Rievaulx abbey.[280] Stephen de Bulmer confirmed, on behalf of his son and heir Thomas de Muschamps, an arrangement between their man, Walter de Stainesby, and Rievaulx abbey about the fishery on the river Tees with eight acres of land belonging to it of which no details are given. As a part of the confirmation deal Stephen and Thomas, with their wives and children, were admitted into the

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[276] *EYC*, vol. 3, n° 1688.
[277] Dalton, *Conquest*, p. 100.
[278] *EYC*, vol. 11, p. 180.
[279] For all the family connection see: *EYC*, vol. 2, p. 128.
[280] My identification is based on the family tree in the *EYC*, vol. 2, p. 128.

confraternity of the house and promised prayers.[281] Walter de Stainesby, Bulmers' tenant, had a long standing interest in Rievaulx abbey and appeared together with Thomas Muschamps in the witness list of Hugh Malabisse's grant to Rievaulx.[282] Walter also held land from Meinil and therefore appeared together with Rainald de Meinil in the witness list of Adam II de Brus' charter of confirmation to Rievaulx, who was their overlord.[283]

The connection between the Bulmer and Meinil families might have influenced Bertram de Bulmer to give Rievaulx one carucate in Welburn, which was until then held from him by Aschetil son of Gospatric de Brawby. The former tenant received, in exchange, some other land, although the location is not specified in this charter.[284] Such a grant always had potential for causing future trouble, particularly from the heir of Ansketil who might dispute the rights of the abbey to the part of Welburn, which used to belong to their ancestors. Bertram de Bulmer's grant, however small must have been valued as it was located in the area of great interest to the abbey. Larger parts of Welburn had already been given to the abbey by Gundreda de Mowbray and augmented later by her son Roger.[285] A clear sign of the monks' concern over the security of the grant was the fact that they copied into the cartulary the charter of the grant of Bertram de Bulmer to his tenant Asketil son of Gospatric of eleven bovates in Flocton being exchanged for this one carucate in Welburn given to the abbey. The witness list of this charter opens with the name of Abbot Ailred of Rievaulx, which indicates the strong interest of the abbey in securing this deal. Bertram de Bulmer had to accommodate the cost of the exchange or rather buy the permission of Asketil. He did not increase the service payment from the new plot of land, although it was three bovates larger than the property in Welburn.

> Therefore I wish and grant that the said Asketil and his heirs should hold eleven bovates in the fee and inheritance of me and my heirs, with all the free customs belonging to it and that service which they used to do for the above said carucate of land in Welburn, and there should be in no way any increase in service, which should belong to me or to my heirs on the account of the addition of the three bovates of land.[286]

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[281] *EYC*, vol. 3, n° 907.
[282] *Cartulary*, n° 75.
[283] *Cartulary*, n° 119; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 744.
[284] *Cartulary*, n° 104; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 1049; dated 1154-1157.
[285] *Cartulary*, n° 56, 64. See discussion on pp. 84-5, 89-91.
[286] 'itaque volo et concedo quod ipse Aschetillus et heredes sui teneant xi bovatas in feodo et hereditate de me et de heredibus meis et cum omnibus liberis consuetudinibus et eodem servitio quod faciebant de predicta carrucata terre de Welleburn et nullo modo crescet aliquid servitium

Like many other lords, including Roger de Mowbray, Bertram had to make a compromise at his own expense to satisfy the rights of his tenant and to support the abbey at the same time. The potential for a dispute between Asketil and the abbey was diverted, but the expense was borne by his lord Bertram.

Bertram de Bulmer died in 1166 and his daughter and heir Emma (d. 1208) married Geoffrey de Valognes who held, in 1166, a tenancy of the honour of Skipton.[287] Their relative or descendant Roger de Valognes de Newton granted to Rievaulx, in the early thirteenth century, five bovates of land in Newton. His son John tried to dispute the rights of the abbey to this plot of land, but eventually issued a quitclaim.[288]

Moving on to another family it appears that problems with the identification of some individuals may blur the precise nature of relations between the abbey and these families. William Farrer identified Asketil de Habton or Ryedale, son of Gospatric with Asketil son of Gospatric de Brageby.[289] If this identification is correct this leads us to another family of smaller tenants who maintained long-term links with Rievaulx abbey. They were tenants of Roger de Mowbray in 1166 from several properties and Walter son of Aschetil son of Gospatric held half of a knight's fee of Robert de Gant according to the assessment of the same year.[290] These tenurial links might therefore lead this family into becoming benefactors of Rievaulx abbey. On the other hand his father Asketil, son of Gospatric, held one knight's fee from Bertram de Bulmer who was also benefactor of Rievaulx abbey. This second connection appears to be more plausible since his lord Bertram granted to the abbey one carucate in Welburn which Asketil held from him.[291] The charter recording this act was added later, probably at the very end of the twelfth century, to the main body of the cartulary without the title or number, the hand is smaller and more cursive. This late addition to the cartulary may indicate some concerns of the monks over the security of Welburn and a possible claim from Asketil's heir, but there is no direct information about the dispute.

The first benefactors of Rievaulx abbey from this family were the brothers Roger and Aschetil de Ridale son of Gospatric who granted one toft and two acres in

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quod michi vel heredibus meis pertineat propter iii bovatas terre de incremento.' *Cartulary*, n° 214; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 782; dated 1147-1163.

[287] *EYC*, vol. 11, p. 180.

[288] Bodl., MS Dodsw. vii, f. 116; published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, p. 218.

[289] *EYC*, vol. 2, p. 119.

[290] *Red Book*, vol. 1, pp. 419, 433.

[291] BL, MS Cotton Julius D I, f. 141 [f. 148]; *Cartulary*, n° 214.

Wombleton.[292] After his death Ascaria, the widow of Aschetil son of Gospatric, confirmed one carucate of land in Welburn which was a part of her dower.[293] Patrick de Ridale, the youngest son of Ansketil and brother of Walter, succeeded his father and brothers to the family lands about 1175.[294] He gave to the abbey a right of way through the moor of Habton for the abbey's employees, lay brothers, carriages and animals.[295] Although this was a small grant in itself it allowed effective access to those lands of Rievaulx abbey which were located between the properties of Patrick and other men. This piece of land would be of little use if entry to it was restricted.

The Bulmer family is a good example of a wealthy family on the rise who had given generously to a number of religious houses and encouraged their tenants to do the same, even if this meant a material loss for them. The Bulmers were a part of the network of benefactors of Rievaulx abbey connected by marriages, land-holdings and political affinities between the new men who lived, or settled in the area to become not only neighbours, but also benefactors of the Cistercian monks.

4. THE MEINIL FAMILY AND THEIR TENANTS

Bertram de Bulmer's brother-in-law, Stephen I de Meinil was connected to Rievaulx abbey in many ways. Firstly, he was a neighbour of Walter Espec and his name appears in the so-called foundation charter in the second place on the list of neighbours witnessing the act.[296] It is important to remember at this point that this charter is in fact a compilation of two documents, one related to the actual foundation ceremony and the second one to the augmentation of the foundation grant which took place between 1145 and 1153. Stephen I de Meinil was therefore a witness at one or both of these ceremonies, and as a neighbour, was understandably interested in the new monastic house.

Stephen I de Meinil was a prominent person, connected to Eustace Fitz-John with whom he negotiated an agreement between William de St Barbe and William Cumin in 1143 in their dispute over the see of Durham.[297] Stephen appeared also as a

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[292] *CPR 1330-1334*, p. 316; published in the *Cartulary*, p. 285.
[293] *Cartulary*, n° 105.
[294] *Yorkshire Deeds*, vol. 5, ed. C. T. Clay, Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Record Series 69 (1926), p. 181.
[295] *CPR 1330-1334*, p. 316; published in the *Cartulary*, p. 289.
[296] *Cartulary*, n° 42.
[297] A. Young, *William Cumin: Border Politics and the Bishopric of Durham 1141-1144*, University of York, Borthwick Paper no. 54 (1979).

witness on many important monastic charters between 1120 and 1140.[298] His gift to Rievaulx was made between 1145 and 1152 and consisted of the vill of Stainton.[299] This land was given with the consent of Sibil his wife and his sons Robert and Henry, but the donor reserved a right to take timber from Stainton and requested one mark yearly of service payment from the monks.[300] This grant was later confirmed by Roger de Mowbray.[301] The amount of service payment is interpreted by William Farrer in the following way: 'Possibly Meinil received little more from it than the chief rent of two marks which Hugh Malabisse the mesne lord paid to Roger de Mowbray, the chief lord.'[302]

The younger son of Stephen I, Henry de Meinil, did not add anything to his father's donation, but confirmed grants of his men in Broughton (Cleveland, parish of Kirkby), that is thirteen acres given by Jordan Pain, belonging to Henry's fee there, and two acres also in Broughton given by Alan Barn and Bernard who were tenants of Jordan.[303] Henry de Meinil also reserved his right of arbitration in the case of conflicts between Jordan, his heir and the monastery. This clause appears to copy the behaviour of the great barons, such as the Mowbrays or Gants whose courts were a legal arena in case of disputes between their tenants and their monasteries.

> And if by chance it should happen that Jordan or his heirs would wish to trouble the said monks on the account of the said grant, I and my heirs will perform full justice for them in this.[304]

In this way, even if Henry de Meinil lost direct control over the alienated property, he could exert some degree of control over its future.

The next generation of the Meinil family represented by Stephen II, (d. in 1188) continued to support Rievaulx abbey. Stephen II was the grandson of Stephen I, and the son of Robert de Meinil, the older brother of Henry. He gave, between 1175 and 1185, a part of the woodland of Greenhove bordering on the east side with Great Broughton and on the west side with Bilsdale, for the salvation of his own soul, his wife's and all their

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[298] *EYC*, vol. 2, p. 137.
[299] BL, MS Cotton Julius D I, f. 15v [f. 19v].
[300] *Cartulary*, n° 72; *EYC*, vol. 3, n° 1842; dated 1145-1152.
[301] *Cartulary*, n° 71; *EYC*, vol. 3, n° 1843; dated 1154-1164.
[302] *EYC*, vol. 3, p. 452.
[303] The original grant of Jordan Pain was given between c. 1180 and 1188. *Cartulary*, n° 123; *EYC*, vol. 1, n° 580.
[304] 'Et si forte contigerit quod Jordanus vel heredes ejus de ipsa elemosina molestiam eisdem monachis inferre voluerint, ego et heredes mei plenariam inde illis justitiam exhibebimus.' *Cartulary*, n° 125; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 775; dated 1175-1185.

relatives.[305] Although he came from a family of generous benefactors to the abbey it is worth to pointing out another connection to the abbey created by his marriage. Stephen II's wife was Joan, a daughter of Robert I de Ros, patron of the abbey. Robert was not particularly generous towards Rievaulx abbey, but his son-in-law might have wanted to show support for the family foundation of his in-laws, although Stephen II did not show any interest in Kirkham priory, their favourite house.

More than one hundred years after the death of Stephen II, when his great-grandson Nicolas de Meinil died, the connection of the family with Rievaulx abbey was still evident. The inquisition into the lands of Nicolas who died on 28 May 1299 revealed that the abbot of Rievaulx held from him four carucates in Little Broughton (near Stokesley) in frankalmoign, each worth forty shillings yearly.[306]

The Meinil family particularly favoured white monks and were also long-standing benefactors of another Cistercian house, Fountains abbey. Although Stephen II requested spiritual benefits from the monks of Rievaulx, he planned to enter Fountains abbey as a monk in old age, and for that purpose, he granted to the latter land in Eston for building fisheries.[307]

Some indication of the abbey's understanding of the position of the Meinil family is given by the design of the cartulary. The Meinil charters are dispersed in the cartulary, Stephen I's charter is placed together with Malabisse documents because they were holding land within the Malet fee and the Malabisses also gave land in Stainton to Rievaulx abbey. Stephen I's charter is actually preceded by its confirmation issued by Roger de Mowbray. Henry Meinil's charter is placed with other charters related to the same vill and Stephen II's charter seems to be located without any special reason. This may indicate that they were not seen by the monks as a significant family on its own, and each Meinil was identified by his connections with other benefactors of Rievaulx abbey.

5. THE LASCELES FAMILY

Among the most long lasting relationships between the abbey and a knightly family was one with the Lasceles of Bordelby. They were knightly tenants of the Brus

[305] *Cartulary*, n° 164; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 799.
[306] *Yorkshire Inquisitions,* vol. 3, ed. William Brown, Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Record Series 31 (1902), p. 117.
[307] Wardrop, *Fountains Abbey,* p. 167.

fee in Morton, Bordelby, East Harlsey with hamlets of Salcoc and Siddall. Although the family was large, the main branch of the kin, which had substantial holdings in the Honour of Richmond and advanced its position considerably in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, in contrast to the lesser branches of the kin, did not interact with Rievaulx abbey.

Robert de Lasceles of Bordelby was one of the early benefactors of the house in the areas of Cowton and Harlsey. Between 1154 and 1159 he gave one carucate in Morton in the parish of East Harsley. This gift was later confirmed by King Henry II, but in the royal charter the grant in Morton is attributed jointly to Robert and his son Geoffrey.[308] This grant consisted of the specified half of the vill and the common pasture belonging to it. The abbey was obliged to pay one mark yearly for the services. In the 1160s Robert gave to the abbey an income of one mark from his mill in Bordelby.[309] His cousin, William de Lasceles of Cowton gave to the abbey before 1162, a meadow in Cowton, which he acquired from the exchange with Robert de Ros and his wife for one bovate of land in the same vill, which William the carpenter had held.[310]

The next charter copied to the cartulary after Robert's grant is his son's confirmation given between 1170 and 1176. Geoffrey de Lasceles, with the consent of his brothers Robert and William, confirmed half of the vill, but also other properties given by his father, namely the common pasture of East Harlsey and Bordelby for 400 sheep, ten cows, a bull and oxen sufficient to till that land, one carucate consisting of eight perches lying on the south side with toft and croft. The donor placed a restriction on the use of the common pasture by himself and his people, which favoured the flocks of the abbey.

> Within and outside, wherever my cattle and those of the people of these vills should be pastured, provided that nevertheless, their lamb should not be pastured in stubble after harvest of the above said vills, neither should my sheep nor those [belonging] to the people of these vills be pastured in their stubble.[311]

This clause is one of many indications of practical difficulties faced by users of common pastures when new flocks belonging to a third party were introduced. At the point of donating pasture right to the abbey, the donors wanted to secure some

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[308] *Cartulary* n° 87; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 727; *Cartulary*, n° 212.
[309] Bodl., MS Dodsw. vii, f. 51v; published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, p. 206.
[310] Bodl., MS Dodsw. vii, f. 152v-153; published incomplete and with mistakes (Robert de Ros is transcribed as Richard de Ros) in the *Cartulary*, p. 207.
[311] 'intus et extra, ubicunque pecora mea et hominum earundem villarum pascuntur, ita tamen quod agni eorum non pascentur in bladis predictarum villarum, nec agni mei nec hominum earundem villarum pascentur in bladis illorum.' *Cartulary*, n° 88; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 728.

consensus and prevent future disputes by putting in place clear guidelines concerning use of the pasture. In this case however the arrangement favours one user of the common pasture, the abbey, and puts restrictions on use by other parties.

Between 1170 and 1176 Geoffrey de Lasceles also confirmed his father's grant of a tillage on the south side of Morton given by Robert in return for admittance into the fraternity of Rievaulx abbey. Similarly he confirmed his father's grant, for the purpose of the salvation of his own soul and his father's fraternity of the abbey, of the tenement of the late Robert de Hernievill. The monks were obliged to pay one mark yearly of the services.[312]

Parallel to the Lasceles grants, their tenants also gave land to Rievaulx abbey, which effectively augmented their lords' donations. Between 1166 and 1176 Jocelin de Harsley, who was a man of Geoffrey de Lasceles, gave to the abbey three acres in Hersley located on the south side of the land belonging to his lord and to the east of the town. His wife gave her consent for the grant, because those three acres were her dowry; Jocelin's lords, Geoffrey de Lasceles and Rainald de Tunstal also gave their permission.[313] This generosity continued in the next generations; William son of Jocelin gave to the abbey one more acre in Hersley, his son Ralph son of William, Jocelin's grandson added sixteen acres in the same vill.[314]

In 1185 Geoffrey made an agreement with the abbey, but the details are not known except that the monks paid one mark for the licence to make a settlement with him.[315] After his death, Geoffrey was succeeded by his brother Robert de Lasceles.[316] This Robert son of Robert gave thirteenth acres in Herlsey to the abbey, in the vicinity of the donations of his predecessors.[317]

The large amount of land held already by the abbey in East Harlsey was further augmented by grants from other members of the Lasceles family in the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries: William son of Andrew de Lasceles gave four acres in Harlsey, and Gerard son of Adam de Lasceles gave six acres there.[318]

These donations from the Lasceles family are particularly good, but not an isolated example of the generosity of one family of moderate standing who remained

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[312] *Cartulary*, n° 88; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 728.
[313] *Cartulary*, n° 170; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 962; royal confirmation in *CChR 1226-1257*, p. 397.
[314] *CPR 1330-1334*, p. 316; published in the *Cartulary* p. 287.
[315] 'Et de .j. m. de monachis de Rieuall' pro licentia concordandi cum Galfrido de Lacell'. *The Pipe Roll, 31 Henry II*, vol. 34 (London: Pipe Roll Society, 1913), p. 72.
[316] *EYC*, vol. 2, p. 71.
[317] Bodl., MS Dodsw. vii, ff. 143-143v; published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, p. 207.
[318] Bodl., MS Dodsw. vii, ff. 52, 142v; published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, pp. 206-7.

generous to the abbey for several generations. The value of these grants lay in their location, in the close vicinity of each other and close to the core estates of the abbey. East Harlsey became a grange first recorded in 1301, but must have existed much earlier.[319]

In the thirteenth century, however, some members of the Lasceles family disputed some grants of their predecessors. In 1205 the monks of Rievaulx paid for the aid of the royal court to secure possession of their farm of the demesne of Harsley until the end of its term, but it did not prevent further disputes.[320] On 6 October 1251 Abbot Adam de Tilletai of Rievaulx paid 100 shillings for leave to make an agreement with Robert de Lasceles in a plea of warranty of charter.[321] Then, on 13 October of the same year Abbot Adam brought a case against the same Robert de Lasceles. The objects of the dispute were two carucates, fifteen acres, one rood, three perches of land in Morton (East Harsley) and one bovate, 178 acres of land and five tofts in Harsley, also the pasture for 600 sheep, ten cows and one bull in Herlesay and Bordelby. Robert de Lasceles recognised the right of the abbey to hold the above listed properties which were given to the monks by his ancestors.[322]

The long lasting relationship between the Lasceles family and the abbey was acknowledged again in the later part of the thirteenth century. According to the writ issued on 28 April 1285 to the sheriff of Yorkshire, a messuage and two bovates of land in East Harlsey were held by William de Lasceles from the abbot of Rievaulx 'by homage and service'. As William was illegitimate offspring and had no heirs, this land would return to the abbot on his death.[323]

Although the Lasceles family were not an isolated case, their generosity to the abbey is particularly well documented. Despite their relatively meagre status a large number of Lasceles gave land to Rievaulx abbey; some of these grants were not larger than a few acres, but their location in Harlsey and its vicinity made them very attractive for the abbey. Although their status was much lower than, for example, the Meinil's

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[319] *Yorkshire Lay Subsidy 1301*, ed. William Brown, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series 21(1897), pp. 85-6.
[320] *EYC*, vol. 2, p. 295; *Great Roll of the Pipe, 7th year of John, Michaelmas 1205*, ed. Sidney Smith, vol. NS 19 (London: Pipe Roll Society, 1941), p. 60.
[321] *Feet of Fines from 1246 to 1272*, p. 24, n. 1.
[322] *Feet of Fines from 1246 to 1272*, p. 24.
[323] *Yorkshire Inquisitions*, vol. 2, ed. William Brown, Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Record Series, 23 (1898), p. 26; *Notes on the Religious and Secular Houses of Yorkshire*, vol. 2, ed. William Brown, Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Record Series, 81 (1931), pp. 34-5.

family, in contrast to the latter, the Lasceles charters copied to the cartulary were placed in a rather prominent position.

6. THE BALLIOL FAMILY

Another substantial knightly family of Rievaulx benefactors, which rose to baronial status in the course of the thirteenth century, were the Balliols. The Balliol family's initial property was acquired by Guy de Balliol from William Rufus in Cleveland. In 1085 it was augmented by the Yorkshire fee of Aubrey de Coucy. The landholding was then passed to Guy's nephew, Bernard de Balliol.[324] During the war between King Stephen and King David of Scotland, Bernard de Balliol was, together with Walter Espec, on the side of the English ruler. He was a member of the royal court and following the example of King Stephen, he became a benefactor of the Knights Templar.[325]

It appears from the charter of Bernard Balliol (died 1167), that he might have some tenurial or personal connection with the earl William de Mandeville. Although he does not specify that William was his lord, he made a pledge, together with his twelve men (a customary number), with William as the guarantor to strengthen the validity of his extensive gift of pasture to Rievaulx in Middleton-in-Teesdale between 1161 and 1167.[326] His other extensive grant of pastures in Teesdale, pastures and land in Westerdale, with several additional rights such as permission to set snares to entrap wolves and permission for their shepherds to use horns if threatened by the wild beast or thieves, was also pledged by Bernard and his twelve men by the guarantee of the same Earl William.[327]

Another substantial grant to Rievaulx abbey by Bernard de Balliol was given to the abbey for the salvation of King Henry, Bernard's father, mother, his wife Agnes and his brothers. This donation encompassed not only the monopoly for fishing in Newsham, but also permission to build fisheries there, an area of land and material for the reparation of fisheries.[328]

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[324] *EYC*, vol. 1, pp. 437-8.
[325] Green, *Aristocracy,* pp. 122, 411.
[326] *Cartulary*, n° 115; *EYC*, vol. 1, n° 562. This grant was confirmed in 1176 by King Henry II. *Cartulary*, n° 213; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 774.
[327] *Cartulary*, n° 215.
[328] *Cartulary*, n° 114.

The value of Bernard's grants was very significant for the abbey and the monks secured additional confirmations to avoid any possible problems. Archbishop Roger de Pont L'Évêque of York confirmed all his grants in Westerdale and Teesdale between 1164 and 1167. The original charter of Bernard was read in the presence of York chapter and the man himself sworn to William de Amundeville to observe it.[329] Pope Alexander III confirmed, between 1174 and 1176, among properties given by other men, a fishery in Newsham given by Bernard.[330]

Hugh de Balliol, the grandson of Bernard, augmented his grandfather's donation of the fisheries in Newsam. Hugh gave ten acres of the arable land of his demesne, which were adjoining the monastic fishery and the right to use common pasture in Newsam for eight head of cattle.[331] Hugh's son, John de Balliol and John's men from Allerston and Middleton were engaged in the conflict with Rievaulx abbey over the mill in Middleton. In February 1238 a royal charter directed to the bishop of Durham ordered him to resolve this conflict between the abbey and Balliols.[332] After that time there is no further indication of the contacts between Rievaulx abbey and the Balliol family whose fortune accelerated due to John's marriage to Devorguil, the daughter and heir of Alan lord of Galloway. Their son, also John became King of Scotland from 1292 until 1296.[333]

The grants of Balliol family, substantial in themselves, particularly those of pastures and fisheries had yet another value; they were also given in a compact blocks. Thus the grants of Bernard and his grandson complemented each other and substantially enlarged the abbey's holdings in Newsam.

7. TUNSTALL FAMILY AND THEIR TENANTS

A lesser family, which never achieved the social success of the Balliols was the Tunstall family and their tenants in East (Low) Bolton in Wensleydale. Their interaction with Rievaulx abbey spanned several generations and a great number of other individuals connected to this family augmented lands originally granted by Acaris de Tunstall. As a testimony to this family's importance to the abbey, Acaris's charters and confirmations were copied to the cartulary in a single cluster. Firstly, Acaris granted in

329 *Cartulary*, n° 238; *EEA*, vol. 20, n° 81.
330 *Cartulary*, n° 266 (p. 378); *EYC*, vol. 2, n°1231; *PU*, vol. 1, n° 131.
331 Bodl, MS Dodsw. vii, ff. 135-135v; published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, p. 221.
332 *CR 1237-1242*, p. 29.
333 *Early Yorkshire Families*, p. 4.

1173-74, a twenty-five and a half acres of land in East Bolton and the right of pasture in the territory of that vill for a limited number of animals, reserving a service payment of half mark yearly, although the monks gave a lump sum of ten marks to cover payments until 1194.[334] In the same year he gave or rather added one house and several plots of land there and the right to use the common pasture for a limited number of animals.[335]

The next donation of Acaris de Tunstall was also in East Bolton between 1174 and 1181 and consisted of twelve acres of land in East Bolton with a meadow which Henry de Bolton had held from Acaris for a yearly service payment of two shillings and six pence.[336] The full extent of Acaris' grants from the fee of his lord Ralph son of Roger in East Bolton, was confirmed by Ralph in the charter copied to the cartulary immediately after Acaris's charters.[337]

Similarly to the cases discussed in the earlier parts of this chapter, the idea of becoming a donor of Rievaulx abbey spread throughout the tenurial group of the Tunstall family. Dolfin de Bolton and William son of Humphrey gave more lands in the vicinity of their lord Acaris and with his explicit permission.[338] Another of his tenants, Peter son of Gilo de Bolton donated to the abbey his rights to the land and park in Depedale, also in East Bolton. This land was given to Peter by his lord Acaris de Tunstal and Peter's sister Sigerid and her husband gave consent to the alienation.[339] The same Peter, with the consent of his lord exchanged half an acre in Bolton for another plot and payment of twelve pence.[340] His daughter Alda, as a widow with the consent of her son and heir, William son of Ulf, quitclaimed all her rights to the lands in East Bolton held by the abbey.[341]

Another neighbour, Adam son of Ralph de Bolton, who also might have been a tenant of Acaris de Tunstall, and certainly had an interest in the same area, quitclaimed any possible rights he might have to the land to East Bolton, which Acaris had granted to Rievaulx.[342] Adam also exchange a piece of land there in the amount of one perch,

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334 *Cartulary*, n° 139; *EYC*, vol. 4, n° 91.
335 *Cartulary*, n° 140; *EYC*, vol. 4, n° 92.
336 *Cartulary*, n° 141; *EYC*, vol. 4, n° 93.
337 *Cartulary*, n° 142; *EYC*, vol. 5, n° 142.
338 *Cartulary*, n° 143, 144; *EYC*, vol. 4, n° 94, 95.
339 *EYC*, vol. 4, n° 97.
340 *Cartulary*, p. 100 (n° 145p).
341 *Cartulary*, pp. 102-3 (n° 145t).
342 *Cartulary*, pp. 101-2 (n° 145r).

and six and a half rods with the abbey for another plot in the same vill and received the additional compensation of two shillings.[343]

Acaris de Tunstall was succeeded by his son Roger in the lands in Tunstall and Appleton, and the family retained their interest in East Bolton.[344] His son, also called Roger, quitclaimed to Richard son of Wimar de Leyburn all his rights to the lands in East Bolton which his cousin Ismania, daughter of his uncle Richard de Tunstall, had held there.[345] Richard son of Wimar donated in turn to Rievaulx all those lands in East Bolton which Roger de Tunstall quitclaimed.[346]

The younger son of Acaris mentioned above, Richard de Tunstall, confirmed his father's donations in 1192, including twelve acres and a small meadow in East Bolton which were previously the object of a law-suit between Richard and the abbey at the court of royal justices at York.[347] He also granted three rods in East Bolton between the land already belonging to the abbey and properties belonging to other individuals.[348] Richard de Tunstall's daughter Ismania married first Peter son of William de Bolton and then Reginald son of Walter de Bolton. Her brother Conan, the heir of Richard de Tunstall, died without issue. Ismania followed the example of her father, uncle and grandfather, and also became a benefactor of Rievaulx abbey and gave properties and rights to the abbey with both of her husbands and also independently as a widow. Ismania gave, jointly with her first husband, their mill in East Bolton with the monopoly in that vill.[349] They also confirmed her father's grant in East Bolton, but for an annual service payment of two shillings and six pence.[350] During her widowhood Ismania granted a rent described in the previous charter to the abbey and additionally confirmed all her previous donations and added one penny of rent which she received from her brother Conan.[351] After her second marriage to Reginald, the couple confirmed her father's and her own earlier grants.[352] Presumably under their influence, William le Scrope, who possessed rent from the land given by Ismania and Reginald to Rievaulx,

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343 *Cartulary*, p. 102 (n° 145s).
344 *EYC*, vol. 4, p. 123.
345 *Cartulary*, pp. 92-93 (n° 145b).
346 *Cartulary*, p. 93 (n° 145c).
347 *EYC*, vol. 4, n° 98.
348 *Cartulary*, p. 96 (n° 145i).
349 *Cartulary*, p. 93 (n° 145d).
350 *Cartulary*, p. 94 (n° 145e).
351 *Cartulary*, p. 94-5 (n° 145f), and p. 95 (n° 145g).
352 *Cartulary*, pp. 95-6 (n° 145h).

granted this income to the abbey.[353] Imania's brother, Conan son of Richard, gave to the abbey a rent which he used to pay her in the past.[354]

Another piece of evidence that the monks had a keen interest in the Bolton area and interacted with a large number of people there is a quitclaim by the widow of Robert Leech of a portion of land which came into his possession as a result of a law-suit between Robert and Reginald son of Walter.[355] The remaining grants of land in East Bolton were given to the abbey by Robert son of Askeris. In addition Robert de Scrafton and his wife Cassandra quitclaimed half acre in East Bolton which had been an object of a law-suits in the court of Richmond between them and the abbey.[356]

This sequence of donations given over several generations in the East Bolton area illustrates how a group of relatives and their tenants would slowly, but effectively alienate large parts of their holdings to the abbey. Such kinds of grants, not large in themselves, were very important for the abbey, because they helped to build compact estates. Grants were rarely given in isolation, by one individual. Donations usually had a collective character and could either unite members of a family in a pious gesture or cause dissatisfaction among heirs who objected to the decrease of their holdings. Families and tenurial groups were in that sense the most common forms of social organisation encountered by the abbey. However already in its early history Rievaulx abbey was confronted with conflicts not related to any of the above.

C. THE COMPLEXITIES OF RELATIONSHIPS

A special group of relationships recorded in the cartulary are those related to the conflicts about particularly extensive properties such as waste below Pickering. The waste was demarcated between Costa Beck to the east and Allerston Beck to the west, and north of the Derwent. It came into the abbey's possession from King Henry II in 1158 with permission to use it in any way they wanted, including erecting sheepfolds and buildings, free from all services, in exchange for Stainton given to the abbey by Walter de Gant.[357] His son, King Richard I, confirmed this grant.[358] Much of this area was covered by a marsh, but could be used a pasture. Conflicts over the waste below

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353 *Cartulary*, p. 97 (n° 145j).
354 *Cartulary*, p. 98 (n°145m).
355 *Cartulary*, p. 98 (n° 145l).
356 *Cartulary*, pp. 98-100 (n° 145n, 145o).
357 *Cartulary*, n° 205-210. The last charter in this sequence was also copied to the Coucher Book of the Duchy of Lancaster. *Honor of Pickering*, pp. 75-7.

Pickering pushed the abbey into contact with large and diverse groups of lay people. There was no apparent link between those individuals, some of them were already benefactors of the abbey or related to such individuals, but for some it was probably the only contact they may have had with Rievaulx.

There are twenty two copies of charters related to the disputed possession of the waste below Pickering. These entries are grouped in a few clusters: n° 150-151 (quitclaim charters of Manuivelains), n° 163 and 165 (quitclaims of Roger de Clere and William Mandeville), n° 180-184, 186-191 (quitclaims of various individuals) and n° 205-210 (royal charters).

Table 1.

Entries in the cartulary related to the waste below Pickering

Entry nr	**Individual(s) involved**	**Character of the act**	**Property**	**Other people involved**	**Date**
150	Stephen Manuivelain	Quitclaim	Of any rights to the waste below Pickering within borders described in the charters of King Henry	With the consent of his heir Roger and other sons	
151	Roger Manuivelain	Confirmation	Of his father's quitclaim		
163	Roger de Clere	Quitclaim	Of a ditch between the waste below Pickering and his vill of Wilton and the land between the ditch and the waste	Swore before the royal justices in Doncaster	1180

[358] *Cartulary*, n° 173.

165	William de Mandeville earl of Essex	Grant	Of a ditch made by the monks between the waste and his vill of Thornton, also whole land between the ditch and the waste	Before the royal justices in Westminster	1181
180	Robert II Ros	Quitclaim	Of his right to the Theokmarais and Loftmarais located on the waste below Pickering	With the consent of his wife, sons, his tenants Peter and William de Surdeval (Theokmarais) and Robert Luvel (Loftmarais)	
181	Jocelin Arecy and his wife Helewise	Quitclaim	Of their rights in Theokmarais and Loftmarais	Monks paid him compensation. Done in the presence of Robert dean of York	c. 1170-76
182	Peter and William de Surdeval	Grant	Of twelve bovates in Theokmarais which they held from his lord Robert II de Ros	Sworn in the presence of dean and chapter of York. Also quitclaimed by their heirs Peter	

				and William.	
183	William son of Levoch	Quitclaim	Of any rights to the waste below Pickering within borders described in the charters of King Henry		
184	Walter Bardolf	Quitclaim	Of any rights to the waste below Pickering on the south side of Midsyke towards Earnshow and within the borders described in the royal charter		1170-80
186	Asketin son of Roger de Thornton	Quitclaim	Of any rights in Micleholm and all the weste below Pickering	Asketil sworn his charter at the altar of the monastic church. Confirmation by his son Jolan	1160-70
187	Alan Forester son of Roger Thornton	Quitclaim	Of any rights in Micleholm and all the weste below Pickering	Sworn at the altar of the monastic church. Confirmed by	

				his son Alan	
188	Hugh Brun	Quitclaim	Of any rights in Micleholm and all the weste below Pickering	Sworn at the altar of the monastic church.	1165-75
189	Thorpin de Allerston and his nephew Geoffrey	Acknowledgement	Of the borders of the waste below Pickering	As recognised by the important men of the area	1157-58
190	William de Vescy	Quitclaim	Of rights to the waste below Pickering within the specified borders with the reserved rights to the pasture		
191	Stephen Manuivelain and his son Robert	Quitclaim	Of his rights to Micleholm. Monks paid him compensation.	Sworn by him and his son Roger to Hugh Malabisse	1170-80
205	King Henry II	Grant and Confirmation	Of two carucates in Kilverdmersh Of all the pastures in the weste below Pickering		
206	King Henry II	Precept to the sheriff of	To secure Henry I's		

		Yorkshire	grant of the waste below Pickering		
207	King Henry II	Precept to the sheriff of Yorkshire	Not to allow anybody to infringe the rights of the abbey to the waste below Pickering		
208	King Henry II	Precept to the sheriff of Yorkshire	That the monks should held the waste below Pickering in peace		
209	King Henry II	Precept to the sheriff of Yorkshire	That the monks should held the waste below Pickering in peace and their rights should not be infringed		
210	King Henry II	Renewal of the grant	Of the waste below Pickering with the boundaries specified		

It is clear that the organising theme for these entries is the property. These conflicts were the sole reason that some people came into close contact with the abbey and for those who already interacted with Rievaulx it added another dimension to their

contacts, as their tenurial or family connection were not important here. Although such connections must have played some role in the process of settling the disagreements, the charters of quitclaim related to this waste are all grouped together. Charters of those individuals who were already benefactors of the abbey were placed in this sequence, and not dispersed throughout the volume. This editorial manoeuvre indicates that the community of Rievaulx clearly associated these people and their actions with the conflict over the waste below Pickering.

One of the royal jurors called to investigate the conflict over the borders of Pickering was a local nobleman, Torphin de Allerston son of Uctred, who had a personal interest in the area and was already a benefactor of Rievaulx abbey.[359] He was one of the early donors responsible for the grant of the extensive pasture rights in Allerston within the waste below Pickering. Between 1160 and 1175 he gave some land on the east side of Allerston and adjoining meadow, which Richard son of Gil held from him as well as a meadow in the direction of Derwent, previously held by the same Richard.[360] Together with his wife Matilda de Fribois and their son Alan, they granted in 1160 five acres of land and a site for the buildings in Gindale, a pasture and sheep-folds for 500 sheep. The grantors reserved half of the manure for themselves and one toft. The monks were obliged to pay a rent of twenty shillings annually to Matilda and her heirs. The grantor promised not to allow sheep belonging to anybody else on this pasture.[361] This grant had been confirmed and sealed by Dean Robert Butevilain and the Chapter of York.[362]

Between 1154 and 1174 Torphin and his son Alan gave another pasture for 500 sheep in Allerston, a sheep-fold near Morehow and a portion of land in the Westdale. The donors added also one acre of meadow to collect hay for the sheep-folds, but reserved half of the manure for themselves.[363] Sheep dung was an important fertilizer and many monastic grants had a clause reserving all or some of the dung for the benefactor.[364] A further grant in Allerston, of much smaller value, was given to the abbey in the early thirteenth century by John son of Baldwin de Allerston (who was not however related to this family) of free passage through his territory in Allerston called

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359 Burton, 'Estates and Economy', p. 34.
360 *Cartulary*, n° 138; *EYC*, vol. 1, n° 388.
361 *Cartulary*, n° 167; *EYC*, vol. 1, n° 386.
362 *Cartulary*, n° 86.
363 *Cartulary*, n° 168; *EYC*, vol. 1, n° 387.
364 *West Yorkshire,* vol. 3, pp. 764-5.

Greenhill.[365] Such a grant of passage, small in itself, was very important to the abbey. Since the estates of Rievaulx and many other houses were spread throughout the region, the rights of way were crucial for the efficient running of their economy.[366]

The charters of the Allerston family contain some of the most specific arrangements of the use of pasture among the twelfth-century grants to the abbey. These documents give a good insight into the practical side of grant giving and the subsequent relationship between the donor and the recipient which was the result of sharing the same pasture or becoming close neighbours. The shared use of the common pasture as described in the Allerston charters necessitated cooperation on daily basis between these two parties, and in practice these were probably the employees of the Allerston family and the abbey. The more detailed the agreement was, the less likely conflict was to arise.

While the charters discussed throughout this chapter indicate how the practical and legal side of grants to the abbey were intended to function, there are not many sources which allow us to see how the abbey perceived the land acquisition from its lay neighbours. To investigate this problem we have to come back to the issue of gift-giving, but from a different angle to that discussed in the earlier parts of this thesis, that is to see how the monks might think about their neighbours and benefactors. The cartulary remains the most comprehensive source, but apart from this volume one of the early narrative sources created in the abbey, the biography of abbot Ailred by Walter Daniel provides some more information.[367] It contains passages which give some explanation for the early donations to the abbey as seen by the monastic community.

> The bishop orders him [Ailred] to preach to the clergy in their local synods and he does so; to bring priests to a better way of life, as he does not fail to do so; to accept grants of land from knights in generous free-alms, and he obeys, since he had realised that in this unsettled time such gifts profited knights and monks alike, for in those days it was hard for any to lead the good life unless they were monks or members of some religious order, so disturbed and chaotic was the land, reduced almost to a desert by the malice, slaughter and harrying of evil men. And so he desired that land, for which almost all men were fighting to the death, should pass into the hands of the monks for their good; and he knew that to give what they had helped the possessors of goods to their salvation, and that,

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[365] Bodl., MS Dodsw. vii, f. 93v; published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, p. 209. Allerston was inherited by Hastings family in early thirteenth century, *Early Yorkshire Families,* p. 1.
[366] Stephen Moorhouse, 'Monastic Estates: their Composition and Development', in *The Archaeology of Rural Monasteries*, ed. Roberta Gilchrist and Harold Mytum, British Archaeological Reports vol. 203 (Oxford: B.A.R., 1989), p. 59.
[367] For the analysis of the structure of the cartulary and its implications see pp. 5-9.

> if they did not give, they might well lose both life and goods without any payment in return.[368]

This extract contains several important ideas which shed some light on the ideology and practice of gift giving. Historically this passage refers to the late 1130s and early 1140s, the early years of the reign of King Stephen, which were marked by the disintegration of royal control in the north, struggles between prominent noblemen and recurring Scottish attacks. There is something strongly pragmatic in Ailred's explanation of grant giving. By donations of land to the abbey, people could improve their chances of salvation, moreover the property given to the Church would not fall into the hands of enemies. Therefore, not becoming a benefactor of the abbey was unpractical behaviour — one might not only lose one's lands, but also waste possible spiritual reward. This almost commercial element of Ailred's thinking is stressed by the translator 'if they did not give, they might well lose both life and goods without any payment in return.'[369] The source of the commercial metaphor is biblical, but it does not necessarily mean that its usage in the late 1160s was purely stylistic. Many biblical phrases and metaphors were used to express contemporary concerns. Ailred was more aware of the realities of the outside world, than it might appear from his theological writing. In historiography Ailred has been seen mainly as a theologian, author of spiritual tracts, suffering from rather poor health, but more recently this picture has shifted towards seeing Ailred also as an abbot, politician and an active churchman. From a careful reading of the sources it appears that the literary tradition of the abbot of Rievaulx as 'the gentle Aelred meek and mild, the sensitive soul with genius for friendship, otherworldly because clearly too good for this world' is in striking contrast with the evidence from the charters.[370] Ailred was a capable manager and administrator in a crucial period for the abbey when the core of its estates were formed. Above all, he understood the process of land accumulation by the abbey and the importance of lay benefactors in this.

Monks were pragmatic, which does not mean cynical. They had goods to offer, such as prayers and other spiritual benefits which could be exchanged for other goods, in this case land, which was in the hands of noblemen. To the medieval mind heaven, hell, damnation or salvation were real, almost on the same level as property was real and transactions between lay people and monks were not only a legitimate but an

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[368] *Life of Ailred*, p. 28.
[369] *Life of Ailred*, p. 28.
[370] Marsha L. Dutton, 'The Conversion and Vocation of Aelred of Rievaulx: a Historical Hypothesis', in *England in the Twelfth Century: Proceedings of the 1988 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. Daniel Williams (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1990), pp. 48-9.

appropriate cause of action to increase the chances of salvation. 'Concern for the salvation of one's soul and the souls of one's ancestors was of fundamental importance to all men and women. It underpinned the medieval psyche'.[371] This belief in salvation as the central goal of one's life was shared by the monks and lay-men alike and on this basis, the ideology and practice of gift-giving to religious institutions was built.

Names of the powerful barons and their much less significant men who gave grants to Rievaulx were preserved in the charters and eventually in the cartulary together with the locations of their donations. People and places were forever intertwined in this world of personal ties and obligations. Cistercian monks, in contrast to their Benedictine and Cluniac predecessors acquired property primarily in permanent possession. Although the rhetoric of gift giving and reciprocity persisted in the Cistercian charters in the twelfth century, this did not reflect the type of contracts as the purely contractual exchanges between Cistercian monks and their benefactors eradicated any earlier notions.[372] This assessment of Cistercian practice is based on Burgundian sources, but while the monks of Rievaulx did not practice the so-called gift economy, there was much more back and forth movement between the abbey and its benefactors particularly from early thirteenth century onwards. As Stephen Moorhouse points out, 'monastic estates were never static in either size or content'.[373] These changing possessions were due to a variety of reasons: exchange, sale, quitclaim or law-suits, all of which occurred in the context of Rievaulx abbey's estates.

The relationship of Rievaulx abbey with its lay neighbours was multi-layered across various social strata from barons to small tenants. The world around the abbey was not simply hierarchical, but was more like a three dimensional web. Vertical lord-tenant relations were often secondary in importance to lateral family and neighbourly connections. In her book on religious patronage in Anglo-Norman England Emma Cownie explains that '[t]he motivation behind religious patronage was always mixed, primarily governed by locality, lordship and tenurial status, it could also be influenced by ties of family or friendship, by shifts in fashion and by personal preferences and personalities'.[374] This is also true in the case of Rievaulx abbey. Although the sources are meagre it appears that many of the Mowbrays' tenants and honorial officials were granting land to Rievaulx abbey to follow the example of their lords. As an example of

[371] Cownie, *Religious patronage*, p. 151.
[372] Berman, 'Debate on Cistercian Contracts', 435-6.
[373] Moorhouse, 'Monastic Estates', p. 37.
[374] Cownie, *Religious Patronage*, p. 118.

another Yorkshire family, the Lacys, shows their tenants supported consecutively each new foundation: St Clement's and St John's abbeys in Pontefract and then Nostell priory.[375] On the other hand Adam son of Peter de Birkin although not a tenant of Rievaulx's benefactor, had strongly personal reasons for his extensive grants to the abbey.

After the first wave of fashion and interest in the Cistercian order from the end of the twelfth century, Rievaulx must have relied on other factors in securing new grants. Although in the second half of the thirteenth century grants of land were smaller and less frequent, the contacts between Rievaulx and its lay neighbours were already well established and often developed and formalized by the system of land-holding. The abbey was a lord to many individuals and held land, for rent, from several people. The reappearing number of names of people witnessing monastic charters gives an indication of the cycle of individuals who displayed attachment to the abbey. They might be benefactors, but also, especially in the later part of the twelfth and in the thirteenth centuries, they might only witness charters as a way of showing their support to the house. A great number of witnesses came from the families of early benefactors who lived close to the abbey and its estates such as Ingrams and Lasceles. Usually these people did not give anything new to the abbey, but their presence at the donation ceremonies reinforced affinity between these families and the abbey. These gatherings were of benefit to the abbey, and to those who acted as witnesses strengthened their ties within the local communities, could discuss issues of importance, and also allowed to display attachments to the religious institutions without any material loss to themselves.

The fast changing fortunes of barons and rapid fluctuation of the honour holders, such as the Mowbrays and Stutevilles, resulted not only in disputed ownership of many properties but also forced the abbey to look for benefactors among various families and kins, as well as constantly to ask for confirmations of grants acquired in the past. The pattern of the grant confirmations, particularly by the third parties such as the archbishops of York, or the deans and chapter of York indicates properties which were most valued or in danger of being disputed.

Because of the multitude of vertical connections in the neighborhood, the abbey developed a great variety of contacts with these people. The abbey received gifts of land and rents, exchanged properties, brought law-suits against those who encroached on its lands and negotiated mutually convenient agreements with others. Rievaulx was clearly

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[375] Cownie, *Religious Patronage*, p. 178.

seen by its neighbours as a landowner as much as a religious institution and an active participant of the local land-markets. All those different types of connections between the house and its neighbours often occurred at the same time. Many families of long standing benefactors of the abbey experienced all of them across three or four generations. Besides the eschatological motivations, giving grants to a particular abbey was one of the ways of showing affinity and Rievaulx as many other religious houses benefited from it.

CHAPTER III
RIEVAULX ABBEY AND OTHER RELIGIOUS HOUSES

Among the neighbours of Rievaulx abbey, other monastic houses had a special place. They shared with Rievaulx the same corporate nature and mission, but were also competing for grants from the same pool of potential donors. This chapter contains an analysis of the contacts between Rievaulx and religious houses of various orders in the north of England, their relationships, conflict and ways in which they competed or cooperated.

Similarly to the contacts with the lay neighbours, relationships between various houses formed a web of intertwined connections. However, for the purpose of clarity, these relations are divided here into six groups: Rievaulx abbey's relationship with close neighbours, with the houses which had the same founder as Rievaulx, with other Cistercian houses, with monasteries with lands bordered by Rievaulx's granges, contacts with houses belonging to the Sempringham order, and finally with other religious institutions. This division points out to the several crucial reasons for the inter-monastic connections. Firstly, houses were either located in the close vicinity, or their granges might border even if the precincts were in the considerable distance. Secondly, many houses had mutual contacts, both positive and negative due to having the same patron or receiving grants from the same people in the vicinity of each other. Thirdly some of the connections occurred due to the personal involvement of the particular abbots or inter-order politics. All these issues are visible in the case of Rievaulx abbey and will be discussed in the course of this chapter. It is important however to stress that often all these reasons were intertwined and occurred at the same time. For example, Byland and Rievaulx abbeys were close neighbours because they received grants from the same people.

In the early twelfth century, the north of England experienced a revival of religious life, beginning with the resurgence of Selby Abbey, Monkwearmouth and Durham monastic community. In 1113 the church of Hexham in Northumbria was given by Archbishop Thomas II of York to the canons regular. Later on, in the 1140s several Augustinian houses were founded by the local noblemen with the encouragement or advice of Archbishop Thurstan, in Guisborough, Drax, Bolton, Kirkham in Yorkshire and Thurgarton in Nottinghamshire. Although Waverley abbey in Surrey was the first Cistercian house in England, it was the north of the country which experienced the

foundations of several large houses of this order in the first half of the twelfth century.[1] With the growing numbers of religious foundations in Yorkshire, it became more common for many monasteries to have other religious institutions as neighbours or neighbours of their granges.

The majority of the neighbours of monastic houses were lay people of various social standing, but many houses had also other religious communities in their close vicinity. Despite the theological doctrines and the ideology of monasticism expressed in the language of *caritas,* friendship and cooperation between various monastic communities, many of the relationships not only between houses of different orders, but even between those belonging to the same order were not always peaceful. Cistercian authors particularly stressed the importance of friendship within and between the monastic communities. The idea of *caritas* was understood on two levels as a spiritual union with the divine and as a spirit which should bind monastic communities and other members of the Church.[2] In practice this ideal was very difficult to follow for a variety of reasons which will be discussed in the context of Rievaulx abbey.

Although Rievaulx abbey was the first and one of the most important Cistercian houses in the north of England, it had many monastic neighbours both in close vicinity and further afield. Within a radius of fifteen miles of Rievaulx abbey were the houses of three orders, the closest one was Byland (originally Savigniac, then Cistercian), then two Augustinian houses in Newburgh and Kirkham, and one Gilbertine house in Malton.[3] Within the wider radius of thirty miles there were two Benedictine houses in Whitby and St Mary's York, one Premonstratensian in Easby, two Cistercian in Fountains and Jervaulx, and one Augustinian in Guisborough. The majority of these neighbours had similar rural-based economic foundations with the exception of Guisborough, Bridlington and Selby which also established towns in their close vicinity.[4]

There were two distinct geographical areas where the majority of their estates were concentrated and even overlapped. For example the lands of Rievaulx, Byland, Guisborough, Fountains, Newburgh and Whitby were concentrated in Cleveland. In the Vale of Pickering donations, exchanges and purchases created the estates of Malton,

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[1] Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders,* pp. 31-2, 48. Although several of the Yorkshire Cistercian houses, among them Rievaulx and Fountains, became the most prominent within Cistercian order in England, Yorkshire did not have particularly high concentration of monasteries of this order. Hill, *English Cistercian Monasteries*, p. 36.

[2] Newman, *Boundaries of Charity*, pp. 97-105.

[3] Burton, 'Estates and Economy', p. 44.

Rievaulx, Whitby, Byland, Newburgh and Bridlington.[5] The majority of Yorkshire religious houses also acquired town property, particularly in York and Beverley and these properties often bordered each other. A grant of land and buildings to Rievaulx abbey in the early thirteenth century in Aldwark illustrates this trend. The property given to Rievaulx was located opposite the houses belonging to Guisborough priory and between the property of Marton priory and a layman.[6]

Monastic houses were rarely neighbours in the literal sense of the word, that is having their precincts in close vicinity; more commonly their granges or pastures bordered each other and the distribution of the land between the monastic houses was the result of several factors. The foundation grants and initial donations gave each abbey its base and a direction for further expansion. Subsequent acquisitions of land by each house were limited by the geographical conditions in the area and the willingness of the benefactors to alienate their own property, but each monastery developed its own areas of expansion and concentrated on building granges in particular places. Early on in their existence religious houses concentrated on the building of their core estates near the actual administrative centre of the monastic precinct, but later on many houses diversified their holdings both in terms of type, arable, pasture, iron-works, and location.[7] From the late twelfth century many Cistercian monasteries began a consolidation of their estates. Particularly distant or small lands would be sold or exchanged for properties located nearer the abbey or existing granges. Many religious houses also held land for rent from the lay people or other monasteries for a limited time only. Several cases of such practices were discussed in the previous chapter. This more flexible approach to the monastic estates among Cistercian houses can also be seen in central and eastern parts of Europe although at a considerably later date due to slower economic development. In the fourteenth century many Cistercian abbeys located in central and northern Poland tended to concentrate their lands in the vicinity of the abbey creating their own 'micro-regions' of social and economic control and disposed of those lands which were located too far away to be effectively controlled.[8]

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[4] Lawrence Butler, 'The Archaeology of Rural Monasteries in England and Wales', in *The Archaeology,* p. 1.

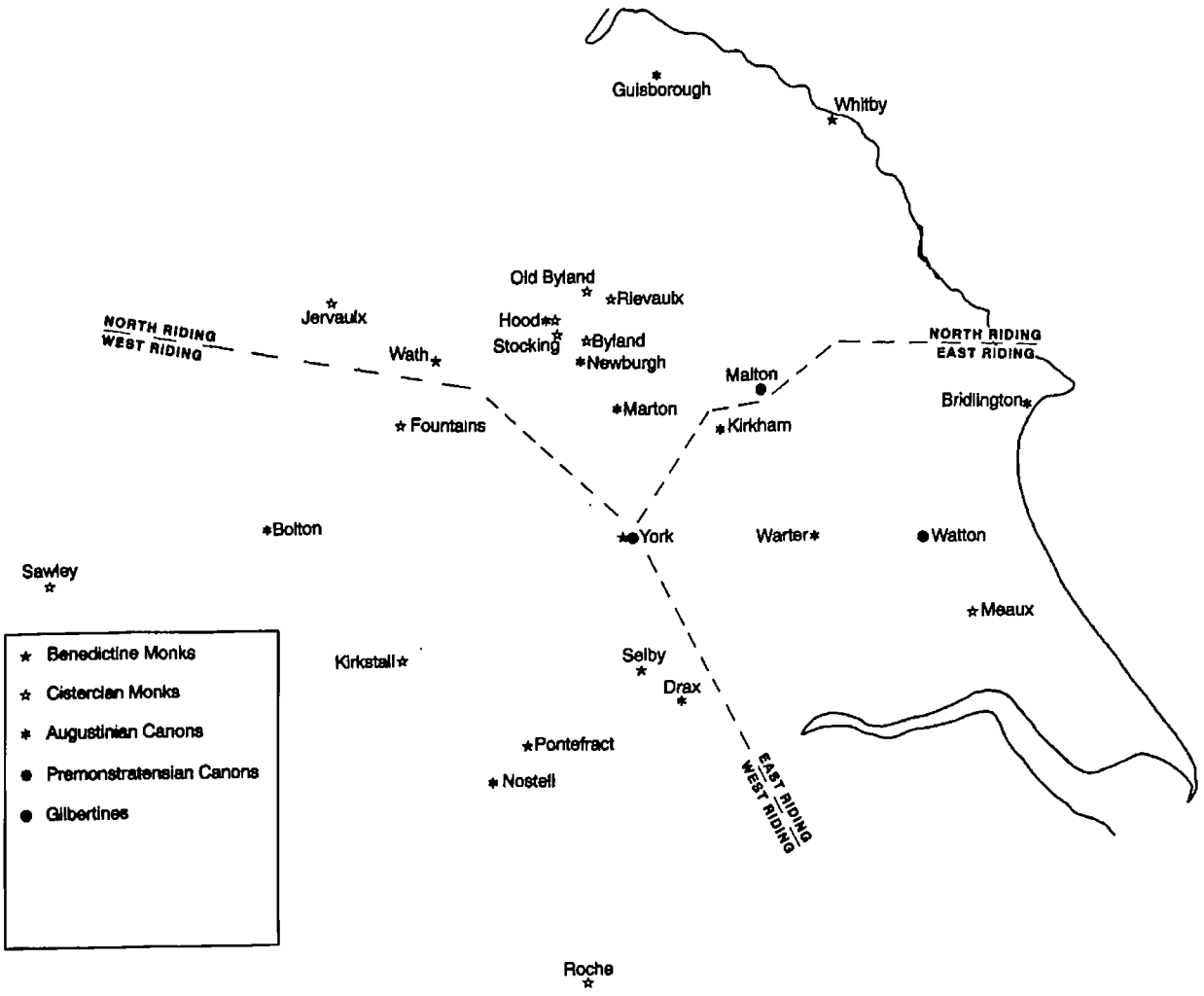
[5] Bryan Waites, 'The Monastic Settlement of North-East Yorkshire', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 40 (1962), p. 492.

[6] *Charters of the Vicar Choral of York Minster: City of York and its Suburbs to 1546*, ed. Nigel J. Tringham, The Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Record Series, vol. 148 (Leeds: YAS, 1993), n° 5.

[7] R. I. Hodgson, 'Medieval Colonisation of Northern Ryedale', *Ryedale Historian* 10 (1980), 57.

[8] *Monasticon Cisterciense Poloniae,* vol. 1, p. 205.

SELECTED RELIGIOUS HOUSES IN YORKSHIRE (based on Bernard Jennings, 1999)



The sources illuminating relationships between Rievaulx and other monasteries are scattered and fragmented, nevertheless, they provide information on a variety of interactions ranging from friendly cooperation and negotiation to open conflict. Rievaulx abbey interacted with other monasteries for several reasons. Most contacts occurred because the groups or individuals belonged to the same monastic order or were part of the Church, but many links were also a result of the abbey's involvement with the lay world, particularly through its patrons. The majority of benefactors gave grants to more than one house and often these acts created links between houses which otherwise might have never occurred.[9] Not surprisingly most of the conflicts resulted from overlapping areas of economic interest and disputed borders. This type of conflict was typical for any kind of neighbours, not necessarily ecclesiastical, but in the case of conflicts with other monasteries, disputes might take a different form from cases of confrontation with lay neighbours. The monks or canons were also more likely to ask abbots of other houses or other Church officials for arbitration.

Conflicts of an economic nature occurred because, in practice, the role of any Cistercian monastery was dual, consisting of spiritual pursuits on the one hand and economic activities on the other. This dualism, so clear to us, was probably not perceived so strongly by contemporaries, particularly by members of the Church, for whom economic pursuits were probably identified more closely with the need for expansion for the glory of God. In order to attract donations monastic houses needed to establish and cultivate a reputation of spiritual excellency and to develop relationships with existing donors and also neighbours or tenants who were also potential benefactors. Thus Rievaulx competed with other monasteries for the land and donations given for the glory of God which were also so necessary for its successful functioning.

Thus, the economic sphere of the abbey's activity often caused conflicts with the neighbours, including other religious houses. As the economic bases of every monastery were confined almost exclusively to the land, the expansion of monastery's holdings was the way in which they could secure and develop successful functioning on a material level. This area of monastic history, crossing both religious and economic spheres, remains one of the most puzzling, not only due to the common application of the modern notion of rationality as confined to the material spheres of human activities,

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[9] This is true not only in the case of Cistercian houses, but many other monastic orders. A rivalry or at least competitiveness between houses was often fostered by the lay patrons. Penelope D. Johnson, *Prayer, Patronage and Power: the Abbey of the la Trinité, Vendôme, 1032-1187* (New York: New York University Press, 1981), pp. 103-4.

but also due to the perception of religious motivations as intrinsically irrational.[10] An economically successful house with a big church was more likely to attract donations, than a small and visibly poor establishment, and this in turn would allow for further development. Some interesting answers to this problem have been provided by recent studies on the economic behaviour of the medieval Church in which its religious function is analyzed in the terms of rational choice made by agents wanting to satisfy simultaneously economic and non-economic goals.[11] Robert B. Ekelund tries to explain inter-church mechanisms, which created conflicts between individual monasteries, by comparing its structure and functioning to a modern firm. In the organizational sense religious houses could be described as franchised firms within the Church. The Church provided, in return for the particular payments from the monasteries, the 'brand-name' and 'quality assurance', such as guarantees of salvation and doctrinal purity for the individual monasteries and these could in turn 'sell it' to its 'customers', that is, potential patrons and benefactors, The pursuit of many monasteries, particularly Cistercian, for territorial exclusiveness to pursue their expansion led to local monopolist behaviour. This, in turn, created conflicts with other monasteries operating on the same 'market' and with the global interest of the Church.[12] In response to this problem, certain practices were employed, namely vertical integration and franchising.

> Monasteries were geographically dispersed to reduce *intra*brand competition, and their territories were circumscribed to enable each monastery to develop and maintain a local monopoly.[13]

This desire for territorial exclusiveness is testified by the early Cistercian regulations. The distance between the granges of two houses should be at least two leagues (c. 6 miles) and every new house should be at a distance of at least ten leagues (c. 29 miles) from existing monasteries.[14] In some parts of Yorkshire, maintaining this territorial exclusiveness proved to be difficult, despite the clauses in many donation charters against grants to other orders. Repeated conflicts over land holding testify that maintaining a monopoly in terms of grants was almost impossible, because benefactors rarely kept their promises of exclusive grants. Certain areas, such as the West Riding

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[10] D. A. Postles, 'Heads of Religious Houses as Administrators' in *England in the Thirteenth Century: Proceeding of the 1989 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. W. M. Ormrod (Stamford: Watkins, 1991), p. 37, considers investments in the religious side of the monastic houses, for example buildings 'for the glory of God', as directly opposite to the rational investments in the estates.

[11] *Sacred Trust: the Medieval Church as an Economic Firm*, Robert B. Ekelund et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 46.

[12] *Sacred Trust,* pp. 3-5.

[13] *Sacred Trust*, p. 49.

which was rich in minerals, were very popular among religious houses and the benefactors, of whom Adam son of Peter was probably the most extreme example, rarely restricted their generosity to one house only.

While this comparison between the medieval Church and modern market organizations may appear far fetched to many historians, it provides a further argument as to why the monasteries were involved in so many conflicts, despite their ideology of charity and cooperation. Many monasteries, behaved in a monopolist fashion, trying to ensure their dominant position in certain territories by pushing weaker houses out of their area. An expression of these monopolist tendencies are the clauses in some donation charters preventing the benefactors giving land to other religious houses in the same area. Rievaulx obtained a special agreement with Adam son of Peter that he would not grant any property to other monastic houses in the vicinity of Rievaulx's lands given by him.[15] Such action was most likely motivated by the fact that Adam son of Peter and his wife Matilda were prominent benefactors of the Cluniac priory in Pontefract and the Cistercian monks were concerned that Adam and Matilda might be tempted to grant something in the area of Rievaulx's interest to the Pontefract priory.[16]

Conflict was not, of course, the only mode of interaction. Another type of relationship into which Rievaulx entered with other monasteries was related to its position in the Cistercian order. On several occasions Rievaulx acted as an investigator or mediator at the request of the Chapter General. This was related to its prominent position in the English Cistercian province and therefore the Cistercian Chapter General was inclined to ask Rievaulx for arbitration if such a necessity arose. Significantly, Rievaulx abbey acted often as mediator in this way, but much less as an open party involved in conflict. Between 1191 and 1292 the abbots of Rievaulx mediated or reported, together with other abbots, nineteen times to the Chapter General about situations in several English Cistercian houses, but Rievaulx itself was involved in only seven conflicts, out of which four were with its closest neighbour — Byland. In comparison, Fountains abbey seemed to be a more aggressive institution: it acted between 1191 and 1278 as a mediator or investigator only ten times, but was involved in conflicts with Byland, Melrose, Furness, and Archbishop Henry of York eighteen times.

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[14] *Statuta*, vol. 1, pp. 20, 32-3.
[15] *Cartulary*, n° 92.
[16] *The Cartulary of St. John of Pontefract*, vol. 2, ed. Richard Holmes, Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Record Series, 30 (1902), p. 397. For the further discussion on the economic versus religious aspects see pp. 228-31.

Cartularies of Yorkshire monastic houses provide testimony for the active role of the abbots of Rievaulx as mediators among religious houses in the region. In 1154 or 1155 abbot Ailred mediated between the abbey of Savigny in Normandy and its daughter, Furness in Lancashire, in their dispute over the control of Byland Abbey.[17] Abbot Sylvan of Rievaulx (1170-1188) was appointed among other high ecclesiastics to resolve conflict between the priory of Guisborough and Robert priest of Glemham over the church in Crathorne.[18] In 1223 the abbots of Rievaulx and Byland were appointed by the pope to hear an appeal of the prior and convent of Durham against the rector of Embleton church in their dispute concerning tithes. The abbots were given the power to either settle the matter finally, or return it back to the papal curia for the further consideration.[19] In 1251 the abbots of Rievaulx and Rufford (a Rievaulx daughter-house) were called to arbitrate between Fountains and Sallay abbeys. More then twenty years later in 1279 abbots William of Rievaulx and Adam of Byland were appointed by the General Chapter to resolve a further conflict between Fountains and Sallay.[20]

English monasteries, not only Cistercian, seemed to have relied primarily on the mediation of other religious houses and in more severe cases asked bishops or popes for assistance. Mediation by the abbots of other local houses, not involved in the case, was done on either on informal basis, or by the appointment by the papal judges delegates.[21] In the late twelfth century popes often delegated abbots of Rievaulx to oversee the implementation of their mandates concerning other religious institutions.[22] In 1177 Archbishop Richard of Canterbury (1173-1184) appointed the Abbot of Rievaulx to investigate a disagreement between Malton and Elstow priories.[23] Soon afterward, the same archbishop gave a mandate to the Abbot of Rievaulx and Prior of Bridlington to examine a conflict over the church of St Peter in Halton (Linc.) between Elstow priory

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[17] *Life of Ailred*, p. xcii. This conflict was probably related to the wider issue of the merger of the Savignac with Cistercian order. Furness abbey resented the growing Cistercian control over internal issues of the former Savignac houses. Burton, 'Origins and development', p. 182, n. 1.

[18] *Cartularium Prioratus de Gyseburne, ebor. Dioceses Ordinis S. Augustini*, vol. 1, ed. W. Brown, Surtees Society 86 (1889), n° 592.

[19] Jane E. Sayer, *Papal government and England during the pontificate of Honorius III (1216-1227),* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 119 and Appendix 2, n° 28.

[20] *The Cartulary of the Cistercian Abbey of St. Mary of Sallay in Craven*, vol. 2, ed. Joseph McNulty, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series 90 (1934), n° 412.

[21] Jane Sayers, 'English Cistercian Cases and their Delegation in the first half of the Thirteenth Century', *Analecta Sacri Ordinis Cisterciensis* 20 (1964), pp. 87-90.

[22] *Papal Decretals Relating to the Diocese of Lincoln in the Twelfth Century,* ed. W. Holzman and R. Kemp, Lincoln Record Society, vol. 47 (Lincoln, 1954), pp. 6-9, 12-17, 40-41; *PU*, vol. 3, p. 445.

[23] BL, Harl. Ch. 43 G. 23.

and another house.[24] This trend continued in the next century. For example, in 1226 the abbots of Rievaulx and Fountains were appointed to oversee the restoration of the financial solvency of the Yorkshire nunneries. In 1231 Archbishop Walter Gray of York and a monk of Rievaulx whose initial was 'S', were ordered by Pope Gregory IX to investigate clerical non-residency in the diocese of York.[25] In 1253 Abbot Adam de Tilletai of Rievaulx and Prior John of Newburgh were appointed by Pope Innocent IV to ensure that the Cistercian abbey of Meaux received the chapel of Skyren and its yearly income of eight marks, given to them by Thomas de Etton.[26] The number of papal letters directed to Rievaulx and instructing its abbots to act as investigators or mediators indicates the position of this religious house in the diocese, and thus the level of authority which its abbot could command.[27]

Another important indication of the extent of the positive contacts between Rievaulx and its monastic neighbours are the witness lists. Of the 245 charters which constituted the original twelfth century cartulary of Rievaulx abbey as many as fifty-four (22%) contain the names of abbots, priors, monks or canons from other houses. Not surprisingly, the single most frequently recorded individual witness was the abbot of neighbouring Byland, Roger (1142-1194), who appeared five times, but priors and canons of Bridlington witnessed nine charters, more than the representatives of any single Cistercian house: Priors Roger (1149-1153) and Gregory (1154-1181) and the canons: Gregory, Ralph, Gilbert, Reginald, Baldwin de Gant and Geoffrey the cellarer. Priors of Newburgh, another Augustinian house, witnessed five charters: Prior August (1142/3-1154) witnessed three charters and Richard (1155-1186) two charters. Although the abbots of Fountains did not witness any charters collected in the cartulary, abbot Acius and two monks, Peter and Harvey, of its daughter house, Vaudey (Lincolnshire) witnessed five charters. Alexander abbot of Kirkstall, (1147-1182) another of its daughters, as well as two monks of this house, witnessed three charters. Abbots of the daughter houses of Rievaulx also witnessed grants to the mother-house. Ailred during his time as the abbot of Revesby (1143-1147) in Lincolnshire witnessed one charter, abbot Hugh of Revesby (1172-1203/4) appeared in three witness lists, as well as Simon cellarer of Revesby (one appearance). Hugh abbot of Warden (occ. 1173-

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[24] BL, Harl. Ch. 43 G. 24.
[25] *The Register of Walter Gray*, p. 165.
[26] *Calendar of entries in the papal registers relating to Great Britain and Ireland*, vol. 1, *Papal letters (1198-1304)*, ed. W. H. Bliss (London: HM Stationary Office, 1893), pp. 114, 129, 292. [henceforth as *CPL*].
[27] For a comparable situation in Silesia see: Antoni Barciak, 'Role cystersów na Górnym Śląsku w średniowieczu', in *Cystersi w społeczeństwie Europy środkowej*, pp. 684-5.

1179) in Bedfordshire witnessed one charter for the mother house, Simon cellarer of Warden and Alexander, a monk of Warden witnessed two and one documents respectively. Ernald the abbot of Melrose, a Scottish daughter house of Rievaulx and Elias abbot of Rufford (1155-1160/76) in Nottinghamshire each appeared in one list. The abbots of Rievaulx performed reciprocal gestures, acting as witnesses for other religious houses, among them Rufford, Beggan abbey's charter (Brittany) for Kirkstead abbey and Newburgh priory.[28]

The witnessing of charters was an important activity in helping to establish and sustain friendly relationships between monastic houses and their neighbours, both lay and religious. By the act of witnessing a donation or other legal act, the witnesses became bonded with the grantee; their memory had a legal value and could be used in any future dispute. Both lay and religious witnesses usually formed a reoccurring group which can be analysed to trace possible alliances, connections and mutual trust in a given area. As the occasions of witnessing the charter required the physical presence of these individuals, this practice fostered friendly contacts between the religious houses and no doubt the abbots and priors used such events to discuss various issues of mutual importance or to exchange useful information.[29]

As we have seen so far, the connections between Rievaulx abbey and other religious houses in Yorkshire developed for a variety of reasons, but the most obvious one was physical proximity between two monastic precincts.

A. CLOSE NEIGHBOURS

Physically, the closest monastic neighbour of Rievaulx was Byland. This abbey was founded in 1138 by Roger de Mowbray, also an important benefactor of Rievaulx abbey and had a very turbulent early history. The house changed its location four times in the first thirty-three years. Originally established as a Savignac house in Calder (Cumberland) in 1134 by Ranulf Meschin, in 1137 the abbey was destroyed by a Scottish raid. The monks escaped to Furness, their mother house, but were refused entry there. At this point the desperate monks traveled to York to seek help from Archbishop

[28] BL, Harl. Ch. 83 G.38 (1200-23); Harl. 43 B.47 (1215); Cotton Ch. V. 13 (1186). The last of those documents, an agreement between William de Mowbray and Newburgh priory, concerning financing of St Nicholas chapel in Thirsk. It has attached seals of the abbots of Rievaulx, Byland, and the priors of Kirkham and Marton.

[29] John R. Senior suggests for example that the abbots of Yorkshire monasteries exchanged information and advice on the building materials. John R. Senior, 'The Selection of

Thurstan, who was known as a protector of the monks. There, they received help from Roger de Mowbray and his mother Gundreda in 1138 who gave them Hood as their new site and the tithes of food, which were replaced in 1140 by the lands in Cam, Wildon, Scackleton and Airyholme. According to the *Historia Fundationis* compiled by the Abbot Philip of Byland (1196-1198) the site in Hood was intended only as a temporary residence. The growth of the community prompted Gundreda and Roger to grant them a new site in Old Byland (vill and a church) in September 1142.[30] This new location created conflict with Rievaulx abbey which was so close that the monks were confused by the sound of each other's bells, signaling the differing daily routines, as Byland was at this point still a Savignac house. As a result, in 1147, the congregation of Byland was moved again, first to Stocking (parish of Kilburn) and finally in 1177 to New Byland where it remained.[31]

Essentially conflicts between Rievaulx and Byland derived from the proximity of the houses and from the fact that their properties bordered. This closeness has also been interpreted by Burton as a reason for relatively small donations to Byland abbey in contrast to its powerful neighbour, which was more likely to attract donations from their mutual neighbours.[32] Although the dating of the documents related to contacts between Rievaulx and Byland copied into the cartulary is approximate, the earliest one dates from the time when the Byland community was still living in Old Byland. Between 1142 and 1145 abbot Roger of Byland agreed that Rievaulx abbey could dig a ditch to the river Rye, at the foot of Asberry Hill, which overlooks Rievaulx's precinct, on the property belonging to Byland. The abbot of Byland granted to Rievaulx a right to use land which the said ditch enclosed.[33] This grant, particularly the enclosed land, caused further disagreements soon after between abbot Roger of Byland and abbot Ailred of Rievaulx. A comprehensive agreement dated 1147-67 (probably closer to 1147 than the later date), although copied with some additions into the cartulary only after 1170, regulated various disagreements concerning the borders of the properties of both

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Dimensional and Ornamental Stone Types Used in Some Northern Monasteries - the Exploitation and Distribution of a Natural Resource', in *The Archaeology*, pp. 230-36.

[30] 'Historia Fundationis' in *Monasticon Anglicanum*, vol. 5, p. 350; *EYC*, vol. 3, n° 1833. This is a simplified account of the early history of Byland, for a detailed account see Burton, 'The origins and development', pp. 175-80.

[31] Janet Burton, 'The Settlement of Dispute Between Byland Abbey and Newburgh Priory', *The Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 55 (1983), 67-8; Janet Burton, 'The Abbeys of Byland and Jervaulx, and the Problem of the English Savigniacs, 1134-1156', in *Monastic Studies*, vol. 2, pp. 119-24.

[32] Burton, 'Origins and development', p. 187.

[33] *Cartulary*, n° 244.

houses.[34] The preamble of this charter emphasizes the intention of both communities to maintain mutual peace and love. They promised each other reciprocal prayers and, on a more practical level, to support and advise in case of hostility or persecution by the patrons, powerful noblemen or neighbours.

> And therefore, brothers from Byland, should perform for any brothers of Rievaulx, in respect of masses and psalms and other prayers just as they would for a brother of their house; and those of Rievaulx should give, what is due to themselves, to any brother of Byland. If indeed any oppression or persecution by advocates or powerful men, or neighbours should occur for one house, then they should stand together in advice and help, supporting each other in all things.[35]

The expression used in this case is vague and does not refer to any specific occasion or person, but the clause is an essential part of the contract, it was not a decorative feature and was put there on purpose. By establishing a community of prayers the monks set up a system of reciprocity and remembrance. For a monastic community such a declaration carried a significant practical and ideological dimension, the exchange of prayers expressed the idea of monastic brotherhood. Often these mutual commemorations were the result of friendships between the abbots or marked the end of disputes between houses, just as in the case of Rievaulx and Byland.[36]

This lengthy agreement, entitled in the cartulary as 'Cyrographum pacis inter nos et Bellandises', was intended as a permanent solution. It stipulates all the points of controversy between Byland and Rievaulx. Byland acknowledged the right of Rievaulx abbey to a particular bridge, with a sluice stopping the flow of the water on the river Rye. The height of the bridge was not be altered, unless it was kept equal to the river banks. Rievaulx was also granted a right to use the road and be responsible for its repair, from the said bridge as far as their own land towards Hesketh. Both houses gave each other rights to repair mill ponds on both sides of the river if required. The portion of land enclosed by the ditch at the foot of Ashberry Hill and the portion of land called Oswaldenges in Scawton were to remain in possession of Rievaulx. Byland on the other hand assured its full rights to Deepdale, and its exclusive title to acquire more land in Gristhorpe, Falsgrave, Seamer, Irton, with the exception of the meadow in West Ayton, where nothing could be acquired. In Hotton up to the vill of Brompton there should be no change in the property rights or buildings without the prior consultation of both

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[34] Burton, 'Estates and Economy', p. 47.

[35] 'Et ideo, obeunte aliquo fratre Rievallensi, fratres de Bellelanda in missis et psalmis ceterisque orationibus sicut pro fratre ipsius Domus faciant; quod et ipsum, obeunte aliquo fratre Bellelande, Rievallenses pro ipso persolvent. Si vero aliquid adversi vel prosecutionis ab advocatis, vel a potentibus, vel vicinis uni Domui emerserit, per invicem stabunt consilio et auxilio, sibi in omnibus adherentes.' *Cartulary*, n° 243.

abbots, cellarars and communities. The animals belonging to Rievaulx located at the Griff grange could be pastured in Scawton woods from Burnsdale towards Sproxton, but the rest of Scawton wood remained as an exclusive property of Byland. The later part of the charter gives a detailed description of the borders between the properties of both houses in Hesketh (belonging to Rievaulx) and Old Byland and also between Laskill and Bilsdale (Rievaulx's properties) and Snilesworth in Hawnby (belonging to Byland). Another point of dispute, resolved by this document, was that over the iron-works in Emley and Shitlington. The property there was granted by Matthew son of Saxe to Rievaulx abbey between 1155 and 1170.[37]

After Adam son of Peter gave a large grant in Shitlington, Flockton and Emley to Rievaulx abbey these properties also became an object of controversy between Rievaulx and Byland.[38] Byland claimed rights to the iron-works in Emley and Shitlington and this dispute was settled well before 1170, as this document corroborates the previous arrangement:

> Indeed since this agreement had been kept for many long years by both sides, in the year of Lord's Incarnation 1170, lest mutual love should cool, it is again repeated and confirmed more strictly.[39]

Byland was limited in the extraction of minerals to the six vills and woods of Emley, West Bretton, Shitlington Philippi (that is part of Shitlington belonging previously to Philip son of Saxe), Denby, Briestwistle and Thornhill. Rievaulx on the other hand was restricted in the extraction of minerals to two other parts of Shitlington (fee of Adam son of Peter and Matthew son of Saxe), Flocton and 'Threpwda'.[40] Both houses withdrew their claims to various properties, Byland quitclaimed two bovates in Welburn up to Oswaldenges, the ditch in Stainton leading to the river Rye, some iron-works in Stainton and Flockton, the bridge and the road leading to. In turn Rievaulx quitclaimed any rights to a common pasture in Morton. This agreement marked the eastern side of the Vale of Pickering as the area for expansion for Rievaulx abbey. Finally both sides agreed to an arbitration procedure if any problem should arise in the future:

> That if even after that, a dispute ever would arise, it should be resolved by four monks, according to the above said method. If any of the brothers would overstep the above said boundaries, on the account of his carelessness and negligence, he should be flogged in the Chapter of the brothers on the next

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[36] Newman, *Boundaries of Charity*, pp. 124-5.
[37] *Cartulary* n° 101; *EYC*, vol. 3, n° 1753. See also, pp. 132-3.
[38] *Cartulary*, n° 93, 99, 95; *EYC*, vol. 3, n° 1722, 1727, 1728.
[39] 'Cum autem hec conventio pluribus annis ab utroque in multis conservata fuisset, A° ab Incarnatione Domini M° c° lxx°, ne tepesceret caritas mutua iterato replicata et arc[t]ius est roborata'. *Cartulary*, n° 243.
[40] For the commentary on this part of the agreement see *EYC*, vol. 8, pp. 210-11.

> Sunday, and that day he should not eat with others at the table, but on the floor. However, the negligence should be examined, to see if while he himself was ignorant and occupied by other things, the cattle which he watched [are] into strange pastures. If, in fact, he did it knowingly, that is seeing it while lying down, sitting or standing, they should be found in unknown pastures, he should be punished on three Sundays by the above said punishment. Moreover, if seen by another brother and ordered to leave, he would not obey, he should be banished from his order, and should be the lowest of all until the previous punishment should be complete on three Sundays, so that on these three days he should drink only water. The boys who may be in the monastery, for such fault should be flogged until the blood [appears]. If a hired labourer, should commit, such a crime the master should be warned a first and second time. If once more he should not improve, the master of hired labourers, as if he himself had done it, should suffer the above said punishment. This charter has been read in both Chapters, in the presence of the abbots, lord Silvan of Rievaulx and Roger of Byland, is made in perpetuity and having made so in the respect by these as well as by both Chapters.[41]

This lengthy description of the procedure to curb any future disputes shows not only how monasteries dealt with these issues, but also indicates how conflicts might occur in the first place. The human error, or simply ignorance of the borders of pastures caused trespasses on to the lands of neighbours. The punishment procedures established in this agreement indicate the personal responsibilities of the monks for maintaining good relations with neighbours. The error of one individual could cause problems for the whole convent, therefore a rather severe physical and public punishment was meant to be a deterrent for the monks and lay brothers. The detailed nature of the agreement between Rievaulx and Byland abbeys indicates also a delicate balance between these institutions and the extent of the actual or possible areas where disagreements could occur. It appears to be a rather crowded world and the areas where the monastic houses could acquire attractive donations were shrinking very fast.

The lengthy agreement between Rievaulx and Byland settled several issues, but the conflict about tithes of Oswaldenges and Stainton due to the church in Scawton was

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[41] 'Quod si aliquando inde controversia aliquando exorta fuerit, per iiii^{or} monachos, secundum modum predictum, pacificetur. Si quis fratrum metas predictas transgressus fuerit, [propter] negligentiam suam et incuriam, proxima Dominica in Capitulo fratrum verberetur, et ea die non cum aliis ad mensam, sed in terra, comedat. Negligentia autem judicabitur si, ipso nesciente et in aliis rebus occupato, pecora que custodit in alienis pascuis paverint. Si vero scienter id fecerit —id est, supino vidente et sedente vel stante, in alienis pascuis inventa fuerint, tribus Dominicis predicta poena plectetur. Si, vero, visus ab aliquo fratre, et jussus exire, non obedierit, amoveatur ab ordine suo, et ultimus omnium sit donec premissam poenitentiam perfecerit tribus Dominicis, ita ut ipsis tribus diebus non nisi aquam bibat. Pueri qui de Domo sint, pro tale culpa vapulent usque ad sanguinem. Conductitius, si talia commiserit, magister ejus moneatur semel et iterum. Si denuo non correxerit, magister conductitii, ac si ipse fecisset, predictam poenam sustineat. Hec carta lecta est in utroque Capitulo, presentibus Abbatibus, Domino Silvano Rievallensi, et Rogero Bellelandensi, et tam ab ipsis quam utroque Capitulo in perpetuum confecta..' *Cartulary*, n° 243.

resolved by a separate agreement, probably parallel to the one discussed above. Between 1154 and 1160, Rievaulx and Byland signed an agreement, according to which, Rievaulx agreed to pay twenty pence yearly as a compensation to the church of Scawton for the loss of tithes.[42] Although the territories of Oswaldenges and Stainton belonged to Rievaulx, the church of Scawton appeared to be controlled by Byland abbey. This seems to be implied by the wording of the charter, being an agreement between both monasteries about the compensation, not between Rievaulx abbey and Scawton church. This agreement did not end this conflict. Archbishop Roger of York, after his accession in 1154, and later Archdeacon Ralph Baro, in 1157-58, issued separate charters concerning these tithes.[43] The conflict did not even finish then, but lasted well into the 1160s when pope Alexander III gave his ruling concerning payment of the tithes.[44]

Despite this seemingly endless stream of conflict between Rievaulx and Byland, contacts between the abbots of both houses were very good. After all, it was this abbot of Byland who brought his monastic community into the Cistercian order and must have consulted Ailred on many issues pertinent to this move. It was also Abbot Roger who anointed the dying Ailred and kept the vigil, with other abbots on his last days.[45] Personal friendship between abbots or various houses were a part of Cistercian ideology of *caritas* and played an important role in the order's life. As will see below, a personal contact had also strong impact on the early relationship between Rievaulx and Sempringham order.

At the time when Byland and Rievaulx abbeys were engaged in these conflict, another neighbour of Byland, Newburgh priory, carried out a successful collaborative drainage project with Byland. The flows of Holbec stream, Thorpe Beck and Long Beck were altered to provide better water delivery to Byland's precinct and a better current for Newburgh's mills.[46] This example of cooperation indicates that conflict was not inevitable between religious houses although Rievaulx abbey was not as willing as Newburgh to cooperate for mutual benefit. Having said that, however we should remember that the land which was the object of dispute between Rievaulx and Byland was crucial for Rievaulx's expansion of its precinct and shaping its estates in the most desirable way.

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[42] *Cartulary*, n° 242.
[43] *Cartulary*, n° 225, 226; published and dated in *EEA*, vol. 20, p. 88. For a discussion on this part of the conflict see pp. 220-1.
[44] *PU*, vol. 1, n° 104.
[45] *Life of Ailred*, pp. 59-60.

The scale of conflicts between Rievaulx and Byland abbeys prompted their superiors in the Cistercian order to intervene. It is likely that a charter by Geoffrey abbot of Clairvaux and G. (either Gariaumer or Gilbert le Grand) abbot of Cîteaux copied into the cartulary close to this other agreement between Rievaulx and Byland, is related to the series of conflicts between these two houses. The abbots of Cîteaux and Clairvaux, between 1162 and 1165, expressed their concern about preserving 'brotherly peace and love' between Byland and Rievaulx. The abbots strongly reinforced the Order's prohibition on the acceptance of certain lands, by forbidding the abbots to accept any lands against the Order's rules.[47] The charter does not specify to which rules and decrees of the order the abbots of Cîteaux and Clairvaux were referring, but it may well be one of the early regulations of the *Summa Cartae Caritatis* or legislation of the Chapter General of 1134 prohibiting acceptance of churches, income from the altars, tithes, manors, serfs, rents from the land and mills, all of which Rievaulx and Byland held to some extant.[48] The abbots' attitude to the conflict was rather pragmatic, they understood that being close neighbours causes problems and advised both abbots to be cautious in their actions towards each other. It is also possible that this letter was related to some arbitration between Rievaulx and Byland undertaken by abbots of Cîteaux and Clairvaux of which no other record has been preserved. The mediation of the Chapter General was sought by both houses in later conflicts; there is no reason to doubt that Yorkshire Cistercians might ask prominent persons within the order for arbitration.

Despite the detailed agreements and involvement of other abbots further conflicts took place as times and circumstances changed. A series of conflicts between Rievaulx and Byland recorded in the *Statuta Capitulorum* occurred in 1236, 1238, 1252 and 1253; unfortunately these entries are very laconic and do not provide information about the reasons for these conflicts.[49] In the first instance Byland complained against Rievaulx; then in 1238 the statutes indicate a quarrel without pointing to the offending site. In the last two cases Rievaulx complained against Byland. On the first occasion the Chapter General designated the abbots of Roche, Kirkstall and Meaux to investigate the matter, and resolve it by arbitration or judgement; and then in 1238 the abbots of Furness, Combermere and Beaulieu were called to inspect the situation. In the last two cases of 1252 and 1253 the Chapter General appointed the abbots of Furness, Fountains

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[46] C. J. Bond, 'Water management in the rural monastery', in *The Archaeology*, pp. 97-8.

[47] 'Ea propter prohibemus vobis, et omnimodis intericimus quatinus non grangiam nec terram nec pasturam ab aliquo requiratis vel accipiatis contra formam ordinis et terminos constitutos.' *Cartulary*, n° 245

[48] *Summa Cartae Caritatis* 23, in *Statuta*, vol. 2, p. 124; *Statuta,* vol. 1, pp. 14-15.

and Merevale to examine the situation, the first of the three abbots was also designated to report back to the Chapter General about their arbitration. Although all these entries are very laconic, there is a considerable change in tone of the 1253 decision of the Chapter General. Instead of just appointing another team to investigate, the Chapter urged designated abbots to give judgment without delay, and resolve the matter so there will be no needs for further investigation:

> A complaint of the abbot of Rievaulx against the abbot and convent of Byland is committed to the abbots of Furness, Fountains and Merevale again by the full power of the order, to determine judgement, who without cost of delay, if they find one has transgressed against the other, paying attention to what is fair, and should proceed quickly to judge and remedy, so that it will not be necessary to repeat its instruction for the commission.[50]

The wording of this entry may indicate that the disagreement between both houses was prolonged and probably related to the earlier cases from 1230s. The arbitration, mentioned in the entry, by abbots of Furness, Fountains and Merevale would ensure that they knew the background and local aspects of the conflict and would not have to travel very far to investigate the matter.

In the course of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries Rievaulx and Byland abbey had to develop strategies for dealing with difficulties arising from the physical proximity of the houses. Not only were their precincts nearby, but both monasteries tried to attract donations from the same people, which meant that other lands could well be bordering. One of the ways of dealing with the overlapping interests was to secure a monopoly of grants from a particular donor. Rievaulx gained exclusive mining rights in Stainborough from Adam son of Peter de Birkin who gave much land in that area to Rievaulx and Byland abbeys.[51] As the early conflict between both houses has shown, the monks were prepared to make compromises and find methods for resolving future conflicts, or seek arbitration from within the Cistercian order. This method was particularly effective if there was no direct lay involvement, but in many other situations either patrons or benefactor played some role in generating conflicts between the houses.

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[49] *Statuta*, vol. 2, 1236: 48; 1252: 35; 1253: 18.

[50] 'Querela abbatis de Rievalle contra abbatem et conventum de Bellalanda, de Furnesio, de Fontibus et de Mira valle abbatibus iterato committitur in plenaria Ordinis potestate iudicio terminanda, qui sine morae dispendio si alteram partium contra alteram invenerint excessisse, iuris ordine servato procedant celeriter et emendent in qua super hiis de cetero non oporteat commissionis mandatum innovari, et quid inde, etc.' *Statuta*, vol. 2, 1253: 18.

B. HOUSES SHARING THE SAME PATRON

Moving on from Byland to other neighbours, it is important to point out, that the relationship between Rievaulx and Kirkham priory of Augustinian canons had a particular dimension lacking in other cases discussed here, due to the fact that both houses had the same founder. Kirkham priory was founded circa 1122 by Walter Espec and located about seven miles from Rievaulx. Walter Espec's treatment of Rievaulx and Kirkham abbey shows how a powerful lay noblemen could fundamentally alter the functioning of the house of his creation. Espec's intention was to turn Kirkham priory into a Cistercian house, and despite the failure of his plan, the actions undertaken for that purpose had a significant impact on Rievaulx abbey and Kirkham priory and their subsequent relationship.[52]

Another reason for the early animosity between both houses might have originated from the desertion of Waldef, prior of Kirkham, a friend of Ailred, in the 1140s to become a Cistercian monk and the abbot of Melrose in 1148.[53] Marsha Dutton suggests that the 'Letter to Maurice' written by Walter Daniel after Ailred's death was directed to the prior of Kirkham who harboured resentment towards the abbot of the successful Cistercian house. Maurice questioned the claims of the Rievaulx community for Ailred's sanctity, but the animosity between both houses had earlier roots.[54]

After this early period of contacts between Rievaulx and Kirkham there is large gap in the sources, and not until 150 years later is there further indication of a more mundane relationship. In 1276 Prior William of Kirkham issued a plea of trespass against the abbot of Rievaulx. Unfortunately the location of this trespass was not specified.[55] It is likely that it occurred in Bilsdale, where the north-eastern part was in the possession of Kirkham and where by 1274, the priory acquired control of the whole manor, while the southern part was in the hands of Rievaulx.[56] It might have been an early stage of the conflict which surfaced between 1279 and 1281, when William prior of Kirkham issued a plea against William abbot of Rievaulx about common pasture in Bilsdale. The prior accused Abbot Adam of Rievaulx of unjustly dispossessing Richard then the prior of Kirkham of the right to a common pasture in Bilsdale. The abbot of

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[51] *Cartulary*, n° 92; Burton, *The Monastic Order*, pp. 210-14.
[52] For the details on the attempt to turn Kirkham priory into a Cistercian house by Espec see pp. 36-7.
[53] *Life of Ailred*, pp. xxx-xxxi.
[54] Dutton, 'Introduction', p. 67.
[55] *Notes on the Religious*, vol. 1, p. 103, n° 5.

Rievaulx denied the charges and claimed judgment by his peers.[57] The assize was issued and at the new hearing brother John Wlveley from Kirkham priory gave evidence against the right of Rievaulx abbey to the common pasture in Bilsdale.

> [H]e said that the assize ought not to be done, because he said that the above said prior is the head lord of the vill of Bilsdale, and that he himself appropriated from the above said place, just as it was legal for him by the provision of Merton etc. And the abbot said that the above said provision does not lie between them, because he said that he was not in the possession of the above said common for forty years before the said prior acquired the lordship of the said vill; and that the said prior acquired the said lordship from the one Simon de Ver, only five years ago. He said also, that he holds this in free alms, and that he himself is not holding of the above said prior by the said alms.[58]

Simon de Vere, mentioned in the court hearing was a neighbour of Rievaulx abbey and a benefactor of Kirkham. Simon himself had a long dispute with Rievaulx abbey. After several years of suits and trespasses Simon de Vere finished formally in 1260 several conflicts with the abbey.[59] The memorandum of this agreement was written in the Kirkham cartulary, which shows that this institution not only had an interest in the area of the dispute but also in the contacts between Simon de Vere, its benefactor, and Rievaulx abbey.[60]

Although the relationship between Rievaulx abbey and Kirkham priory is known rather fragmentarily, the cases analysed in this chapter indicate strongly that their mutual contacts were to a large extent the result of their involvement in the lay world. The episode of near disappearance and re-endowment of Kirkham priory at the beginning of its existence indicates how a powerful founder could intervene in the life of his monastery and create links between the houses of different orders which may not have come into being without his actions. Their bordering Bilsdale properties given to both houses by their founder Walter Espec created the usual problems which could

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[56] John McDonnell, 'Medieval Assarting Hamlets in Bilsdale, North-East Yorkshire', *Northern History* 22 (1986), 271.

[57] Placita Ebor, 8-9 Edw. I, published in the *Cartulary* p. 404.

[58] 'Et dicit quod assisa [non] debet inde fieri, quia dicit quod predictus Prior est capitalis Dominus de villa de Bildesdale, et quod ipse appropriavit de predicta placea, sicut ei bene licuit per provisionem de Mertona etc. Et Abbas dicit quod predicta provisio non jacet inter eos, quia dicit quod non fuit seissitus de predicta communa quadraginta annis antequam praedictus Prior dominus ejusdem ville perquisierat; et quod predictus Prior perquisivit predictum dominium de quodam Simone de Ver, jam quinque annis elapsis. Dicit etiam quod ipse tenet in liberam elemosinam, et quod ipse non [est] tenens predicti Prioris de predicta elemosina.' Placita Ebor, 8-9 Edw. I, published in the *Cartulary*, p. 405.

[59] Bodl, MS Dodsw. vii, f. 140; published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, p. 226-7. For the discussion on contacts between Simon and abbey see pp. 107-8.

[60] Kirkham Cartulary, Bodl. Fairfax 7, f. 51v; published in the *Cartulary*, pp. 254-5.

occur between neighbours.[61] Later contacts between Rievaulx and Kirkham, particularly in the 1280s were also strongly related to their roles as tenants, lords and land-holders, which entangled them in the web of disputes not only among religious institutions, but lay neighbours as well.

After the death of Walter Espec, the founder of both houses, his heirs continued to create links between Rievaulx and Kirkham. The hospital of St Thomas's in Bolton (within the barony of Wark-on-Tweed, which Robert I de Ros inherited from Walter Espec) was established about 1225 by Robert II de Ros. The hospital, designated to care for lepers, was under the supervision of both Kirkham priory and Rievaulx abbey.[62] It was probably at the request of Robert de Ros, that the abbot of Rievaulx and prior of Kirkham assumed this supervisory role. He, as a patron of both houses, could put pressure on them, although Robert's influence over the Augustinian house in Kirkham was considerably stronger than over Rievaulx. As the hospital shared the same patron with Rievaulx abbey it was bound to receive lands in the vicinity of the other, which, again, created potential conflicts. The connection between Rievaulx abbey was also strengthened by the means of land holding. In 1235 Bolton hospital was recorded to hold forty acres in the vill of Bolton from Rievaulx abbey.[63]

At some point William, Master of St Thomas's Hospital in Bolton, quitclaimed all rights which his institution claimed to the vills of Elveley and Swannesland with pasture for 200 sheep. Both these vills, in the diocese of York, were part of the initial endowment of the hospital and had been given to the hospital by Robert II de Ros, patron of Bolton and Rievaulx, but the reasons for the quitclaim, or any possible compensation are not specified.[64] The name of a Master William appears in the existing, but incomplete, list for this institution under 1313.[65] Although the charter of quitclaim is undated, there is no proof that this is the same person. I am inclined to suggest that the Master William from the charter was a person active in the thirteenth century. The charter refers to Robert II de Ros, who died in 1226, as a recently deceased person, there is no additional title to describe him, which seems to indicate that the people

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[61] John McDonnell suspected that the remnants of a rampart in Broad Ings were a part of the physical division between sheep pasture of Rievaulx and the northern part of Bilsdale belonging to Kirkham. *A History of Helmsley, Rievaulx and District*, ed. John McDonnell (York: The Stonegate Press, 1963), Appendix A(xv), p. 417.

[62] John Hodgson, *A History of Northumberland*, vol. 7 (Newcastle: Andrew Reid, 1904), pp. 200-2. The names of the respective prior and abbot are on the foundation grant of the hospital. However, in the Patent Roll of 1331, the hospital was described as being granted to Rievaulx and Kirkham by its founder. *CPR 1330-1334*, p. 155.

[63] *CR 1234-1237*, p. 61.

[64] Bodl., MS Dodsw., vii, f. 102; published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, p. 213.

involved knew exactly who he was. It is unlikely that such a wording would be used almost ninety years after his death.

There is no evidence for further contacts between the abbey and the hospital until 1280 when Rievaulx abbey granted to St Thomas's hospital in Bolton half of carucate in Bolton.[66] It is possible that this grant constituted part of an exchange, but for some reason this was done in two separate actions and recorded in two different documents. There are no doubts, however, that Rievaulx's involvement in the Bolton hospital was a direct result of Robert II de Ros's patronage over these institutions.

C. OTHER CISTERCIAN HOUSES

Once we get beyond the abbey's immediate neighbours, relationships become calmer. Certainly, contacts between Rievaulx and Fountains were less stormy than with the closer neighbours. Their economic interests generally did not overlap and their joint position as the most important, rich and influential of the northern Cistercian houses was not questioned. During the years of abbot Henry Murdac of Fountains at the archbishopric of York, the first two abbot-suffragans at Fountains were monks of Rievaulx: Maurice and Thorald.[67] The relationship of both monasteries was more often one of working together and mediating for each other than of conflict. The chapters of Rievaulx and Fountains, together with Archbishop Roger of York and lay noblemen, witnessed between 1154 and 1181 an agreement between Byland abbey and Newburgh priory.[68] In 1218 the abbots of Fountains, Rievaulx, Waverley, Margam and Beaulieu were chosen by the Chapter General to judge serious disorders occurring in English houses which could not wait until the next Chapter General.[69] In 1226 the abbots of Fountains and Rievaulx were called by Pope Gregory IX to restore the property of several nunneries in Yorkshire which were struggling with poverty and debts.[70]

At least twice in the thirteenth century abbots of Rievaulx helped to resolve conflicts in which Fountains abbey was entangled. In 1251 the abbots of Rievaulx and

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[65] Hodgson, *History of Northumberland*, vol. 7, p. 216.
[66] Bodl., MS Dodsw., cxxi, f. 205; published incomplete in the *Cartulary*, p. 250. The editor identified incorrectly this hospital as located in the East Riding instead of Edlingham, Northumberland.
[67] Burton, 'The origins and development', pp. 165-6.
[68] BL, Egerton Charter 585. For discussion of other documents from the Byland cartulary related to this conflict, but not containing name of the abbot of Rievaulx, see Burton, 'The settlement of disputes', pp. 67-72.
[69] *Statuta*, vol. 1218: 74.
[70] *CPL*, p. 114.

Rufford, its daughter-house, were called to arbitrate between Fountains and Sallay in their dispute over the changes in the direction of Lonsdale road and pasture rights in that area where properties of both houses were located close to each other.[71] This road formed a part of the border between the properties of both houses. Originally the case was arbitrated by four knights and then referred to the abbots. More then twenty years later in 1279 abbots William of Rievaulx and Adam of Byland were appointed by the General Chapter to resolve a further conflict between Fountains and Sallay about the same road.[72] The aim of the second arbitration was to enforce the previous agreement which was by then broken. The abbots ordered perambulation by the monks and lay brothers of the houses to secure the borders. They also ordered a payment for any damages done by the monks and lay brothers of Sallay and clarified some points of the previous document.[73]

The only documented case of direct conflict between Rievaulx and Fountains occurred between 1170 and 1180 and the cause was rather predictable — conflicting economic interests. It was ended by the agreement between Abbot Sylvan of Rievaulx and Abbot Robert of Fountains, and ratified by Abbot Alexander of Cîteaux, and Abbot Henry of Clairvaux, in the presence of the abbots of other Cistercian houses Richard de la Chaussée of Mortimer in Normandy (1174-79), and the abbots of Byland, Woburn, Sallay and Jervaulx. Both sides of the conflict agreed that the borders of their unnamed granges in Cleveland should not be changed. Presence of the high rank representatives of the order indicates that the disagreement between Rievaulx and Fountains was taken very seriously by the Chapter General. This appears to be motivated by the status of the houses rather than the gravity of the conflict itself, which was indeed typical. Both communities promised each other not to commit any trespasses, and designated a right of way for the monks of Fountains to the land, which they had acquired opposite the property of Everard II de Ros, the patron of Rievaulx abbey. Both sides had rights to collect wood, salt and establish fisheries towards the sea.[74] Burton suggests that this document refers to Rievaulx's grange in Normanby and Fountains' in Eston. The origin of this conflict lies therefore in the Stephen II de Meinil grant to Fountains abbey in Eston; he was also an active benefactor of Rievaulx.[75] The grange of Normanby (in the parish of Eston) belonging to Rievaulx was built from the grant from Richard son of

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[71] *Cartulary of Sallay,* vol. 2, pp. 13-14, n° 411.
[72] *Cartulary of Sallay*, vol. 2, pp.14-16, n° 412.
[73] For the analysis of this conflict see Wardrop, *Fountains Abbey*, pp. 129-30.
[74] *Cartulary*, n° 241.
[75] Wardrop, *Fountains Abbey*, p. 167.

Thurstan of Normanby (between 1170 and 1180) of one tillage of land as well as permission to establish a fishery.[76] Richard's son, Robert, confirmed this grant and added Saltcote hill between 1178 and 1181.[77] Finally, Richard Lost, a nephew of Robert, between 1175 and 1185, gave to the abbey a further thirty three acres, described as being between the land given by his grand-uncle, uncle, and the river Tees, together with the right to establish fisheries, common pasture for 100 sheep, eight horses and oxen.[78] Taking into account the timing of these grants it is possible that conflict with Fountains occurred while Rievaulx was still receiving these donations in Normanby. The considerable distance from the house and the dispute with Fountains prompted Rievaulx abbey to lease the pastures and fisheries in Normanby to Walter a priest of Eston church. The money was then spent on the purchase of fifty acres of arable land in Sproxton near Griff and pasture for one hundred sheep and forty-eight head of cattle located close to the abbey.[79]

Among the Yorkshire houses discussed in this chapter only Fountains could be compared in scale and importance to Rievaulx abbey. Their economic interests did not overlap in any significant way and both houses maintained mutually good relationship. The same cannot be said about other smaller houses located further away from Rievaulx abbey.

D. DISTANT HOUSES WITH BORDERING GRANGES

Apart from positive interactions between Rievaulx abbey and Fountains abbey discussed above, other types of connections occurred between Rievaulx and the Augustinian houses in Bridlington, Newburgh, Guisborough and Drax. Most of them were of an economic nature, particularly over spheres of influence, grange building and shared common pastures. Although these houses were located far from Rievaulx, their granges were bordering. Even if each house had a sphere of influence, it was not always possible to maintain a monopoly within such an area; larger and more important houses commanded stronger influences over their environment than their smaller counterparts. Besides that, a particular group of conflicts between Rievaulx and the Augustinian houses originated from disagreements over tithe payment. Augustinian canons had no prohibition against or reservation about receiving tithes. They were, in fact, an optimal

[76] *Cartulary*, n° 116; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 739.
[77] *Cartulary*, n° 117.
[78] *Cartulary*, n° 118.
[79] Waites, 'Monastic Settlement', p. 493. He does not specify the source of this information.

beneficiary for noblemen, who might dispose of their proprietary churches in the later twelfth century, due to the reform movement in the Church.[80] Cistercian abbeys, although formally prohibited from accepting churches and their tithes, were very keen on this type of income as well. The Cistercian exemption from their payment was another point of controversy.[81]

The benefactions of the Mowbray family brought Rievaulx into contact with Newburgh priory which received grants in Welburn from the same benefactor.[82] Both houses had disagreement over the tithes due from Welburn and Hoveton. Rievaulx as a Cistercian house was exempted from this payment, a privilege which was very much cherished by the order. Between 1189 and c. 1210 Rievaulx granted the tithes it possessed (that is tithes from the abbey's land) in Welburn and Hoveton to Newburgh priory to avoid further disputes. Both houses agreed to which lands were liable for tithes and which were not.[83]

The pragmatic approach of Newburgh priory and Rievaulx abbey to their mutual contacts is testified by an agreement between Abbot Roger of Rievaulx and prior of Newburgh in 1233 over the lease of the Poketo mill in Fryton for the annual rent of two marks. The priory was also given charters of the original donor, Hugh de Flamvill.[84] Although Cistercian houses were formally prohibited from acquiring mills, for reasons other than domestic use, this type of property was commonly held by them. Rievaulx abbey possessed several mills from the early 1150s onwards.[85] Their eagerness to harness the energy of water was particularly prominent in their newer areas of expansion in Europe. In the thirteenth century Polish Cistercians often used earlier donations of the water-ways not so much for fisheries, but commonly to build water-mills.[86]

Contacts between Rievaulx abbey and Guisborough priory, the wealthiest Augustinian house in Yorkshire, were even more varied. Guisborough priory became a tenant of Rievaulx abbey due to the fact that some of its benefactors had dealings with the Cistercian abbey. Stephen, Richard and Dionisius de Eston confirmed a grant to Guisborough abbey of all the lands in Cargo Fleet (York), which their father Walter bought from Rievaulx in the second half of the twelfth century. The canons were

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[80] Janet Burton, 'Monasteries and Parish Churches in Eleventh and Twelfth Century Yorkshire', *Northern History* 23 (1987), p. 39

[81] For the issue of tithes in connection with Rievaulx see pp. 217-9.

[82] *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 163.

[83] *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 164.

[84] Bodl., MS Dodsw., vii, f. 117; published incomplete in the *Cartulary* p. 219.

[85] Burton, 'Estates and Economy', pp. 56-7.

obliged to pay a service payment of two shillings yearly to Rievaulx, which the abbey had to pay to the Brus family.[87] In 1233 Peter II de Brus quitclaimed this payment to Rievaulx abbey.[88] This kind of economic connection became common between religious houses in the course of the thirteenth century and caused a considerable number of conflicts and law-suits.

In the early thirteenth century Rievaulx abbey was appointed to oversee certain interests of Guisborough abbey. In or soon after 1200 the abbots of Byland, Rievaulx and Fountains as well as the prior of Kirkham inspected charters of grants of Robert de Brus to Guisborough and reported their findings to Archbishop Geoffrey of York concerning churches and their income given by Robert to this house.[89] In 1210 pope Innocent III sent a mandate to Abbot Warin of Rievaulx (1208-11) and the dean and treasurer of York Chapter to grant to Guisborough priory, the church of Hessle, for the 'use of hospitality', which was previously granted to the recently deceased Master Britus, a papal sub-deacon and notary.[90] It took eight years for the pope to confirm Rievaulx abbey's grant to Guisborough priory of Hessle church. It is possible either that this long delay was caused by the slow bureaucracy of the papal court, or that Rievaulx was trying to delay or even ignore papal orders. If the monks controlled the church of Hessle, as the papal mandate suggests, after the death of its previous holder, they were likely to be reluctant to give away this income.[91]

In 1239 Rievaulx abbey petitioned Pope Gregory IX to resolve another conflict between them and Guisborough about the payment of unspecified tithes. This case had been heard before the officials of the archdeacon of Cleveland, but no satisfactory resolution was reached. Therefore, the pope appointed the abbot of the Premonstratensian house in Croxton (Leicestershire) and the prior of the Augustinian house in Newburgh, and the prior of Beauver (diocese of Lincoln) to arbitrate between Rievaulx and Guisborough.[92]

Although recorded contacts between Rievaulx abbey and Guisborough priory are fragmentary, their diversity points to certain characteristics of inter-monastic contacts, which consisted of monetary agreements, tithes disputes, and arbitration over these. Like the contacts with lay neighbours, of which conflicts were predominantly recorded,

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[86] *Monasticon Cisterciense Poloniae*, vol. 1, p. 207.
[87] *Cartularium Prioratus de Gyseburne*, n° 557.
[88] BL, Add. Ch. 20578.
[89] BL, Stowe Ch. 465.
[90] *CPL*, vol. 1, p. 36
[91] *CPL*, vol. 1, p. 54.
[92] *CPL*, vol. 1, p. 180.

these connections noted between Rievaulx and its monastic neighbours were similarly biased towards disagreements than cooperation.

Another of the northern Augustinian houses, Bridlington priory, was founded by Walter de Gant, one of the prominent benefactors of Rievaulx abbey. Although both institutions were located at a considerable distance from each other (forty miles), they received lands in close proximity. In order to avoid conflict with Bridlington priory in Willerby, where the priory owned a church and Rievaulx had a licence to acquire land and pasture, the abbey leased ten and half acres of land, tenements and pasture for 300 sheep to the priory in 1175.[93] Rievaulx's holdings there dated from as early as 1152 and were reconfirmed in 1172 by Henry de Willerby (a tenant of the earl Simon de St Liz, a son-in-law of Gilbert de Gant) with the clause permitting them to build a grange.[94] Rievaulx could technically try to build a grange there, having acquired a licence to purchase or receive grants there from earl Simon de St Liz and his wife Alice de Gant between 1170 and 1184.[95] The reason for a compromise so favourable for the canons was probably motivated by the possibility of a costly conflict with Bridlington which would arise from attempts to establish a grange there.[96] Rievaulx recognised this area as primarily Bridlington's sphere of expansion and ceased its own territorial growth there before any serious conflict occurred.[97] As any large land-owner religious houses were interested in building not only extensive, but also compact estates and usually wanted to secure some form of control in the area in which its properties were located. These spheres of influence had to be recognised by other members of the land-owning community, if the system was to work smoothly. The case of dispute between Rievaulx and Bridlington discussed above shows how conflicts could be prevented.

Drax priory, also located at a considerable distance from Rievaulx, clashed with the abbey over the grant in Faweather (West Riding, parish of Bingley), an area of the particularly fierce competition for donations between religious houses. Faweather was given to Rievaulx abbey by Adam son of Peter de Birkin between 1150 and 1160, but Drax priory's initial endowment was located in that area and the canons claimed rights to the tithes which Rievaulx refused to pay.[98] Between 1221 and 1223 the abbey agreed

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[93] *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 1230.
[94] *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 1228. This charter was copied to Bridlington cartulary, not to the cartulary of Rievaulx abbey which indicated a keen interest of the canons in the area.
[95] *Cartulary*, n° 158; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 1232.
[96] Waites, 'The Monastic Settlement', 493; R. A. Donkin, 'The Cistercian Grange in England in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries with special reference to Yorkshire', *Studia Monastica* 6 (1964), p. 103.
[97] *Bridlington Cartulary*, pp. 100, 114, 115.
[98] *West Yorkshire*, vol. 2, p. 328.

to pay an annual compensation to Drax priory of three shillings for the loss of tithes, although the dispute surfaced again in the early fourteenth century.[99]

Another West Riding vill, Harden (parish of Bingley) was an area of high concentration of monastic grants from Adam son of Peter de Birkin, a prolific benefactor of many Yorkshire monasteries. Most of Harden was, by the early thirteenth century in the hand of Rievaulx abbey and other monastic competitors were pushed out. Prioress Agnes of Esholt, a small Cistercian nunnery, quitclaimed or rather sold three bovates of land in Culligworth, and the common forest in Harden. The monks paid ten marks of compensation.[100] The common pasture in Harden was also an object of the dispute between abbot Roger and the prioress of Esholt in 1231, which the nuns tried to claim unsuccessfully as a part of their freehold.[101] Another nunnery, Kirklees, which also had a right to specific parts of the forest in Harden quitclaimed it to Rievaulx abbey. The charter was issued by the prioress Sybil.[102] Although these quitclaims concern relatively small properties, they gave the abbey better control of the forest and its resources. Both nunneries, small and poor, stood no chance in confrontation with a large and wealthy house and had to withdraw from the area, which Rievaulx abbey was determined to monopolise.

Another area where monastic lands were concentrated was East Cowton (parish of Northallerton) in which there were estates of Rievaulx, Bridlington, Fountains and Marrick.[103] This last house, a small Benedictine nunnery, had a conflict with Rievaulx abbey in the late twelfth century resulting from the grant of Simon and Alan de Chambord to Rievaulx abbey of two bovates which their brother Robert had given to the nunnery. Although William de Chambord, son of Robert confirmed his father's grant to Marrick nunnery, both houses claimed the right to these two bovates.[104] The result of this dispute was an exchange, between 1197 and c. 1208. Rievaulx abbey gave to the nunnery its two bovates of land in East Cowton, from the donation of Simon and Alan Chambord, in exchange for forty-four acres and common pasture for 100 sheep in Harlsey from the donation of Robert Lasceles, but in addition the nunnery had to pay the forinsec service from the Cowton property. This charter was witnessed by the lay neighbours of both houses and members of the Lasceles family, as well as Richard

[99] Burton, 'Estates and Economy', 73.
[100] BL, Eg. Ch. 2245; for the English summary see *YD*, vol. 2, n° 143. Adam son of Peter de Birkin donated three bovates of land in Cullingworth and Harden, between 1180 and 1184 to the nuns of Esholt. *EYC*, vol. 3, n° 1785, 1874, vol. 6, n° 67.
[101] *Assize Roll,* no. 1042, m. 16d, in *YD*, vol. 2, p. 57.
[102] BL, Eg. Ch. 2254; for an English summary of this charter, see *YD*, vol. 1, n° 82.
[103] Burton, 'Estates and Economy', p. 40.

seneschal of Bishop Philip of Poitiers of Durham (1197-1208).[105] Although East Cowton was an attractive area, it was close to the grange of Fountains abbey and the acquisition of the pasture in Harlsey helped to Rievaulx abbey to consolidate its grange in Morton with further pastoral components.

The contacts between Rievaulx abbey and four Augustinian houses in Bridlington, Newburgh, Guisborough and Drax originated predominantly in the grants from the same people located in the close vicinity. Religious houses were prepared to make compromises and often negotiated agreement if such necessity arose. They were realistic and pragmatic in these deals, even if it meant, as in the case of Rievaulx and Bridlington, redirecting the abbey's expansion in other direction. The issue of tithes payment and the Cistercian refusal to pay them triggered many disagreements between Augustinian houses and Rievaulx abbey. Usually a financial compromise was reached between the parties in the form of either a delimitation of the lands from which the tithes were paid and which were freed, as in the case of Newburgh priory, or some form of compensation, as in the case of Drax priory.

E. CONTACTS WITH THE SEMPRINGHAM ORDER

As we move on to discuss the relationship of Rievaulx abbey with the Sempringham, also known as the Gilbertine, order, it is important to point out that the early abbots of Rievaulx displayed a considerable interest in the condition of the Sempringham order. This order, as a new addition to the monastic landscape of England, needed to assert its place and role, particularly towards the older and more established institutions, but at the same time, help and advice from the experienced abbots was important to Sempringham's own development.

The order originated from the Lincolnshire parish of Sempringham where Gilbert of Sempringham established in the 1130s a small house for nuns. After a visit from Abbot William of Rievaulx and upon his advice, Gilbert introduced lay sisters, a group modeled on the Cistercian example. In the late 1140s Gilbert added, with the advice of Bernard of Clairvaux, canons to the order, creating double houses of both nuns and canons, living in separate quarters. The Sempringham order grew in popularity and before 1154 several double houses were established in and outside Lincolnshire,

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[104] *EEA*, vol. 20, Appendix 2, n° 6.

[105] *Collectanae Topographica et Genealogica*, vol. 5 (London: Nichols, 1838), p. 110. This charter was dated Clay, EYC, vol. 5, p. 283. For more information about Chambords grant to Rievaulx abbey see p. 117.

including Watton in Yorkshire, and single houses for canons only, such as Malton priory in the same county.[106]

It seems that the general position of the Sempringham order was of concern to Rievaulx as the charter of protection by King Richard I for this order was copied into Rievaulx's own cartulary.[107] This interest dated from the time of the first abbot of Rievaulx, William, who visited and advised Gilbert of Sempringham on the organization of his order. It was he who had proposed the introduction of lay sisters, and probably lay brothers to the Gilbertine order. Then Ailred, the future abbot of Rievaulx became acquainted with Gilbert in 1143 when he was appointed as a first abbot of Revesby in Lincolnshire which was located only a few miles away from Sempringham.[108]

The personal involvement of abbot Ailred in the internal issues of the new order is testified by his own account, *De sanctimoniali de Wattun*, of his investigation in the scandal of a Gilbertine nun at the double houses at Watton in the early 1160s.[109] One of the young nuns there became pregnant as a result of an affair with a canon or a lay brother from the same house. Both of them were very severely punished by the nuns, but due to a miraculous intervention the nun's condition disappeared and the chains, with which she was bound, fell off. Abbot Ailred was called to investigate this miraculous occurrence.[110] Ailred's involvement in this serious and potentially damaging event for the Sempringham order indicates how much he was trusted by Gilbert, master of the order, and how much his spiritual authority and monastic experience were valued in the York diocese. A trust placed in Ailred to resolve this difficult situation must have been based on Master Gilbert's observation of Ailred's success as the first abbot of Revesby, as an extremely capable manager of estates and director of religious life of its monastic community.[111] This positive picture of the early contacts between both houses

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[106] Burton, *Monastic and Religious*, pp. 98-9

[107] *Cartulary*, n° 248.

[108] Brian Golding, *Gilbert of Sempringham and the Gilbertine Order c. 1130 - c.1300* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), pp. 83, 85.

[109] Ailred of Rievaulx, 'De sanctimoniali de Wattun', *Patrologia Latina* , ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 195, (Paris, 1855), col. 789-796. Watton was founded in 1150 by Eustace Fitz John, who had close connections with Walter Espec. His son William de Vescy was a benefactor of Rievaulx abbey. For more information on the contacts between this family and Rievaulx abbey see pp. 118-9.

[110] Giles Constable, 'Aelred of Rievaulx and the nun of Watton: an episode in the early history of the Gilbertine order', in *Medieval Women: Studies in Church History, Subsidia* I, ed. Derek Baker (1978), pp. 205-26; Elizabeth Freeman, 'Nuns in the Public Sphere: Ailred of Rievaulx's *De Sanctimoniali de Wattun* and the Gendering of Authority', *Comitatus* 27 (1996), pp. 55-80.

[111] Marsha Dutton, 'Introduction', in *The Life of Ailred of Rievaulx by Walter Daniel*, transl. F. M. Powicke, (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1994), pp. 29-30. On the friendship between

has been recently questioned by Berman who suggests that the rivalry between both orders was already present at this early stage and Ailred's narrative about the scandal in Watton house was intended to 'reflect badly' on the rival.[112] This suggestion appears unfounded since the focus of the *De sanctimoniali de Wattun* is on the miracle, rather than the event itself. While there was rivalry between the orders, it was a much later development.

These personal contacts between the leaders fostered more structured contacts between Rievaulx abbey and houses of the Sempringham order. An agreement of 'societatis et pacis' between the Cistercian and Sempringham orders regulated the relationship between those two orders in England. A copy of it was inserted in the cartulary of Rievaulx abbey.[113] This document was witnessed and sealed in 1164 by the abbots and priors of both orders: Geoffrey abbot of Clairvaux, Ailred of Rievaulx, Richard of Fountains, Walter of Kirkstead, master Philip of St. Laurence, Ralph abbot of Louth Park, Acius abbot of Vaudey, Gilbert master of the Sempringham order, Thorpin prior of Sempringham, Alan of Lindesfarne, Adam of Lincoln, Richard of Lindley, Thomas de Ormesby, Hugh of Sixhills, Ralph of Watton, and Robert of Malton. The position of the abbot of Rievaulx was recognized by the prominent placement of his name in the witness list, in the second place after the abbot of Clairvaux. It indicates on one hand, the personal significance of Ailred, and on the other, marks the status of Rievaulx abbey among monastic houses in England. This agreement between the Cistercian and Sempringham orders covered procedures for resolving quarrels over property rights and the issue of erecting new buildings. Monks and canons agreed that the new granges or buildings belonging to the orders should be at a distance of two leagues from each other (about 6 miles). Orders were permitted to receive up to one measure of land within this protected area providing that this property was used as a pasture or cultivated by laymen, not by the lay brothers and under no circumstances should granges be established there. Representatives of the Cistercian and Sempringham orders promised not to accept canons, monks or novices from each other, nor to hire servants who had not fulfilled their contracts with the other order.[114] Golding interpreted this agreement as symptomatic of the increased competition for people and land. By 1150 the majority of the substantial pieces of property which could

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Gilbert and Ailred see Brian Golding, 'St Bernard and St Gilbert', in *The Influence of Saint Bernard: Anglican esseys*, ed. Benedicta Ward, Fairacres Publications, vol. 60 (Oxford: S.L.G. Press, 1976), p. 48.

[112] Berman, *Cistercian Evolution,* p. 146.

[113] *Cartulary*, n° 246.

have been distributed were already donated and the monastic orders were competing for rather meagre leftovers.[115] Recruitment of the hired labour was also a vexatious issues and created additional area of competition between the orders.

However, in the thirteenth century, the personal connection between the abbots of the two orders disappeared, with it Rievaulx's support diminished, and economic conflicts between Rievaulx and Sempringham developed, as is testified by papal mandates. In 1220 Pope Honorius III issued a mandate to the abbots of Fountains, Rievaulx and Byland forbidding them to encroach on the rights of the canons of Sempringham to the churches and their assets granted to them by patrons.[116] Twenty-six years later, another mandate from Pope Innocent IV urged the abbots of Byland and Rievaulx to stop harassing the canons of Sempringham contrary to the licence they had received from the pope.[117] Next year, in 1247, a similar letter was directed to the abbots of Rievaulx, Byland and the prior of Bridlington, although the wording was different. Instead of reproaching the Cistercian abbots for harassing the Sempringham order, the pope asked them to ensure that nobody encroached on the rights of the canons.[118] It appears that the papal orders were not obeyed and he had to issue another mandate in 1248 to the abbot of Rievaulx and the prior of Kirkham to investigate whether the Sempringham order had been bothered against the papal licence. The abbot and the prior were appointed to oversee that the order of Sempringham received two churches and their income in the diocese of Lincoln.[119] A year later Pope Innocent IV instructed the abbots of Byland and Rievaulx to oversee that the privilege of the priors and canons of the Sempringham order, not to be summoned away from their houses to places further than two days journey, was not broken.[120] Two years later, in 1250 the same abbots received another papal mandate to supervise implementation of yet another licence for the Sempringham order concerning the restricted powers of the apostolic legates towards the order.[121]

The number of papal letters directed to the abbots of Rievaulx and their colleagues in other monasteries concerning various issues related to the rights and privileges of the Sempringham order must have resulted in relatively frequent contacts between these houses. It is impossible to assess why there was such a great number of

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[114] *Cartulary*, n° 246.
[115] Golding, *Gilbert of Sempringham*, pp. 269, 280.
[116] *CPL*, vol. 1, p. 76.
[117] *CPL*, vol. 1, p. 230.
[118] *CPL*, vol. 1, p. 233.
[119] *CPL*, vol. 1, pp. 258-9.
[120] *Original papal documents*, n° 352; BL, Stowe Ch. 372.

conflicts between members of Cistercian, Augustinian and Sempringham orders in the middle of the thirteenth century, but it is probable that some of these conflicts were related to common pastures in the Vale of Pickering. Both Rievaulx and Bridlington had large sheep flocks there and Malton priory had the third largest herd there.[122] Many of the papal letters mention churches and its therefore likely that Rievaulx abbey and the Sempringham order clashed over income of these churches or tithes payment. From the 1240s onward the abbots of Rievaulx often acted in their capacity as judges or conservators of Sempringham's privileges. This change indicated not only that the position of Rievaulx abbey as a leading religious institution in the north of England was recognised by the pope, but also that the disagreements between Rievaulx abbey and the houses of the Sempringham order had ceased.

In their numerous conflicts with monastic neighbours in the late twelfth century Rievaulx abbey often looked for help outside the York diocese, even as far as the papal or royal court. In the attempt to stop the encroachments on Rievaulx's properties by the canons of Malton, Kirkham and Sempringham, Pope Alexander III issued a mandate to Bishop Hugh of Durham and Abbot Clement of St Mary's York on 14 March 1174-76. He obviously did not act on his own accord. Monks of Rievaulx must have petitioned the pope on this matter and asked for help. This mandate urged the above mentioned ecclesiastics to stop trespasses committed on various properties of Rievaulx abbey. The canons of Malton were illegally occupying waste below Pickering, the canons of Sempringham claimed the right to the property given to the abbey by Adam son of Peter and his mother, and the canons of Kirkham occupied more than they should of the pasture in Helmsley which Rievaulx and Kirkham were given for their joint use. The charters do not specify however, the amount of land taken from Rievaulx by these houses. The canons of Sempringham and Malton were ordered by the pope to vacate unjustly taken land and the canons of Kirkham were instructed to stick to the portion of pasture granted to them.[123] It is very likely that the disputes described in this charter were not linked to each other. The pope responded to the request for help from the monks who were troubled by the canons of Malton, Sempringham and Kirkham at some point prior to the papal intervention, but these actions were not a joint campaign against Rievaulx abbey. All three houses had different reasons for their disagreements with Rievaulx. Malton, like many lay individuals, wanted to get part of the attractive land below Pickering. In contrast, Kirkham shared pasture rights with Rievaulx because

[121] *Original papal documents*, n° 374; BL, Stowe Ch. 573.
[122] Golding, *Gilbert of Sempringham*, p. 421.

these were granted by their founder, and Sempringham wanted a portion of the attractive land in Shitlington and Flockton.[124]

Conflict between Malton and Rievaulx remained unresolved until 1175 when King Henry II issued a separate document, copied into the cartulary, which settled it. The monks of Rievaulx permitted thirty oxen belonging to the canons to be pastured between Howe Bridge to Kiptoftleys and from the Costa Beck along the stream past the houses belonging to Rievaulx for ever, also two bulls and thirty cows with their calves, but the young animals for a year only. In return, Malton priory quitclaimed all its rights to waste below Pickering.[125] Separately, Simon de Tonei, bishop of Moray (1171-1184), who was a former monk of Melrose, a daughter house of Rievaulx abbey, and Abbot Richard de la Chaussée of Mortimer issued an attestation of the same agreement, 'Testimonium Symoni episcopi Murefensis et Ricardi abbati Mortum Mari de causa que vertebatur inter nos et Canonicos de Maltona'.[126] The appearance of these non-standard witnesses may indicate that the agreement was made away from Rievaulx and the diocese of York, thus the usual witnesses, such as the Dean and the Chapter of York were not present.[127]

In the first half of the thirteenth century Rievaulx abbey and Malton priory had another dispute about the particular pasture within the waste below Pickering called Castle Ings ('Eduimersch') between 1240 and 1253. The investigation by the jurors of the Pickering Wapentake revealed that Castle Ings did not belong to the part of waste given by the king to Rievaulx, but was given by Eustace FitzJohn and his son William de Vescy to Malton priory. The abbey had to relinquish its claims.[128]

These persistent conflicts between Malton and Rievaulx within the waste below Pickering were a result of several issues. Firstly, the abbey which held most of the waste wanted to monopolize the area, although the priory, a great producer of wool, also had a keen interest in the pastures there. Secondly, the founder of Malton priory and his son were also benefactors of Rievaulx abbey and granted land to both institutions in close proximity. Two other documents related to the conflicts between William de Vescy and

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[123] *Cartulary*, n° 267; *PU*, vol. 1, n° 188.
[124] For a discussion on Birkins' grants see pp. 126-30.
[125] *Cartulary*, n° 192. The same charter was copied to the Malton cartulary, BL, Cotton Claudius D xl, f. 28; Coucher Book of the Duchy of Lancaster, in *Honor of Pickering*, p. 122.
[126] BL, Cotton Julius D I, f. 125v [f. 123v]; *Cartulary*, n° 193.
[127] The Cistercian house of Mortimer in Normandy was refounded and moved to a new location from the previous Benedictine establishment by King Henry I about 1134. Its links with the Cistercian houses in England were established by its Abbot Richard. Janauschek, *Originum Cisterciensium*, pp. 48-9.
[128] Malton Register, f. 31, in *Honor of Pickering*, pp. 184-5.

Rievaulx abbey were copied in the Malton cartulary, which indicated that the priory had interests in this area, but also that its cartulary was a repository of important documents for its patron.[129]

Overally, it appears that the early involvement of Rievaulx abbey in the affairs of the Sempringham order originated in personal contacts established by its early abbots. Later, disputes between Rievaulx and houses belonging to Sempringham order arose from their conflicting economic interests and possibly some jealousy over the new and successful order, at the time when the Cistercians became a less fashionable object of donations.

F. OTHER RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

Apart from the contacts with the fellow monastic houses described above there is some evidence for the involvement of Rievaulx abbey with another type of religious institution, that is with charitable hospitals. This interest might indicate Rievaulx's concern with charitable pursuits, but was also a result of much more mundane considerations. Although the Cistercian order was not primarily designed to help those in need, by donations to the hospitals a Cistercian house could perform charitable works by proxy. Possibly as early as 1147 Ailred of Rievaulx promised alms of clothing and other goods yearly on St Martin's day in return for the tenancy of two bovates of land, which the abbey received from St Michael's hospital in Whitby.[130] Somewhat later, between 1147 and 1157, Godwin, priest of that hospital, exchanged for practical reasons three bovates of land with Rievaulx for three shillings yearly.[131]

Later interactions between Rievaulx and St Peter's in York (later known as St Leonard's) occurred for a very different reason — property in York. Between 1180 and 1203 Paulin, the master of St Leonard's granted to Rievaulx a piece of land in the Marsh of Hungate. The property was the tenure of the hospital and it was held previously by Jeremiah, archdeacon of Cleveland.[132] After the death of Jeremiah, the relatives of the archdeacon disputed this grant. Between 1192 and 1220 John, his kinsman, quitclaimed or rather sold land in Hungate to the abbey for forty three marks.[133] The readiness of the abbey to buy off quarrelsome relatives of the donor is not surprising if we look at the

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[129] For the information about this documents see pp. 190.
[130] *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 123. This land was given to Whitby abbey by Gundreda de Mowbray, an important benefactor of Rievaulx.
[131] *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 124.
[132] *EYC*, vol. 1, n° 304.

location of this grant. The Hungate area was located closely to the river Foss, and the property there might be used for storage of wool before shipment. The interest of Rievaulx abbey in this area must have been considerable as this house acquired other properties there, namely a plot of land in the parish of St John the Baptist in the Marsh from Muriel of Hungate and another plot of land in the same parish from goldsmith Walter. Both grants occurred during the reign of King John.[134] It is known from other sources that Rievaulx used its York property to store wool contracted to the Italian merchants.[135]

Much more accidental were contacts between Rievaulx abbey and the Knights Templar, although on a general level the origins of the Knights Templar order were closely connected with Bernard of Clairvaux.[136] In 1233 the abbot of Rievaulx and Robert master of Templars engaged in conflict over six bovates of land in Allerston. Rievaulx abbey's holding there originated from King Henry II's grant of waste below Pickering, later augmented by other donations. Eventually Allerston became one of the abbey's granges with a large pastoral component.[137] In order to resolve conflict, both sides appointed attorneys, but the outcome is unknown.[138] This connection between Rievaulx and the Knights Templar appears rather mysterious, but was most likely a result of Robert II de Ros's grants to this military order. Robert gave the manor of Ribston (West Riding) to this order, which established a commandery there.[139] He also granted a number of properties in York to the Knights Templars.[140] The property in Allerston, six bovates and a mill, belonged at the time of the order's dissolution in 1308 to the preceptory of Foulbridge, which was one of the smaller and less known houses.[141] It was founded about 1226, but the founder is unknown. It is possible that the land in Allerston was granted by Robert II de Ros or his son William or other benefactors of Rievaulx abbey with an interest in the military orders, for example any of the Mowbrays, Stutevilles or Bruses.[142]

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[133] *EYC*, vol. 1, n° 305.
[134] 'An Early Mortmain Inquest', ed. D. M. Palliser, in *The Church in Medieval York: Records Edited in Honour of Professor Barrie Dobson* (York: Borthwick Institute, 1999), p. 11.
[135] PRO, E 159/59 m. 9d; 159/60 m. 16d; 159/61 m. 11d; 159/65 m. 27.
[136] Newman, *Boundaries of Charity,* pp. 147, 184-86.
[137] Burton, 'Estates and Economy,' p. 77.
[138] *CR 1231-1234*, pp. 304-5.
[139] *Magni Rotuli Scaccarii Normanniae sub Regis Angliae*, ed. Thomas Stapleton, vol. 2, (London: Society of Antiquarians, 1844), p. lxxvii; Janet Burton, 'Knights Templar in Yorkshire in the Twelfth Century: a Reassessment', *Northern History* 27 (1991), 38-9.
[140] *CR* 1227-31, 117b.
[141] J. McDonnell and G. E. Morris, 'Holdings of the Knights Templar in North Yorkshire', *Ryedale Historian* 17 (1994), p. 6; *VCH,* vol. 3, p. 258.
[142] For more information on Robert's interest in the Knights Templars see p. 44.

On one level Rievaulx abbey and the other monastic houses discussed here were just like any other neighbours engaging from time to time in conflicts about borders and common pastures. On another level Rievaulx's relationship with its monastic neighbours differed from those with the lay neighbours because all of them were a part of the larger body of the Church. Therefore conflicts between Rievaulx and Byland or Fountains were not only disputes over borders, but also conflicts within the Cistercian order. The preferred method was an arbitration by neighbours, both lay and ecclesiastical, somebody who knew the local conditions, like in the case of the conflict between Fountains and Sallay abbey. If a dispute was not resolved, the Chapter General, or a bishop or even the pope could intervene.

However, these contacts between different monastic houses were also, to a large extent, the result of links with lay neighbours. In the early years of Rievaulx abbey the personal contacts with other abbots, primarily due to the high profile of Abbot Ailred, created various links with monastic neighbours. In the later years these contacts were formalised by the agreements between Rievaulx and other houses such as Byland or Sempringham to resolve any contentious issue. These agreements show a mixture of pragmatism with ideology of monastic love and brotherhood and this probably reflects how the monks might have thought about it. Above all, it was the competition for land which left most traces in the sources. The distribution of monastic lands was the product of various factors, most decisively the willingness of lay people to become patrons and benefactors. This quest for land created competition between the houses and formed relationships which might never have come into being without the lay involvement. Ultimately, conflicts, negotiations, institutional and personal friendships between various monastic houses were part of a much wider network of relationships across families, tenurial groups and church institutions which were intertwined in the system of obligations, dependency and struggle for position and economic power.

CHAPTER IV

RIEVAULX ABBEY AND THE SECULAR CHURCH IN THE NORTH

The majority of Rievaulx's neighbours, all the individuals, groups and institutions discussed in the previous chapters, were physically close to Rievaulx abbey due to the location of their properties, places of their residence or other personal connections. In contrast, people and institutions discussed in this chapter were never physically close to the abbey, nevertheless they played an important role in the development of the house. Archbishops of York, bishops of Durham and their respective chapters gave protection to the abbey in the early years of its existence and later were as likely to cooperate with the abbey as enter various conflicts with this house. This chapter will provide an overview of the types of contacts between Rievaulx and the secular Church hierarchy, then it will discuss specific contacts with the archbishops of York, bishops of Durham and their respective chapters, deans and archdeacons.

The involvement of secular ecclesiastics was important in aiding the spread of the Cistercian order throughout Europe. In the western part of the continent this support was particularly strong before 1152-53. After all, the first British Cistercian house was founded by Bishop William Giffard of Winchester in 1128. In the second half of the twelfth century, local bishops assisted Cistercian expansion in Northern and Central Europe: Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Poland, Bohemia and Hungary. The oldest Cistercian house in Poland in Jedrzejów was founded by Archbishop John of Gniezno in the early 1150s. The coming of the white monks to the Central Europe, and Poland in particular, is often seen in the literature as an attempt to introduce papal reform in the region. In the last pagan territories of trans-Elba region, the foundations of Doberan monastery near Rostock in 1171 went hand in hand with the Christianization of the region and creation of Church structures.[1] In the second half of the twelfth century the involvement of the secular Church in the material development of the Cistercian order in the Western Europe diminished. This process was much slower in the eastern part of the continent. Up to the end of the fourteenth century between 30% and 50% of the land, which was given to the Polish Cistercian houses was donated by bishops. As we

[1] James France, *The Cistercians in Scandinavia* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1992), pp. 27-98; *Monasticon Cisterciense Poloniae*, vol. 1, p. 38; Helena Chłopocka, Winfried Schich, 'Die Ausbreitung des Zisterzienserordens östlich von Elbe und Saale', in *Die Zisterzienser. Ordensleben zwischen Ideal und Wirkichkeit* (Köln: Rheinland-Verlag, 1981), pp. 93-5.

will see below, the material contribution of the secular Church to the development of Rievaulx abbey was significantly less.

In the first phase of the development of the order, during the life of Bernard of Clairvaux, Cistercian monks strove to be reformers of all corruption within the Church and to educate secular clergy in the spirit of ecclesiastical reform. This idea had also been present in the activities of the Yorkshire Cistercians including the abbots and monks of Rievaulx abbey. Ailred, the third abbot of Rievaulx is known to have preached at clerical synods and councils, postulating the necessity for the higher standards of prelates' conducts, that those who were responsible for the salvation of others should take responsibility for their own souls first.[2] Between 1139 and 1153 when the popularity and political influence of Bernard of Clairvaux was at its highest point, a large number of Cistercian monks became bishops, among them a former monk of Clairvaux, Henry Murdac, was elected as the archbishop of York in 1147. The significance of the personal connection between Cistercian monks and the prelates who were also white monks remained important throughout most of the twelfth century as a factor in the successful advancement of many houses. These Cistercians who became bishops remained formally members of the order and often surrounded themselves with white monks as advisors and companions. It is not surprising therefore, that such prelates assisted houses located in their dioceses. Many other bishops were befriended by Cistercians and acted as supporters of the new foundations.[3] Rievaulx secured in this way the protection of important churchmen, including Archbishop Thurstan of York and Bishop Hugh du Puiset of Durham.

Cistercian abbeys had particular expectations about their place in the Church, their far reaching demands for autonomy from the bishops' powers and financial immunities shaped the character of Cistercian politics. Although Cistercian abbots had to give an oath of obedience to their bishops, in practice they were independent from bishops' interference in the elections of abbots, and free from visitations and participation in diocesan synods. By the end of the twelfth century many bishops became strongly dissatisfied with the monastic exemptions enjoyed by the Cistercian houses. The major reason for their frustration was monastic control over parish churches and their income. While the white monks did not conduct pastoral work, they nevertheless were very keen to appropriate income belonging to these churches.[4] This

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[2] Newman, *Boundaries of Charity*, p. 157.
[3] Newman, *Boundaries of Charity,* pp. 141-9, 191-2.
[4] Giles Constable, *The Reformation of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 247-8.

issue became visible in the late twelfth century in the diocese of York, resulting, among others things, in conflict between Archbishop Roger de Pont L'Évêque and several monasteries. Although many Cistercian houses, including Fountains, Byland and Jervaulx did appropriate churches, Rievaulx abbey did not hold churches, nor any portions or pensions according to the taxation of Pope Nicholas in 1291, which would suggest that this particular house remained, in the aspect of the appropriation of churches, true to the original spirit of the Cistercian order.[5]

The Cistercian involvement in Church politics was at its highest point during the life of Bernard of Clairvaux, but soon after his death, from the 1150s onwards, these tendencies began to recede.[6] The early history of Rievaulx abbey shows strongly the reformatory tendencies of the Cistercian order as well as the later gradual acceptance by the monks that the high moral stand-point was not always practical. Although the first abbots of Rievaulx, particularly William, Maurice and Ailred were active in the wider Church arena working towards the goals of ecclesiastical reform, the later part of the twelfth century was marked by the much more local concerns of the abbots.

The time span of the documents related to the relationship between Rievaulx abbey and the secular Church is somewhat biased towards the second half of the twelfth century as the majority of the documents related to this issue were preserved in the cartulary which was completed in the late twelfth century. On the other hand it is likely that the number of charters issued by the secular hierarchy for Rievaulx abbey was lower anyway in the thirteenth century than in the twelfth century due to the slower growth of the abbey estates. The majority of the charters issued by the archbishops and bishops were confirmations of lay grants given in the early phases of Rievaulx's existence. After the first crucial fifty years of Rievaulx's existence the need for constant re-confirming of its rights was also less pressing.

The very high number of ecclesiastics in all the witness lists in both lay and ecclesiastical charters copied into Rievaulx's cartulary indicates the substantial amount of interaction between the abbey and secular churchmen. Clearly deans and individual canons must have been considered as valuable witnesses for grants of the lay donors to the abbey. Among the 245 charters which constituted the original cartulary of Rievaulx abbey, twenty-five have the names of archbishops in the witness list (10.2%), thirteen documents were witnessed by bishops (5.3%), and forty charters (16.3%) contain names

[5] Information obtained from Dr Paula Simpson, an editor of the forthcoming electronic edition of the *taxatio*.

[6] For the analysis of the situation within the Cistercian order after the death of Bernard see: Berman, *Cistercian Evolution*, pp. 148-51.

of other secular clergymen: archdeacons, deans or canons. Archbishop Henry Murdac of York witnessed one charter and Roger de Pont L'Évêque eight, the name of Bishop Hugh du Puiset appeared in the witness lists of seven charters. The relatively high number of archbishops of Canterbury and other southern bishops in the witness lists comes from the royal grants and confirmations to Rievaulx abbey. Archbishops and a great number of bishops were frequent visitors at the royal court and they witnessed many charters not related to their diocese as a routine part of their duties.

Many of the witness also lists contain a large number of noblemen's chaplains as well as parish clergy. These were also very much a part of local, lay society due to their family and tenurial connections, and therefore these people will be discussed in the ecclesiastical context, although their participation, as Burton suggests, might have been encouraged by the religious houses.[7]

Rievaulx abbey was located in the diocese of York as well as the majority of its estates. The Archbishops of York played an significant role from the beginning of Rievaulx abbey's history and later, even if their mutual contacts were not always amicable, they remained an important partner in both the wider Church arena and in a more local capacity.

A. THE ARCHBISHOPS OF YORK AND RIEVAULX ABBEY

Episcopal support was significant in the first phase of development of the Cistercian houses in Yorkshire just as anywhere else. Archbishop Thurstan of York was a founder of St Clement's nunnery in York (c.1125/1133) and Fountains abbey (1132). His influence is also attributed in the foundations of the Augustinian houses in Guisborough, Drax, Bolton, Nostell and Byland.[8] Rievaulx, being the oldest Cistercian establishment in the north of England was also supported by the same archbishop at a similarly early stage, although his involvement in Rievaulx's foundation was more limited. Archbishop Thurstan was known as a correspondent of Bernard of Clairvaux and they might have talked about the possibility of establishing a Cistercian house in Yorkshire at the council of Rheims in 1119. Donald Nicholl suggested that the Archbishop of York conducted negotiations between King Henry, Walter Espec and the delegates of Bernard of Clairvaux.[9] At least official support from the archbishop was

[7] Burton, 'Origins and development', p. 382.
[8] *EEA*, vol. 5, p. xxix. For the detailed description of Fountains abbey's foundation see Wardrop, *Fountains Abbey,* pp. 13-5.
[9] *Letters of St Bernard,* n° 170, 176; Nicholl, *Thurstan*, pp. 151-154.

essential since any foundation of the monastic house needed official permission from the diocese in which it was located. Thurstan was probably present at the foundation ceremony and his name was recorded in the foundation charter, however, surprisingly not in the list of witnesses. Although this document is a composite, there are no reasons to doubt his involvement in this act. The closing sentence of the foundation charter says explicitly that Thurstan gave permission and advice to the founder to establish the monastery:

> Thus, I Walter Espec, founded the abbey of Rievaulx with the advice and permission of Thurstan, Archbishop of York; with the permission and agreement of Henry king of the English, and all this confirmed by the apostolic authority of the Lord Pope Innocent.[10]

The Archbishop of York is listed alongside two of the highest authorities, that is the pope and the king of England. Although the wording of this paragraph is conventional, the advice and permission of Thurstan was essential for the success of the foundation enterprise. He also must have consecrated the monastic church. Soon after the foundation, between May 1133 and January 1140, Archbishop Thurstan confirmed Walter Espec's grant. The preamble of this document gives, in a conventional form, the archbishop's motivation for the charter, that is the duty of the ecclesiastics to protect and support monasteries located in their dioceses.[11] It was very common for Cistercian houses to secure confirmation charters from their diocesan hierarchy. While the monasteries did not want any interference from the secular Church in their internal matters, the authority of the prelates to secure their assets was very much sought after.[12]

The importance of the archbishop of York for Rievaulx abbey remained significant after the death of Thurstan on 6 February 1140. Cistercian monks, believing strongly in their mission to improve the secular Church took an active part in the election process for the new archbishop and scrutinized all the candidates' moral standing, a right which the monks received at the Lateran Council in 1139.[13] This right

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[10] 'Hanc Abbatiam Rievalensem fundavi ego, Walterus Espec, consilio et concessu Turstini, Archiepiscopi Eboracensis concessu etiam et consilio Henrici, Regis Anglorum, Domino Papa Innocentio Apostolica auctoritate hec omnia confirmante.' *Cartulary*, n° 42.

[11] *Cartulary*, n° 218; dated in *EEA*, vol. 5, p. 51.

[12] Constance B. Bouchard, 'Knights and the Foundation of the Cistercian Houses in Burgundy', in *Erudition at God's Service*, ed. John R. Sommerfeldt, Studies in Medieval Cistercian History, vol. 11 (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1987), p. 318.

[13] This right of participation on the diocesan election was given to the monks by the Second Lateran Council of 1139. 'Since the decrees of the fathers prohibit churches to be left vacant for more then three month, we forbid under anathema the canons of the episcopal see to exclude religious men from the election following on the death of the bishop, but let a virtues and suitable person be elected as bishop with their advice. Because if an election is held with these religious person excluded, where this is done without their knowledge and consent, it is null and

was, according to Nicholl, quickly grasped by the Cistercians in the North of England.[14] Meanwhile, King Stephen decided upon his nephew William Fitz Herbert, the treasurer of York, to be Thurstan's successor. The election of the new archbishop took place in January 1141 and the majority of York canons voted for him, William was also supported by the Benedictine houses of St Mary's York and Whitby abbey.[15] Abbot William of Rievaulx, Ailred monk of this house (and its future abbot), Richard abbot of Fountains as well as Waldef prior of the Augustinian houses in Kirkham contested this decision, accusing William of simony, unchaste conduct and intrusion. The open involvement of the king, which was against the principles of canonical election was also criticized by the monks. Although the reforming zeal of the white monks was very visible in this conflict, the local or even personal considerations played, according to Derek Baker, a role in this conflict.[16]

When Abbot William of Rievaulx informed Bernard of Clairvaux about the outcome of the election Bernard immediately sent several letters to the pope contesting the suitability of the new archbishop and the validity of the selection process. Bernard of Clairvaux had full trust in the testimony of the Cistercian monks from Rievaulx and Fountains as being morally superior to William: 'We detect according to the testimony of the truthful men [i.e. Cistercians], that there is no purity from the bottom of his feet to the top of his head.'[17]

In 1141 Ailred of Rievaulx and Archdeacon Walter, went to Rome formally to contest William's election, and the new archbishop of York followed them to fight his case. Both parties managed to gain some support among the cardinals, but due to the lack of evidence and witnesses Ailred and Walter did not fulfill the requirements of the canonical procedure to prove their version of events.[18] The next delegation from York consisted of the Archdeacon of York, Walter of London (1121/28-1148), William precentor of York (1140-1164/74), William abbot of Rievaulx, Richard abbot of Fountains, and priors Waldef of Kirkham and Cuthbert of Guisborough. On 7 March

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void.' *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils,* ed. Norman P. Tanner, vol. 1 (London: Sheed and Ward, 1990), p. 203.

[14] Nicholl, *Thurstan*, pp, 240-1.

[15] Reginald L. Poole, 'The Appointment and Deprivation of St. William, Archbishop of York', *English Historical Review* 45 (1930), 277.

[16] Derek Baker, '*Viri religiosi* and the York election dispute', in *Councils and Assemblies,* ed. G. J. Cuming, Derek Baker, *Studies in Church History*, vol. 7 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), pp. 99-100.

[17] 'Sicut virorum veracium attestatione deprehendimus, a plenta pedis usque ad verticem non est in ea sanitas.' *Sancti Bernardi Opera*, ed. Jean Leclerq, C. H. Talbot, H. Rochais, (Rome: Editiones Cistercienses, 1977), vol. 8, n° 346.

1143 these churchmen presented to the pope accusations against Archbishop William of unchaste life, simony, and intrusion. Pope Innocent, not wanting to make any decision, referred the matter back to the judges-delegate. In 1143 William was consecrated at York by the legate Henry of Winchester with the support of the abbots of the Benedictine houses in York and Whitby. The fortunes of both parties changed again in March 1144 with the election of the new pope Lucius II (1144-1145) who sent the pallium for William with the new legate Imar of Tusculum. Again Bernard of Clairvaux tried unsuccessfully to influence the pope against the archbishop. Pope Lucius II died the following year and the new pope Eugenius III, a former Cistercian monk himself, a firm supporter of Bernard of Clairvaux and a friend of Henry Murdac, abbot of Fountains, was urged by the Cistercians to depose William. The Archbishop of York traveled again to Rome, but despite his efforts, the pope declared his consecration invalid and William had to return to Winchester where he lived as a monk. In December 1147 Henry Murdac was elected as the new archbishop of York.[19] The role of the Cistercian order in this election, and the importance of their connections with prelates, was well known to the contemporaries. William of Newburgh, summarized these events in the following way:

> William being deposed, Henry, abbot of Fountains, undertook the bishopric of York through the powerful influence of the venerable Eugenius; who had once been a friend and fellow student with him under father Bernard of Clairvaux and had good knowledge of his life and work.[20]

This dramatic conflict associated with the election of the archbishop of York indicates how much Cistercian monks in Yorkshire believed in their reforming role in the Church. Abbots of Rievaulx and Fountains were not only willing to undertake long, expensive and difficult journeys to Rome, but also openly challenged the position of one of the most important churchmen in England. It must be left to speculation as to what impact such long absences by the abbots had on the life of these Cistercian houses which had existed by then for less then twenty years and were still at the stage of building their core estates.

Although the struggle of the Yorkshire Cistercians was actively supported by Bernard of Clairvaux, their personal conviction as to the role of white monks as

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[18] C.H. Talbot, 'New documents in the case of Saint William of York', *The Cambridge Historical Journal* 10 (1950), 8.
[19] David Knowles, 'The Case of St William of York', in *The Historian and Character and Other Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), pp. 82-90.
[20] William of Newburgh, 'Historia regnum Anglicarum', p. 56; translation in Nancy F. Partner, *Serious Entertainments: the Writing of History in Twelfth-Century England* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1977), p. 76.

reformers of the Church fueled their determination to depose Archbishop William. This involvement of Abbot William in the wider Church arena was the peak of Rievaulx's engagement on a national and even European level. A few years later, after the death of Bernard of Clairvaux, these great ambitions were reduced to much more local considerations.

Henry Murdac, a Cistercian himself, must have remained on very friendly terms with Rievaulx, although there is only one charter of confirmation issued by him preserved in the cartulary, which is an attestation of Robert I de Ros's charter of confirmation of his uncle's grant to Rievaulx abbey between January 1151 and October 1153.[21] It is possible either that during Henry's time at the York see, Rievaulx abbey did not need any confirmation charters or that the archbishop's charters did not survive. This last possibility is rather less likely because such important documents were unlikely to be left un-copied.

When Henry Murdac died on 14 October 1153, the formerly deposed Archbishop William made another attempt to take the see of York. This time round, the Yorkshire Cistercians abandoned their high moral stand-point and did not object to his candidature. Bernard of Clairvaux was dead by then, and the Cistercian order, had lost much of its ardent reforming approach to the secular Church. The archbishop, on his part, made attempts of reconciliation with the white monks. However, William did not enjoy the office for long and died suddenly, allegedly from poisoning on 8 June 1154.[22]

The reasons for this decrease in the reforming ambitions of the Yorkshire Cistercians was not a lack of strong personalities to conduct it, after all Abbot Ailred, who held the office from 1147 to 1167, had both political aptitude and contacts in the highest ecclesiastical circles, but Abbot Ailred recognized that Rievaulx needed to concentrate on building its estates, not to undertake risky political actions, which might bring more trouble than good to the monastic community at the abbey.[23] His success in soliciting donations for Rievaulx abbey might have brought criticism in some monastic circles, an echo of which can be found, according to Dutton, in the apologetic tone of the passage in the *Life of Ailred* explaining spiritual benefits to the benefactors of Rievaulx.[24] Indeed a further passage in the same text explicitly states that during the

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[21] *Cartulary*, n° 219; dated in *EEA*, vol. 5, p. 99.
[22] Knowles, 'Case of St William', pp. 91-2.
[23] Ailred continued to have a very high profile in the court circles. Between 1161 and 1163 he wrote *Vita Sancti Edwardi Regis et Confessoris*, conveying a strong political and ideological message and dedicated to the King Henry II; Marsha L. Dutton, 'Aelred, Historian: Two Portraits in Plantagenet Myth', *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* 28 (1993), 113-144.
[24] Dutton, 'Introduction', p. 29.

abbacy of Ailred the property of the abbey doubled.[25] This interpretation, however interesting, appears to explain medieval issues by our modern standards. It is very likely that Ailred was criticized for his involvements, particularly political, outside the abbey, but he could not have been criticized for acquiring land for his abbey. This was part of his role and he was expected to acquire as much land as possible.

The scale of the shift in the attitude of Yorkshire Cistercians to Archbishop William came into full force during his canonization process. In the early 1220s the dean and chapter of York petitioned Pope Honorius III to canonize Archbishop William, whose tomb was reported to have healing powers. His predecessor Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) codified the canonization procedure and reserved the exclusive papal right to decide who should be venerated as a saint. In April 1223 Pope Honorius III sent a mandate to the Bishop John Pherd of Ely (a former abbot of Fountains), and abbots John de Cantia of Fountains (1220-1147) and William III of Rievaulx (1216-1223) to investigate the alleged miracles and report back to Rome.[26] A year later the same pope sent another mandate to the same addressees, requesting that Bishop John of Ely, abbots Roger II of Rievaulx (1224-1239) and John de Cantia of Fountains should collect statements from witnesses concerning miracles at the tomb of Archbishop William and send it, under seal, to the pope.[27] Finally Pope Honorius III canonized William in 1227 and in 1284 his relics were translated to a shrine behind the high altar.[28] Thus, over sixty years after the death of Archbishop William the abbots of Rievaulx and Fountains acted as independent examiners of the alleged miracles, although their predecessors had fought against William's election. This rather dramatic change illustrates how the Cistercian order, once a radical, reforming movement became part of the mainstream Church in the course of the thirteenth century. It also indicates that the abbots of Rievaulx and Fountains abbeys were considered by the popes to be the leading religious figures in the diocese of Yorkshire, suitable for undertaking the delicate task of determining the validity of miracles.

As we return to the events of the twelfth century, it becomes clear that a particularly difficult phase in the relationship between Rievaulx and the see of York occurred during the time of Roger de Pont L'Évêque (1154-1181). The source of

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[25] *Life of Ailred*, p. 38.
[26] *CPL*, p. 90.
[27] *CPL*, p. 96.
[28] *Acta Sanctorum*, ed. G. Henschen, D. Papenbroch, vol. Julii 6 (Paris and Rome: Victor Palmé, 1867), p. 135.

Archbishop Roger of York's fame as a monk-hater is an opinion expressed by William of Newburgh:

> He hated Christian philosophers, that is, monks, so much that it was said that he said that Thurstan, once archbishop of York in happy memory, never did anything so bad as when he built that mirror of Christian philosophy, the monastery of Fountains [...] He said ecclesiastical benefices are better conferred even on sensual men than on religious [...] and he effected a deterioration in the condition of all the religious in favour of secular clerks.[29]

The most likely reasons for the conflict between the Cistercian houses and Roger de Pont L'Évêque was his programme of restructuring of the diocesan administration. According to Nicholl the archbishop was frustrated by the monks who greedily accumulated vast estates and fiscal exemptions, while Archbishop Roger struggled to provide for the diocesan clergy.[30] Burton develops this hypothesis even further, and maintains that the tithes problem was the core of Archbishop Roger's conflicts with Cistercian monks of his diocese. This hierarch wanted to establish an efficient organization on the level of the parishes, but without suitable funds this would not be possible, so the monasteries' control of the tithes belonging to the local churches became a major problem in his efforts to develop the structures of the secular church.[31] The nature of his conflicts with religious houses confirms this hypothesis. Archbishop Roger is known to have clashed with Meaux abbey about land given to the monks by his predecessor Henry Murdac.[32] His disagreement with Guisborough priory over the control of churches in Kirklevington and Skelton is known from papal bulls.[33] Fountains abbey clashed with the archbishop over Warsill grange, a dispute which was continued by his successor Walter de Gray.[34]

During his rule at York, Archbishop Roger issued charters of protection for Byland, Marrick, Nunkeeling, Rievaulx and St Peter (St Leonard) hospital in York,[35] and his suggested hostility towards the monks seems not to be a part of his policy towards Rievaulx, if we consider the number of charters he issued for that abbey. Although all of them were merely confirmations and declarations of protection of monastic properties, a type of action generally expected from a bishop, Roger was not under any obligation to provide them. The Archbishop's positive treatment of Rievaulx,

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[29] Newburgh, 'Historia regnum Anglicarum', p. 226; translation by Partner, *Serious Entertainments,* p. 89.
[30] Nicholl, *Thurstan*, p. 211.
[31] Burton, 'Origins and development', pp. 372-3.
[32] 'Chronica de Melsa', p. 94.
[33] *PU*, vol. 1, n° 173.
[34] Wardrop, *Fountains Abbey*, p. 60.
[35] *EEA*, vol. 20, pp. xxx, xxxii.

in contrast to his visible hostility towards Fountains abbey, could have been also a result of his respect for Abbot Ailred. This significantly better relationship between Rievaulx abbey and Archbishop Roger might also stem from the simple fact that this house did not appropriate any churches, thus did not diminish income of the secular church, which was a core objection formulated by the archbishop towards the exempted orders.

In the cartulary of Rievaulx there are copies of eight charters issued by Archbishop Roger. They are placed in two clusters of six and two charters, charters n° 220-225 are placed near the royal charters and those of Archbishops Thurstan and Henry Murdac. Charters n° 237-238, which are confirmations of laymen's grants are located near charters issued by the chapter of Durham. The first of the Archbishop's charters 'De protectione Rogeri Archiepiscopi Rievalle', between 1154 and 1164, is a notification to all the rural deans of archbishop's protection bestowed on Rievaulx abbey with the clause of ecclesiastical justice against any trespass on the monks' rights. Marie Lovatt interprets this protection as directly related to the abbey's disputes over tithes payment.[36] Charters n° 221 and 225, dated between 1154 and 1160 are confirmations of agreements about the tithes of Crosby, Scawton and Oswaldenges respectively.[37] Another charter in this sequence (dated between 1164 and 1170) is a precept to Dean Robert Butevilain and the chapter of York and all the diocesan clergy, issued at the king's request, confirming an earlier grant by Bishop Hugh of Durham of East Cowton (parish of Northallerton) to Rievaulx abbey.[38] The last two charters are confirmations of grants by laymen, two donations of Roger de Mowbray, one in Welburn, one on the opposite side of the river towards Hoveton, and a confirmation of the grant in Hoveton by Ralph Beler.[39] He was Mowbray's man, therefore the confirmation by the archbishop of the grant in Hoveton is accompanied by the confirmation of Roger de Mowbray in the presence of the archbishop, between 1154 and 1159.[40]

Grants of the important lay benefactors were also confirmed by the archbishop's charters, such as an unspecified donation by William de Vescy, an important northern baron and benefactor of many religious houses, including Rievaulx abbey.[41] The grants of the pasture rights in Teesdale and Westerdale by Bernard de Bailliol, a member of a

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[36] *Cartulary*, n° 220; dated in *EEA*, vol. 20, pp. 87-8.
[37] *Cartulary*, n° 221, n° 225; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 955; *EYC*, vol. 3, n° 1832; for the detailed discussion on these agreements see pp. 171-0.
[38] *Cartulary*, n° 222; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 960. Robert Butevilain was the archdeacon of York from c.1148 and in 1158 he became the dean of York. *EEA*, vol. 5, p. 125.
[39] *Cartulary*, n° 223, 224.
[40] *Cartulary*, n° 224; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 127; for a discussion on the significance of these grants see pp. 85-9.
[41] *Cartulary*, n° 237.

leading knightly family, was also confirmed by the archbishop of York.[42] During this ceremony, at York, the confirmation charter of Bernard's lord, William de Mandeville, of the above grant was also read in the presence of Archbishop of Roger. The archbishop's confirmation not only added solemnity to the grant, but provided the monastery with a reassurance of the Church's protection, if the heirs of the original donor should try to reclaim this land.[43]

At first glance, this group of confirmations may appear haphazard, but even as such it indicates particular areas of the relationship between Rievaulx abbey and Archbishop Roger and the extent of the assets which the abbey wanted to protect. The obligation to defend the abbey, declared by the archbishop must have been highly valued by the monastery as it was copied into the cartulary in a very prominent place, together with the royal charters, the agreement with the patron William de Ros and the charters of Archbishop Thurstan. Although such charters of confirmation were conventional and often issued by the bishops in the beginning of their office, Roger did not have to do so, and as his relationship with Fountains abbey shows, he made a distinction in his treatment of the monasteries in his diocese. The archbishop's confirmations of the agreements concerning tithes are examples of how difficult and controversial this issue was and obviously the settlement of this matter was in the interest of the directly involved sides. The abbey's decision to record these particular grants by lay people as confirmed by the archbishop was not accidental. Firstly, charters n° 223 and 224 are connected to each other. Roger Mowbray was one of the most prominent donors of the abbey and although the relationship between this family and Rievaulx was not always easy, their grants contributed significantly to the development of the abbey's estates. Ralph Beler was Roger's man and his grant was simultaneously confirmed by his lord and the archbishop. The most likely reason for the archiepiscopal confirmations was the insecurity of these grants. The borders of Hoveton and Welburn were disputed and encroached on at several occasions by the members of the Stuteville family, Everard de Ros and other noblemen, including Roger Mowbray and his son Nigel.[44]

After the death of Archbishop Roger in 1181, the subsequent archbishops of York interacted with Rievaulx abbey only on a very conventional level, including taking the customary acts of obedience of the newly elected abbots. Although the archbishops

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[42] *Cartulary*, n° 238.
[43] *Cartulary*, n° 238.
[44] Burton, 'Estates and Economy', 44-45; for the discussion see pp. 88-9.

did not have formal visitation rights to Rievaulx abbey, there are indications that they stayed as guests in this Cistercian house during their journeys within the diocese.[45]

Among thirteenth-century prelates Archbishop Walter Gray (1216-1255) was an excellent administrator and experienced politician, having been the Chancellor of England.[46] His surviving register confirms the scale of his attempt to curb clerical marriages and non-residency of the secular clergy in his diocese, but his contacts with Yorkshire Cistercian houses were insubstantial and virtually non-existent with Rievaulx abbey.[47] Although Archbishop Walter's relationship with individual monastic houses are said to be friendly, his actions towards the Cistercian order were not.[48] In 1242, in his role as a regent, during the military campaign of Henry III in France, the archbishop attempted unsuccessfully to extract a year's crop of wool from the Cistercian houses in England.[49] This action is an indication of the growing importance of wool production for the economy of Cistercian houses and its subsequent influence on their relationships with lay and ecclesiastical authorities. In the thirteenth and fourteenth century the Cistercian order in Britain became increasingly targeted by kings who recognised that the white monks could be a source of money for the crown.[50]

The fast changing relationships between Rievaulx abbey and the archbishops of York in the twelfth and thirteenth century indicate as much local considerations as the more general trends in the Church. The support shown by Thurstan to the newly established abbey of Rievaulx was symptomatic for the first phase of the Cistercian popularity and its programme of reform. The active role of Abbot William in the conflict over the election of Archbishop William to the see of York was the consequence of Cistercian participation in the Church reform. The later years of Rievaulx's history were marked by much more local interests, but the narrowing of Rievaulx abbey's horizon was a factor in the abbey's success on a local scale in the accumulation of its estates. The effective coexistence or even cooperation with the anti-

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[45] *Register of Walter Giffard*, p. 270; *Register of John Le Romeyn*, part 1, pp. 42, 162; *Register of Thomas of Corbridge,* part 1, p. 130; G. M. Hallas, 'Archiepiscopal Relations with Clergy of the Diocese of York 1279-99', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 60 (1988), 59.

[46] Robert Brentano, *York Metropolitan Jurisdiction and Papal Judges Delegate (1279-1296)*, University of California Publications in History, vol. 58 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959), p. 29.

[47] A. Hamilton Thompson, 'The Registers of the Archbishops of York', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 32 (1936), 247.

[48] *VCH*, vol. 3, pp. 26-7.

[49] *CPR 1232-1247*, pp. 330, 336; Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*, vol. 3, ed. Frederic Madden, Rolls Series, 44 (1869), p. 286.

[50] For a discussion of the financial pressure from the crown on Cistercian houses see pp. 239-40.

Cistercian Archbishop Roger indicates that Abbot Ailred and his successors were proficient negotiators and politicians on the local scale.

B. THE BISHOPS OF DURHAM AND RIEVAULX ABBEY

Not only were the archbishops of York important during the formative years of Rievaulx abbey, but two bishops of Durham were also early supporters of this house. The initial creation of the close links between Durham and Rievaulx was to a large extent a result of the personal connections of Abbot Ailred. His great-grandfather Alfred had been a canon in Durham, his grandfather Eilaf I was a treasurer of the church of Durham, his father Eilaf II a hereditary priest at Hexham, was a tenant and benefactor of the community in Durham and in his later life he retired there as a monk. Another relative of Ailred's, William Hovegrin was an archdeacon of Durham. Before Ailred left for King David's Scottish court he was schooled in Durham under the direction of the Prior Lawrence and developed a devotion for St Cuthbert, the patron saint of Durham.[51] When Ailred became abbot of Rievaulx his contacts with Durham acquired a new dimension. Sometime between 1149 and 1152 Ailred was asked to resolve conflict about seniority between Prior Roger and Archdeacon Wazo of Durham. Although other abbots and priors were also asked to intervene, Ailred's name opens the charter of notification about their findings and decision reached.[52]

The importance of the Durham bishopric in the early history of Rievaulx abbey is attested not only by Ailred's personal contacts, but also by the grants given to the abbey by the bishops of Durham. In 1152 Bishop William of St Barbe (1143-1152) gave a grange in Crosby (in the parish of Leake) to Rievaulx abbey. A short piece of information about this grant appears in the 'Iste sunt possessiones': 'In the year of Lord 1152 William the Bishop of Durham gave us the grange of Crosby with all that belongs

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[51] Paul Dalton, 'Scottish Influence on Durham, 1066-1214', in *Anglo-Norman Durham 1093-1193*, ed. D. Rollason et al. (Woodbridge, Boydell, 1994), p. 343; Ailred's devotion for St Cuthbert is attested dedication of Durham monk Reginald to Ailred of his work on the subject of St Cuthbert. Reginald also included there a piece of rhythmical prose written by Ailred in the honour of this saint during his journey to and from Cîteaux. *Reginaldi Monachi Dunelmensis Libellus de Admirandis Beati Cuthberti*, ed. James Raine, Surtees Society, vol. 1 (London: Nichols and Son, 1835), pp. 1-3. The Scottish connections of Ailred also helped to established Melrose, an important daughter-house of Rievaulx in Scotland. In the grants of King William I the Lion of Scotland (1165-1214), monks of Melrose are described as 'de Rievalle'. BL, Cotton Ch. XVIII 13, 14.

[52] *Durham Episcopal Charters*, pp. 147-8. The other judges were: Abbot Robert of Newminster, Prior Cuthbert of Guisborough, Prior Richard of Hexam and Prior German of Tynemouth.

to it.'[53] The actual charter recording this grant has not survived, but the confirmation charters of William of St Barbe's successor Hugo du Puiset (1153-1195) have.[54] The chronological sequence of the donations by the bishops of Durham was reconstructed by William Farrer. Firstly, soon after his succession to the Durham see, between 1153-1157, Bishop Hugh issued a charter of confirmation of his predecessor's grant in Crosby, therefore he used the term *concedimus* instead of *dedimus.*[55] This confirmation was on the condition that the monks should pay sixty shillings of annual rent for those three carucates of land. In addition, he added the marshland surrounding the houses of the peasants in Crosby, the meadow belonging to the same vill and a mill there. This part of the grant, as Burton suggests, generated an additional income for the abbey, because the peasants had to pay the abbey to have their grain ground.[56] In return, Bishop Hugh was admitted into the fraternity of the abbey as a special advocate of the house. The monks' prayers during his lifetime and then after his death were promised to be as ardent as for their own abbot. In return Bishop Hugh was expected to act as a protector and defender of the abbey.

> Indeed the abbot and the convent of this church accepted us to the special fraternity as a father and as a special advocate, so that they should pray to God in life and in death, for us, just as for their abbot in all that concerns our salvation. We also receive ourselves on the same occasion to the special sons, so that in all their necessities and affairs they may come to us as to a father and to one who undertakes to defend them and maintain them, their house and all things belonging to them in the protection of our hand.[57]

This charter is an important piece of evidence for Rievaulx's involvement in local politics. Bishop Hugh was a supporter capable of protecting the abbey from the greed of both lay and ecclesiastical men. The date of this charter coincides with the death of the abbey's founder and patron, Walter Espec c.1153. It was a time of uncertainty for the abbey which lost its protector and such a declaration as expressed by the bishop of Durham would be warmly welcomed by the convent. In return, the bishop received prayers for his soul performed by the monks from a monastery which enjoyed a

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[53] 'A.D. MCLII dedit nobis Willelmus, Episcopus Dunelmensis grangiam de Crossebi, cum pertinenciis suis.' BL, MS Cotton Julius D I, f. 15v [f. 19v]; *Cartulary*, p. 260.
[54] *Durham Episcopal Charters*, p. 175.
[55] *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 952; *Cartulary*, n° 49.
[56] Burton, 'Estates and Economy', p. 56.
[57] 'Abbas autem et conventus ejusdem ecclesie speciali familiaritate nos in patrem et specialem advocatum recipiunt ut et in vita et in morte pro nobis sicut pro abbate suo sint apud Deum devoti in omnibus que ad salutem nostram pertinent. Nos quoque vice eadem ipsos in filios speciales suscipimus ut in omnibus necessitatibus atque negotiis suis ad nos veniant sicut ad patrem et ad eum qui ipsos et domum ipsorum et omnia que ad ipsos pertinent sub manu

reputation for exceptional piety. The contract between the abbey and the bishop drawn up in this charter appears to be personal. Although Hugh is identified as the bishop of Durham, he became the special patron of the abbey, as a powerful and important individual, not just because he was a bishop. This distinction was important for the Cistercian monks who needed allies, but at the same time they wanted to remain free from diocesan obligations and restrictions by keeping their contacts with the secular Church on the level of personal friendships rather than formal ties. Instances of monastic initiatives to secure a protector in the place of hereditary patrons, who did not adequately perform their role of protector, were not uncommon. The Benedictine house of Great Malvern secured the help of Walter de Beauchamp as its protector in the early years of King Henry III's reign, because its original patrons did not show any interest in the priory.[58]

Bishops, even if not enthusiastic towards Cistercian houses, had an obligation to support religious houses in their dioceses. In times of particular distress monks often had to turn for help to the prelates. One of the most striking examples comes from the Silesian house in Heinrichau (Henryków). Bishop Thomas I of Breslau (d. 1268) was particularly commemorated and praised, more than any other bishop of this diocese, by the monastic *Liber Vite* for his support in restoring monastic property after the Mongolian invasion in 1241.[59]

Although Bishop Hugh of Durham became a special protector of the abbey, he does not appear to be particularly generous. The second document in the sequence issued by him between 1153 and 1167 was a quitclaim to Abbot Ailred of an unspecified piece of land in Crosby, in the parish of Leake, as well as the confirmation of the quitclaim by Geoffrey de Otrington and his brother Adam from the diocese of Durham, who surrendered their rights to this land in the presence of the bishop and his court.[60] The third document was issued sometime between 1160 and 1180 by the same ecclesiastic, in order to settle the disputed issue of tithes of Crosby belonging to the church of Leake (in Allertonshire). The deal, which was confirmed by the bishop, stated that the monks of Rievaulx were obliged to pay two marks yearly as a compensation to

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protectionis nostre manutenenda et defendenda suscipimus.' *Cartulary* n° 49; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 952.

[58] Mason, 'Timeo Barones', p. 62.

[59] Rościsław Żerelik, 'Wspólnota zmarłych w świetle Nekrologu henrykowskiego', in *Klasztor w społeczeństwie*, pp. 201-2.

[60] *Cartulary*, n° 51; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 953. Atkinson's edition of that charter is missing crucial *nos* before *terram de Crossby*, thus changing meaning of the quitclaim.

the church of Leake for the loss of tithes.[61] This agreement was then reconfirmed by Archbishop Roger of York, between 1154 and 1164, with the clause of ecclesiastical sanctions against anybody who would try to break the agreement.[62] Lovatt suspects that the Archbishop's confirmation is an indication that agreement between Rievaulx and Bishop Hugh was under threat by further conflicts, but apart from the existence of this confirmation, there is no other evidence of any conflicts. Later, between 1162 and 1189 Prior German (1163-1189) and the chapter of Durham confirmed all the grants of Bishops William and Hugh in Crosby.[63]

An important grant by Bishop Hugh du Puiset was recorded in the 'Iste sunt possessiones' after the entry concerning the Crosby donation: 'After that, Bishop Hugh of Durham gave us Cowton with all that belongs to it'.[64] This donation occurred between 1152 and 1160, but the land in Cowton, has been in the monks' hands since Bishop William's time. Between 1144 and 1152 Bishop William had issued a charter confirming the agreement between Rievaulx abbey and Asketill of Worcester and his son Ralph over the property in East Cowton.[65] Farrer suspected that this property was then re-leased to Rievaulx by Bishop William for the annual rent. However it is possible that Cowton was originally granted to Rievaulx even earlier, during the abbacy of Maurice (1145-47), who had been a sub-prior at Durham before becoming abbot of Rievaulx.[66]

In 1153 Bishop Hugh converted the tenure of Cowton into a farm for rent, the boundaries of which were perambulated, but the document recording this act did not survive.[67] The proof that East Cowton was originally leased to the abbey is the charter of Bishop Hugh issued between 1154 and 1167. In this interesting document the bishop of Durham declared his reasons for the grant and its conditions. Originally East Cowton was given to Rievaulx for a term only, but Hugh changed its status into perpetual free alms, kept on the condition that the abbey will pay sixty shillings yearly:

> May all men present and future know, that we by the tradition of charity and for the special esteem which we have towards our beloved son Ailred, we grant to the Church of Blessed Mary of Rievaulx and the brothers serving God there, the whole land in Cowton, that is three carucates of land, which they held from us

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[61] *Cartulary*, n° 50; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 954.
[62] *Cartulary*, n° 221; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 955; dating in *EEA*, vol. 20, n° 79.
[63] *Durham Episcopal Charters*, p. 175; *Cartulary*, n° 240.
[64] 'Postea dedit nobis Hugo Episcopus Dunelmensis Cotum cum omnibus pertinentiis suis'. 'Iste sunt possessiones', BL, MS Cotton Julius D I, f. 15v [f. 19v]; *Cartulary*, p. 260. The edition reads *preterea* instead of *postea*.
[65] *Cartulary* n° 52; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 957.
[66] Burton, 'Estates and Economy', 34.
[67] *Durham Episcopal Charters*, pp. 173-174; *EYC*, vol. 2, p. 292.

> for a term, to be possessed in free and perpetual alms, rendering us and our successors each year sixty shillings at the terms appointed in Alverstonshire, free and quit from all custom and service.[68]

The bishop's declaration of his motivation for the grant, that is, his affection for the abbot Ailred, is another important indication of the links between the abbey and the bishop of Durham. Although the wording is conventional, such a phrase was not an obligatory part of a charter; it was Hugh's choice to include it. The use of conventional phrases does not necessarily mean that the intention behind it was insincere. The generic character of the legal language used in the charters hides personal concerns or intentions, but there is no reason to doubt their existence.

The importance of Bishop Hugh's grant is confirmed by the fact that the abbey obtained confirmation of his grant in Cowton from King Henry II between 1164 and Easter of 1170.[69] Subsequent confirmations were issued by Archbishop Roger of York, Dean Robert Butevilain (1158-1186) and the Chapter of York at the request of the king.[70]

Throughout the period when the see of York was occupied by archbishops with a negative attitude towards Rievaulx abbey, the support of other high ecclesiastics became very important for the monks. Although Archbishop Roger, according to William of Newburgh, was a declared enemy of monks, his relationship with Rievaulx was satisfactory, but the bishop of Durham could offer more substantial support which the abbots of Rievaulx managed to negotiate successfully. Bishop Hugh's declaration of protection over the abbey and his admiration for Abbot Ailred indicate that their contact had a strong personal overtone. While discussing the complexity of the relationship between Rievaulx and Bishop Hugh of Durham we should remember that at the time of his election he was not a 'Cistercian' candidate. Archbishop Henry was opposed to his candidature. According to A. Young the archbishop of York may have preferred Master Laurence of Durham (a relative of Ailred of Rievaulx), who was a Cistercian

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[68] 'Sciant tam presentes quam posteri quod nos, caritatis instuitu et pro speciali dilectione quam erga dilectum filium nostrorum Aelredum abbatem habemus, concedimus ecclesie Beate Marie Rievallis et fratribus ibidem Deo servientibus totam terram de Cotum, scilicet tres carrucatas terre, quas de nobis ad terminum tenebant, in liberam et perpetuam elemosinam possidendas, reddendo nobis et successoribus nostris per singulos annos sexaginta solidos ad terminos in Alvertonescire constitutos, liberas et quietas ab omni consuetudine et servitio.' *Cartulary*, n° 53; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 958.

[69] *Cartulary*, n° 204; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 959.

[70] 'Inde est quod nos, domini nostri precibus et assensui inclinati donationem de Cotum a venerabili fratre nostro, Hugone Dunelmensi Episcopo Monasterio Sancte Marie Rievallis rationabiliter factam confirmamus sicut in ejusdem episcopi carta continetur.' *Cartulary*, n° 222; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 960; between 1164-c.1170.

candidate.[71] Once elected as the bishop of Durham, Hugh became an active supporter of several monastic houses in his diocese. His role was also recognized by Pope Alexander III who sent several letters to this bishop urging him to protect Rievaulx abbey from his greedy diocesans encroaching on the abbey's land.[72]

The relationship between Rievaulx abbey and the archbishops of York and bishops of Durham evolved throughout the twelfth century. At the time of the abbey's foundation, Archbishop Thurstan of York was a supporter of the Cistercian movement and helped to establish houses of this new order in Yorkshire. This friendly line was continued by Henry Murdac, but after his death in the mid-twelfth century, the archbishops of York were much less keen to support Cistercian houses, which meanwhile became wealthy and powerful and abandoned much of their reforming ideology. The bishops of Durham also assisted Rievaulx in its early formative years and beyond. The fact that William of St Barbe and Hugh de Puiset, were personal friends of Ailred, helped to maintain this useful affinity. Apart from Rievaulx abbey other Yorkshire houses held lands in the diocese of Durham, namely Guisborough priory, abbey of St Mary's York, Nun Monkton and Kirkham priories, but among them only Rievaulx developed a long-lasting relationship with the bishops of Durham.[73]

Despite the Cistercian exemption from the powers of the secular Church, the friendly relationship of the Cistercian monasteries with the bishops was important for their successful functioning. Not only could prelates issue valuable confirmation charters, often they became benefactors themselves. After the first wave of Cistercian popularity, the attitude of the secular Church towards the white monks changed dramatically as the actions of Archbishop Roger illustrated. Despite such difficulties Rievaulx abbey managed to maintain positive relationships with other hierarchs, namely Bishop Hugh de Puiset of Durham who not only became a benefactor of the abbey, but also assumed the role of its protector after the death of Walter Espec, the founder of Rievaulx abbey.

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[71] In the older literature these struggles over the election to the bishopric of Durham were interpreted as conflicts between 'traditionalist' and 'reformers', the latter being represented mainly by the Cistercians and their supporters, but recently more complex explanations have been proposed. The political implication of Hugh's election can be interpreted in terms of balance between English and Scottish influences. The bishop's election in Durham can be also viewed from the perspective of internal church affairs between the secular church, Benedictine and Cistercian monks, local politics and forceful attempts by the Archbishop of York to control the internal affairs of Durham. A. Young, 'The Bishopric of Durham, 1093-1193', in *Anglo-Norman Durham*, ed. David Rollason et al., (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1994), pp. 364-5.

[72] Burton, 'Origins and development', p. 375; *PU*, vol. 1, n° 83, 106, 107, 135.

C. ARCHDEACONS, CHAPTERS, DEANS AND CANONS AND THEIR CONNECTIONS WITH RIEVAULX

As we move on to discuss another group of diocesan clergy consisting of chapters, their deans and canons as well as archdeacons it is important to outline firstly the levels of interactions of these institutions and their individual members with Rievaulx abbey. In the York diocese, especially from the mid-twelfth century onwards, a good relationship with the secular hierarchy of the middle rank, particularly deans and cathedrals chapters was very important for Rievaulx because of either the absenteeism or the hostility of the archbishops. Canons themselves were part of the ecclesiastical power networks, consisting of relatives of bishops, deans or lay bureaucrats appointed to the lucrative cathedral offices. Many deans became bishops or archbishops later in their careers and good relationships with the monastic houses established during their time in the chapters might help in their subsequent contact with these institutions.[74] The dean and chapter were based locally and therefore accessible and could issue valuable confirmation charters or act as witnesses. In their role of witnesses the canons could act as a collective group, or on individual bases, particularly if they had some personal or family connections with the abbey. This duality is also visible on the level of conflicts between Rievaulx and the chapters. When it comes to the arguments over the possession and payment of tithes, the disputes were firmly between two ecclesiastical institutions, one secular and one monastic. In other cases, however, individual canons had conflicts with Rievaulx over particular properties.

The administration of the York diocese was divided, by c. 1121-28 into five archdeaconries: York (West Riding), East Riding, Cleveland, Richmond and Nottingham.[75] The archdeacons of the York in the twelfth century did not have precisely circumscribed geographical areas of responsibility, the majority of them used title *archidiaconus Eboracensis* or *archidiaconus Eboracensis ecclesie.*[76] To make this complex situation clearer I will discuss first the contacts between the abbey and the

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[73] Burton, 'Origins and development', p. 375.

[74] The following deans of York became bishops: William of St Barbe (c. 1135-1143) became bishop of Durham, Hubert Walter (1186-1189) became bishop of Salisbury, Henry Marshal (1189-1193/94) and Simon of Apulia (1194-1214) became bishops of Exeter. C. T. Clay, 'Notes on the Chronology of the Early Deans of York', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 34 (1938-39), p. 378.

[75] *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1066-1300*, vol. 6, compiled Diana E. Greenway (London: University of London, 1999), p. 30.

[76] Clay, 'Notes on the Early Archdeacons', pp. 270-1.

archdeacons and chapters on an institutional level and then I will analyze the contacts between Rievaulx abbey and the individual canons.

Among the charters issued by the chapters of York and Durham and various archdeacons and deacons for Rievaulx abbey there are two distinctive groups. The first one consists of documents confirming legal actions of others or legal acts undertaken in the presence of the chapter. The second, smaller, group contains records of conflicts and their resolutions between Rievaulx abbey and the chapters. The majority of these were concerned payment of tithes by the abbey.

The charters issued by the chapters outnumber those of the bishops and this is likely to reflect a higher level of day-to-day interactions between Rievaulx abbey and the chapters, than with the bishops and archbishops who were often absent from their dioceses. Canons also acted as witnesses to the charters issued for Rievaulx abbey, individually, or as a chapter. As many as forty charters out of 245 (16.3%) contained in the cartulary were witnessed by the archdeacons, deans, chapters and their members.

Among the charters of confirmation of the actions undertaken by the third party, copied in the cartulary issued by the diocesan officials, two of the oldest are the attestations by Dean Robert de Gant and the Chapter of York of the quitclaims, without any compensation, by Ralph son of Serlo and Uctred son of Orm of their rights to Griff.[77] Both were Walter Espec's men and the disputed property was a part of the initial endowment. It was therefore crucial for the abbey to have undisputed possession of this land and the quitclaim attested by the dean of York provided such assurance. Among other confirmation documents issued by the chapter there is a cluster of charters related to the various grants in Hoveton, attestations of three of Roger de Mowbray's grants, one of Ralph Beler, quitclaims by Peter de Hoveton, Sunnive wife of Lambert de Hoveton, Samson de Cornwall and his wife Hestilda, and Jocelin de Arcey and his wife Helewise de Clere.[78] The first of the confirmation charters relating directly to Roger de Mowbray is an attestation of the grant of Welburn and a plot of land on the other side of the river towards Hoveton, which his parents had held in demesne.[79] This charter was issued by Dean Robert Gant and the chapter of York between 1154 and 1157 and then re-confirmed by Archbishop Roger.[80] Notification of two separate actions related to the grant by Ralph Beler in Hoveton was made by Dean Robert and the Chapter of York

[77] *Cartulary*, n° 227, 228. Robert de Gant, a former king's chancellor was the dean between 1142/7 and 1157. *Fasti Ecclesiae*, vol. 6, pp. 8-9.
[78] For a discussion on the relationship of these individuals with Rievaulx abbey see pp. 86, 88, 120.
[79] *Cartulary*, n° 229; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 153.

between 1154 and 1157.[81] First, Ralph obtained permission for the alienation of land from his lord Roger de Mowbray. Later, Ralph and his lord made an arrangement so that Ralph and his heirs would receive two marks of compensation yearly.[82] Ralph's grant, with his lord's consent, was reconfirmed by Archbishop Roger between 1154 and 1159.[83]

Another charter in this sequence, dated 1163-69, contains even more layers of legal actions. This is the confirmation of the whole vill of Hoveton including four bovates of land there which Samson de Cornwall had held there as a gift from Roger de Mowbray's mother. Roger bought this property from Samson and his wife who made an oath in the hands of Mowbray's steward Ralph de Belvoire that neither he nor his heir will claim any rights to this property; afterwards he gave the same statement in the presence of the Sheriff Ranulf de Glanville. All these legal actions were confirmed by the charter issued by the York Chapter.[84] It appears that Samson de Cornwall did not give up his rights to the four bovates and was persuaded or maybe forced to quitclaim them again between 1163 and 1169 and this act was also attested by Dean Robert Butevilain of York.[85]

The involvement of the York chapter in these cases indicates how important the land in Hoveton was for Rievaulx abbey and that the monks wanted a secure confirmation of their rights there. Although Roger de Mowbray tried to put pressure on his tenants, it was the authority of the dean and chapter that finally brought these people to quitclaim their rights to Hoveton.

Two other charters relating to land acquired in Hoveton by Rievaulx are quitclaims. The first one by Peter de Hoveton was attested in the presence of Dean Robert Butevilain and the chapter between 1161 and 1180. What differentiates this quitclaim from those previously discussed is that Rievaulx abbey gave Peter compensation of twenty marks of silver, a horse and also two cows, two sheep and two lambs for his wife.[86] The second quitclaim was made by Sunnive wife of Lambert de Hoveton and her two daughters Sigerith and Orenge. The charter of notification was issued by Engelram, a rural dean of Ryedale and Pickering and the decanal chapter

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[80] *Cartulary*, n° 223; dated by Lovatt between 1154 and 1157, *EEA,* vol. 20, p. 86.
[81] *Cartulary*, n° 230; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 128.
[82] *Cartulary*, n° 66; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 125.
[83] *Cartulary*, n° 224; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 127.
[84] *Cartulary*, n° 67; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 126.
[85] *Cartulary*, n° 232; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 129.
[86] *Cartulary*, n° 231; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 130.

between 1160 and 1174.[87] These women gave up their rights to one bovate of land and two assarts to the amount of five acres in Hoveton which they had held from the abbey. They received six marks of silver and one cow from the monks as a compensation. This legal act was performed in the church of All Saints in Helmsley in the presence of Archdeacon John, son of Letold of Cleveland (and later of Nottingham), and sub-archdeacon and archdeacon Ralph d'Aunay of Cleveland.[88] Participation of the dean and archdeacons was intended to make these transactions formal and secure, as well as to prevent any further disputes.

The last three confirmations of donations by lay men issued by Dean Robert Butevilain and the York Chapter were important pasture grants. Torphin de Allerton granted a carucate, twenty-six perches of land for buildings, and a pasture for 500 sheep in 1160, which were part of his wife's dowry. After six years of exemption monks were obliged to pay a one-off compensation of half a mark and then a yearly rent of twenty shillings to Torphin's wife. The chapter not only issued a confirmation charter, but also sealed the document, because Torphin did not have his own seal.[89]

Bernard de Balliol's grant of various pastures in Teesdale and Westerdale was pledged by Bernard and his twelve men in the hand of William de Mandeville and also attested by the chapter of York.[90] This act of guarantee was given in the presence of the entire chapter of York, which added solemnity and increased the strength of the donation by a public act witnessed by many neighbours. It was both the public character of this action and the existence of the written document as such, which made this transaction secure for the abbey:

> And because I wish that this said grant of mine should be strong and unfailing, I declared by my oath and pledge by William de Mandeville, and my twelve free men, who are witnesses of this charter, they pledged with me in the hand of the said William in the presence of the whole chapter of York, everything which is contained in this charter in good conscience will be kept by me. But also I have established the church of York as witness of all these things between me and the monks, so that if ever I or my heirs should attempt to deviate from this donation

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[87] *Cartulary*, n° 239; *EYC*, vol. 9, n° 131.

[88] According to Clay John son of Letold was the archdeacon of Cleveland from 1162-67 and then became archdeacon of Nottingham. Ralph d'Aunay was his successor in Cleveland from c. 1165 to 1172 and then took over archdeaconry of York in 1174. Clay, 'Notes on the Early Archdeacons', p. 421. According to Greenway, John son of Letold was originally a canon of York (first occurred in 1158) and became the archdeacon of Cleveland before January 1167 and was succeeded at by Jeremy in 1171 when John became the archdeacon of Nottingham. Ralph d'Aunay appeared in the sources as archdeacon of Cleveland between 1164 and 1174, partly as vice-archdeacon under Jeremy. *Fasti Ecclesiae*, vol. 6, p. 37.

[89] *Cartulary*, n° 86; Burton, 'Estates and Economy', p. 62; for a discussion of this grant see pp. 152-3.

[90] *Cartulary*, n° 115; *EYC*, vol. 1, n° 562.

> and the terms of this charter, this church will recall us by the Church's discipline to execute the terms of the donation.[91]

By the terms of this charter, the lay donor and his heirs were bound to honour the grant to the abbey. Not only did several people witness this act and support the benefactor's oath, but also the York Chapter assumed the role of intercessory and executive in the case of any future dispute. Dean Robert Butevilain and the Chapter also attested another extensive grant of pasture (between 1175 and 1186) of Ranulf son of Walter to Rievaulx abbey in Folkton consisting of one tillage called Ravenesdale, and a pasture for 1000 sheep.[92]

The choice of these three pasture grants was not accidental; the abbey of Rievaulx had important reasons to ask the York chapter to confirm them. By the late twelfth century, Rievaulx abbey had accumulated substantial stretches of pastures and built up large sheep-flocks. The amount of vacant land was fast diminishing and many lords both lay and ecclesiastical wanted to participate in profitable sheep-farming. Wool production became a important part of Rievaulx economy, thus the abbey wanted to protect its assets by means of secure confirmations.

Not all the contacts between the chapters and Rievaulx were as exemplary as these described above. The second type of interactions, of much more dramatic character, between Rievaulx abbey and the chapters was concerned with the important issue of tithes. Tithe payment and their possession caused much resentment towards the exempted orders of which the Cistercians was one. In theory every Christian, including members of the Church, was obliged to pay them, but in practice many monasteries, including the Cistercian order, received papal exemption from the payment of tithes.[93] Theologically and legally tithes should be paid to the church in which the sacraments were administered, but the ownership of the tithes could also belong to a lay person or a religious house. In the case of monasteries the payment and possession of tithes were intertwined due to their historical rights to keep their own tithes. Monks could hold tithes in two ways. Firstly, a monastery could receive tithes from men working on land

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[91] 'Et quia volo ut hec predicta elemosina mea firma sit et stabilis, manu mea affidavi in manu Willelmi de Mandavilla, et xij liberi homines mei qui hujus carta testes sunt mecum affidaverunt in manu ejusdem Willelmi sub presentia totius capituli Eboracensis omnia que in hac carta continetur sine malo ingenio me servaturum. Sed et ecclesiam Eboracensem horum omnium testem inter me et monachos constitui, ita ut si aliquando ego vel heredes mei ab hac donatione et hujus carte tenore deviare temptaverimus, ipsa ecclesia ad hec exequenda nos ecclesiastica revocet disciplina.' *Cartulary*, n° 115; *EYC*, vol. 1, n° 562.

[92] *Cartulary*, n° 233; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 1252. The original charter of grant issued by Ranulf was also copied in the *Cartulary*, n° 82; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 1247; dated 1162-75.

not belonging to the house as a result of a grant of tithes to the monastery. Secondly, a monastic house could possess tithes owed from its own demesne, that is from the land cultivated by the monks or goods produced for their own use, that is they were allowed to keep their own tithes.

The original refusal to take tithes was an important part of the programme of the reformed monastic orders in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. This was linked to the idea of strict separation from the outside world, including the refusal to perform pastoral work. The founders of the Cistercian believed that the possession of tithes created an unwelcome connection with the outside world. This agenda was however, according to Giles Constable unrealistic and backward-looking. No later then by the mid-twelfth century Cistercians and other reformed orders were fully reconciled with the idea and practice of tithes possession.[94] After 1150 examples of grants of tithes to the new religious houses, and the subsequent monastic ownership of the tithes among the Cistercian houses in England became common. This situation became aggravated when many Savigniac houses joining Cistercian order, but did not abandon tithes ownership upon entering the order.[95]

The freedom from the payment of tithes from the goods produced by the monks and for their own use was granted by Pope Innocent II in 1132 to the Cistercian order. It was soon approved by the council of Pisa in 1135.[96] While possession of tithes stopped being an issue, as shown above, the refusal of the Cistercian order to pay them became a problem. The secular Church's attitude to the monks' payment of tithes changed significantly in the second half of the twelfth century. The firm refusal of the Cistercian order to pay tithes from their land against the wishes of the bishops became a political issue in the Church when the popes became heavily involved supporting Cistercian exemptions, particularly from the time of Innocent II (1130-1143).[97] Papal involvement on the Cistercian side was directly related to inter-Church politics because many popes used the issue of tithe to win the support of the Cistercian order in other matters. Constable concludes that the policy of Innocent II towards the Cistercian order was most likely motivated by the need to acquire their support against the anti-pope Anacletus II (1130-1138).

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[93] Giles Constable, *Monastic Tithes from their origin to the twelfth century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), pp. 198-200.
[94] Constable, *Monastic Tithes* pp. 186-7;
[95] Constable, *Monastic Tithes,* pp. 187-92.
[96] Constance Berman, 'Cistercian Development and the Order's Acquisition of Churches and Tithes in Southwestern France', *Revue Bénédictine* 91 (1981), 200.
[97] Constable, *Monastic Tithes*, pp. 220-42.

Not only the secular Church opposed Cistercian exemption, but also the exemptions from the payment of tithes placed the Cistercian order in an advantageous position in comparison to the older orders and therefore also caused a great resentment from these towards the white monks. To curb this seemingly excessive privileges, pope Hadrian IV decreed in 1155 that the Cistercians were free from the payment only on *novalia*, that is the lands which were previously uncultivated.[98] His successor, Alexander III (1159-1181), who was supported in his struggle against the anti-pope by the Cistercians, reversed this regulation, so that all the lands were exempted. The first abbey which received this privilege from the pope was Rievaulx.[99] The monastic exemption from the payment of the tithes was increasingly condemned by the reformers of the secular Church, who wanted to establish better structures at ground level. This programme required money, which was often taken away from the parish churches by those who owned tithes, including monastic houses. One of these critical opinions was expressed by Archbishop Richard of Canterbury (1173-1184) who wrote to the Cistercian Chapter General (c. 1180) complaining about the scale of the secular Church's losses due to the Cistercian exemption from tithe payment.[100]

A growing number of conflicts between Cistercian monasteries and the Church prompted the Chapter General to issue decrees in 1180 and 1190 banning any purchases of land, except these located in the remote areas and free from tithe obligations.[101] This self-regulation was formalized in 1215 by the Fourth Lateran Council which limited exemption from tithes on any new acquisitions, even if the monks cultivated it themselves, unless the land was classified as *novalia*, that is previously uncultivated and therefore no tithes had been paid from it.[102]

Although Rievaulx abbey did not hold churches and refrained from tithe possession, the payment of such by the house became a troublesome issue, particularly in the second half of the twelfth century. The multi-stage transfer of the properties in Crosby and Cowton to Rievaulx, described in the earlier part of this chapter caused a conflict with the Chapter of Durham over the payment of the tithes from these vills. Between 1154 and 1170 monks of Durham and those of Rievaulx signed an agreement, which survived in two copies, one in Rievaulx cartulary and one in Durham Treasury,

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[98] Constable, *Monastic Tithes*, p. 286.
[99] *PL*, vol. 200, col. 92-95.
[100] *PL*, vol. 207, col. 252-55.
[101] *Statuta*, vol. 1, 1180:1.
[102] 'We therefore decree that on lands assigned to others and on future acquisitions, even if they cultivate them with their own hands or at their own expense, they shall pay tithes to the

stating that Rievaulx abbey should pay compensation for the loss of tithes of the thraves of East Cowton which were due to the church of Northallerton. The Cistercians were obliged to pay three marks yearly, in two installments of twenty shillings at Pentecost and on St Martin's day. If Rievaulx abbey failed to pay the compensation, the monks of Durham had a right to extract the tithes.[103] This clause is described by Lovatt as 'thinly-veiled threats' that if Rievaulx failed to pay it would lose the land.[104] This charter was then confirmed by Prior Germanus of Durham cathedral chapter between 1162 and 1189.[105] Eventually, the case was taken to the highest authority. Between 1171 and 1181 Pope Alexander III informed Bishop Hugh of Durham and the Prior Germanus of Durham chapter, that they had no rights to extract any more money from Rievaulx abbey for the tithes of East Cowton than was agreed and stipulated in their charter and reminded them that the Cistercian order possessed immunity from the payment of tithes from the labour of its own hand. The pope ordered Archbishop Roger and Bishop Hugh to see that any agreement with the monks concerning tithes was adhered to.[106] Between 1174 and 1176 Pope Alexander III directed the archbishop of York and bishop of Durham to excommunicate these clerks who demanded tithes payment in Welburn from Rievaulx abbey.[107] These letters demonstrate that Rievaulx abbey recognized that the authority of a distant, but Cistercian-friendly, pope could help in asserting its freedom from tithe payment and was quick to ask for help in Rome. One of Alexander III's successors, pope Innocent IV exempted Rievaulx abbey in 1243 from the payment of tithe from properties acquired after Alexander III.[108] Rievaulx abbey was not alone in its application to papal protection against the claims of the secular churchmen; Fountains abbey also received numerous bulls of protection.[109]

Another conflict, this time in the diocese of York, occurred between Rievaulx abbey and the church of Scawton. The territories of these vills of Stainton and Oswaldenges were in the possession of Rievaulx abbey which declined to pay tithes from these lands to the said church, which was previously controlled by Byland abbey.[110] The conflict was resolved between 1154 and 1160 with the help of the

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churches which previously received the tithes from the land, unless they decided to compound in another way with the churches.' *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. 1, p. 260.

[103] *Cartulary*, n° 236; *EYC*, vol. 2, n° 956.

[104] *Cartulary*, n° 54; commentary in the *EYC*, vol. 2, p. 293; *EEA*, vol. 20, p. 91.

[105] *Cartulary*, n° 240.

[106] Cartulary, n° 258; *PU*, vol. 1, n° 194.

[107] Cartulary, n° 265; *PU*, vol. 1, n° 133.

[108] *CPL*, p. 199.

[109] *PU*, vol. 3, n° 193-4, 208, 244, 270-71, 322.

[110] For information on the earlier part of the conflict see pp. 171-2.

Archdeacon Ralph Baro of Cleveland (1139/40-c.1157/8).[111] Rievaulx abbey agreed to pay compensation of twelve shillings yearly to the church of Scawton for the loss of tithes from Stainton and Oswaldenges. This arrangement was later confirmed by the charter of Archbishop Roger of York.[112]

An issue of particularly long-lasting conflict concerned the tithes of the parish of Pickering. Although most of the land there had not been cultivated before it was granted to Rievaulx abbey and then it was subsequently cultivated by the lay brothers of that house, the chapter of York was still demanding tithes. A series of charters documenting this conflict is preserved in the cartulary of the York Chapter. In 1206 Dean Simon of Apulia (1194-1214) and the Chapter of York signed the first agreement concerning this matter with Rievaulx abbey. The abbey promised to pay Dean Simon and his successors twenty shillings of compensation for the alleged loss of tithes from the abbey's grange in Kekmarish (parish of Pickering).[113] Previously the monks paid only one mark yearly, but as Burton suggests, this increase was due to the growth of the value of this property.[114] Fourteen years later, in June 1220 Rievaulx abbey made another agreement with Dean Roger de Insula (1220-1233) and the Chapter of York.[115] This time conflict was resolved with the help of the specially appointed papal judges: priors Vivian or William of St. Andrews (1220-1224/26) and William of Holy Trinity, York (1216-1223) and Henry prior of Marton (1199-1227) and was corroborated by Bishop Walter Gray of York (1216-1255). Rievaulx agreed to pay five marks yearly.[116] Among the witnesses were some of the prominent lay neighbours and benefactors of Rievaulx abbey: William de Mowbray, John de Birkin and Robert de Lasceles, as well as a member of the patron's family, Robert de Ros. Nevertheless, this agreement was not the end of the conflict over tithes of Pickering. On 13 February 1240 Adam Abbot of Rievaulx promised to pay tithes from all the new acquisitions in the parish of Pickering, even if they had status of *novalia*, that is land from which the abbey was legally free from the paying of tithes.[117] The last known charter which closed this conflict lasting for

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[111] *Fasti Ecclesiae,* vol. 6, pp. 36-7; dating of the agreements Burton, 'Estates and Economy', p. 66.
[112] *Cartulary*, n° 226, 225; *EYC*, vol. 3, n° 1831, 1832.
[113] Liber Albus, BL Cotton MS Claudius B. iii, f. 13; published incomplete, with an incorrect folio reference in the *Cartulary*, p. 255. See also *Fasti Ecclesiae*, vol. 6, p. 9.
[114] Burton, 'Estates and Economy', p. 66.
[115] *Fasti Ecclesiae*, vol. 6, p. 10.
[116] Liber Albus, BL Cotton MS Claud. B. iii, f. 12v; published incomplete, with an incorrect folio reference in the *Cartulary*, pp. 255-6.
[117] Liber Albus, BL Cotton MS Claud. B. iii, ff. 12v-13; published incomplete, with incorrect folio reference in the *Cartulary*, p. 256. The same agreement in slightly longer version was copied into cartulary in the thirteenth century hand, n° 277.

over four decades was issued on 17 April 1241 by the papal judges delegates — the unnamed Dean and Sub-dean of Lincoln. Both parties, that is Fulk Basset, Dean of York (1239-1243), and the Abbot of Rievaulx, Adam de Tilletai (1240-1260), after the hearing, which is related in the charter, agreed that the abbey would pay two marks of compensation for the tithes of Kekmarish and Loftmarish in the parish of Pickering and the conflict was pronounced closed for ever.[118]

This series of conflicts documented is a clear indication of the practical erosion of the Cistercian exemption from the payment of tithes and the flexibility which the monks had to adopt in dealing with this particular problem. By the early thirteenth century the popes were no longer supporters of the special position of the order and Rievaulx abbey, as many other houses, had to make financial compromises with the secular Church to accommodate their financial demands.

Another aspect of contact between Rievaulx and the chapters was of more personal character. In some cases the economic interests of individual canons overlapped with those of Rievaulx abbey causing conflicts which left traces in the sources. Although the canons only held lands because of their offices, these disputes should be rather considered as occurring between the abbey and a particular canon, not between two institutions. These conflicts between Rievaulx and the canons shared many similarities with disputes between Rievaulx abbey and its lay neighbours, indeed some neighbours were involved in resolving conflicts between the monastic house and the canons as witnesses or provided information on the correct boundary divisions. On a more positive level, other canons had also personal or family interests in Rievaulx abbey and acted as supporters of the house.

One of the recorded cases of such a individual dispute was a conflict between Rievaulx abbey and Thomas son of Paulinus, canon of York, who held the prebend of Stillington (comprising land in Stillington, Nawton and Wombleton) between 1142/54-1191/94.[119] This dispute is known from the Thomas's charter of quitclaim, issued between 1160 and 1165, which also narrates the earlier stages of this conflict. The canon tried to claim his rights to Nawton and Wombleton, which were given to the abbey by Roger and Nigel Mowbray. The abbey firmly denied his right to these properties and Canon Thomas discovered, during his investigation of the possession

[118] Liber Albus, BL Cotton MS Claud. B. iii, f. 11v-12v; published incomplete, with an incorrect folio reference in the *Cartulary*, pp. 257-259; see also *Fasti Ecclesiae*, vol. 6, pp. 10-11.
[119] *Fasti Ecclesiae*, vol. 6, pp. 97-8.

rights, that contrary to what his people had told him these boundaries were not correct.[120]

> For I brought the above said accusations concerning the above said boundaries in Welburn, because my people told me, falsely, that it belonged to my land in Nawton and Wombleton. But seeing that I did not wish to trouble the above said monks unjustly, I investigated painstakingly from the faithful people and neighbours from this area and I learned most certainly and recognized the above said divisions to belong to Welburn, and that I have brought a claim unreasonably, concerning these boundaries. And for that reason I quitclaim whole said claim against the said monks, and grant this land to them to enclose by a ditch freely along the said boundaries just as Robert de Daiville and my other neighbours from these vills for their part permitted them to do.[121]

It is possible that Canon Thomas simply tried forcefully to seize some of Rievaulx abbey's property bordering with his prebend and once unsuccessful, put all the blame on the others. But it is equally likely that his claims were motivated by a genuine mistake and he simply did not know the direction of the borders. His investigation among the neighbours revealed the true divisions between the properties and the canon had no choice but to give up his claims. This case is another example of the importance of the neighborhood and collective memory for preserving consensus among the community of landowners, no matter if they were religious or lay men. Although charters were increasingly used as proof of legal rights to properties, the boundaries were still primarily defined by the consensus of the local community of which religious houses were part.

A more positive aspect of Rievaulx's contacts with individual canons can be seen in the example of Nicholas de Traili, a canon of York, who was a nephew of Walter Espec, the founder of Rievaulx abbey. Nicholas, a canon from 1135/43, held Strensall prebend in the North Riding between 1166 and c. 1185.[122] He witnessed six charters as a member of the patron's family, but also, clearly, as a canon of York who happened to have particular connections with the abbey.[123] His personal interest in Rievaulx abbey has to be particularly stressed because he did not have any economic involvement in the

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[120] *EYC*, vol. 1, n° 164.

[121] 'Nam predictam calumpniam movi super prefatas divisas de Wellebr[una] quia homines mei michi falso suggesserant quod pertinerent ad terram meam de Nagelt[ona] et de Wimbelt[ona]. Set quoniam nolui predictos monachos injuste vexare inquisivi diligenter a fidelibus hominibus et vicinis de eadem provincia et certissime didici atque cognovi prefatas divisas pertinere ad Wellebr[unam], meque super eas prefatam calumpniam contra rationem movisse. Et ideo totam predictam calumpniam omnino quietam clamavi sepedictis monachis et concessi eis terram suam fossato quiete claudere per supradictas divisas sicut Robertus de Daivilla et ceteri vicini mei de eisdem villis ex parte sua illos facere permiserunt'. *EYC*, vol. 1, n° 164.

[122] *Fasti Ecclesiae*, vol. 6, p. 99.

area since the Yorkshire estates of Walter Espec were inherited by his cousin, Robert de Ros. In contrast to other frequent witnesses from within the York chapter, Nicholas de Traili occurred also on documents lacking any other clerical witnesses. For example Canon Simon de Sigillo (1143/53-1167/77) witnessed seven charters, but he always appeared in the context of other members of the York chapter.[124]

Because of the low survival rate of documents it is difficult to assess how common and frequent were these personal contacts between Rievaulx abbey and the canons, but it is very likely, on the bases of the known cases, that these contacts were related to the personal connections of the canons with either patrons and benefactors or individual monks from within the monastic convent. Their informal character may not leave traces in the sources.

From the above, we can see that contacts between the chapters of York and Durham and Rievaulx abbey were as important in their own ways as the connections between the abbey and their respective bishops. The deans and chapters were based locally and were more accessible than high prelates whose political activities often took them away from their dioceses. The deans and chapters often acted as mediators for the religious houses and issued numerous confirmation charters for the monasteries. In some cases it is possible to identify 'chains' of confirmation, that is a particular property being confirmed and reconfirmed by various authorities, from deacons up to the highest authorities. Grants from certain individuals were more likely to be confirmed by the church authorities due to the significance of grant or the insecurity of property rights. Among the examples discussed there are instances of simple confirmation of the grant, for example pastures in Teesdale and Westerdale by Bernard de Balliol. Yet most of the charters issued by the chapters were multi-layered, such as those related to the disputes over the vill of Hoveton, containing several legal actions up to the final agreements corroborated by the authority of dean and chapter of York.

Even if relationships between Rievaulx abbey and the chapters of York and Durham were not always peaceful their authority played an important role in securing the abbey's possessions. The issue of tithes was a particular problem which continued to cause conflict between Rievaulx abbey and the chapters of York and Durham throughout the period analysed. It was not, however, specific for Rievaulx abbey, but an expression of a much wider trend in the Church.

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[123] *Cartulary*, n° 43, 60, 129, 184, 219, 229. For a discussion on Nicholas family connections see pp. 38-9.

[124] *Cartulary*, n° 57, 60, 82, 83, 148, 161, 229. Simon de Sigillo held the prebend in Langtoft (East Riding), he was succeeded by John son of Letold. *Fasti Ecclesiae*, vol. 6, p. 84.

In the course of the first two hundred years of its existence, the abbey of Rievaulx developed important links with the members of the secular Church. Although much had changed, both on the local and an international Church arena from the time of the supportive Archbishop Thurstan to the time of the antagonistic Archbishop Roger, the abbey of Rievaulx managed to establish its place in the diocese and find support, if necessary, from the bishops of Durham. In the difficult times of King Stephen the protection of a powerful individual could substantially help the abbey in the world of unstable alliances and greedy neighbours. While Cistercians wanted to disassociate themselves from the secular Church, they nonetheless needed to cooperate with bishops, deans and chapters. If not for the sake of Christian unity and *caritas*, the monks of Rievaulx had to find consensus for the sake of the successful functioning of the abbey.

CHAPTER V

RIEVAULX ABBEY AND THE ITALIAN MERCHANTS

In contrast to the groups of neighbours and institutions discussed in the previous chapters, the subjects of this part, Italian merchants, were fundamentally different in not being a part of the local networks and their role illustrates varied contacts open to Cistercian houses. The merchants came from far away and their relationship with the abbey was on a purely commercial basis. Their expectations towards the abbey were different from those of patrons, neighbours and the members of secular Church and contained no spiritual or neighbourly elements. The time focus of this chapter is also different. While the relationships based on the land holding were created immediately after foundation of the abbey, the contacts related to the wool trade were much later. The large-scale wool production was only possible when estates were sufficient enough to sustain it. By the late twelfth century, Rievaulx abbey had received donations of pastures for 5140 sheep apart from the donations of open pastures on high moors. This meant that the abbey was capable of producing at least 21.2 sacks of wool per year.[1] A direct indication that the wool production on the Cistercian estates was by that time bringing a substantial income is the fact that all the Cistercian houses in England were forced to give a year's clip of wool to contribute to King Richard I's ransom in 1193-94. There was, undoubtedly, a strong market for English wool both internally, for the local cloth industry, for weavers in town such as Lincoln and Stamford, but primarily for export to the Low Countries. Many Cistercian abbeys, including Rievaulx, benefited from a demand on the continental market for the good quality wool. The growing urbanization of Flanders and the development of the cloth industry there from the twelfth century onwards ensured a constant demand for the English wool, which was by far the major export of England at that time. Until the mid-thirteenth century most of the wool export from England was conducted by the Flemish merchants. Among producers who sold wool to the merchants, either directly or via English middlemen, were Cistercian monasteries. It is quite likely that Rievaulx's first entrance into the wool market was in conjunction with Flemings, but no evidence of this survives.[2]

This situation, so favorable for the merchants from the Low Countries, changed rapidly in the second half of the thirteenth century, when Flemish merchants lost most

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[1] Burton, 'Origins and development', p. 428; this figure is calculated on the basis of the weight of an average fleece being 1.5 lb.

[2] The first indication that Fountains abbey sold wool to the merchants of St Omer comes from 1212. *Statuta*, vol. 1, 1212: 44; Burton, *Monastic Order*, p. 270.

of their hold on the English wool market. Political conflict in England, and subsequent war in 1264 between England and Flanders, closure of the ports in the summer of that year, and other actions against merchants by the barons virtually stopped the trade between these two countries, but early on in the conflict many monasteries were still ordered by the king to honour their obligations to the Flemish merchants.[3] The prolonged disturbances and obstacles lasting for about ten years caused a significant change in the patterns of English wool export, and created the dominance of Italian merchants in the wool trade. In 1275, King Edward I established a custom duty on exported wool of six shillings and eight pence per sack. Surviving accounts show that although some of the Flemish merchants returned to business in 1275, many of their valuable contracts, particularly with the Cistercian monasteries, were lost. During the Flemish absence Italian merchants began to buy Cistercian wool and established long term contracts with the individual houses.[4]

The wool trade was the original reason which attracted Italian merchants to England, but soon they became engaged in banking as creditors to the kings and a large number of lay and ecclesiastical lords.[5] The Bardi society first recorded trading in England in 1267, the Cerchi in 1268, the Frescobaldi and the Falconieri in 1272, the Mozzi in the late 1270s and the Spini not until 1294.[6] Among the largest Italian companies operating in England, the Riccardi and Frescobaldi were engaged primarily in the wool trade, but many others have more varied business interests.[7] The arrival of the Italian merchants arguably changed the character of the wool market because they had much greater liquid capital than their predecessors or competitors and could easily buy produce in advance and make loans.

Among the companies trading with Rievaulx, the Riccardi, Frescobaldi and Mozzi were the most prominent, but smaller societies of merchants were also trading with the abbey. In some cases buyers were not part of any company, but operated in groups under their names and towns.[8] Brian Waites suggested that Frescobaldi company

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[3] There is no record of such letter directed to Rievaulx, but another Cistercian house in Yorkshire, Meaux received a royal letter. *CR 1265-1268*, p. 84.
[4] T. H. Lloyd, *The English Wool Trade in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), pp. 25-59.
[5] Richard W. Kaeuper, *Bankers to the Crown: the Riccardi of Lucca and Edward I* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 35.
[6] T. H. Lloyd, *Alien Merchants in England in the High Middle Ages* (Brighton: the Harvester Press, 1982), p. 171.
[7] Edwin S. Hunt, *The Medieval Super-Companies: a Study of the Peruzzi Company of Florence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 40
[8] Assize Roll, 8 Edw. I, in *Cartulary* p. 209-11 (merchants of Florence); Assize Roll, 8 Edw. I, f. 8d, in *Cartulary*, p. 206 (merchants of Florence); PRO, E 159/65 m. 27 (merchants of Lucca).

dominated trade with the monasteries, but this observation seems to be based on a selective group of sources.[9] The Riccardi company, one of the business partners of Rievaulx, were creditors to a wide spectrum of people and institutions, from aristocrats to knights and even townsmen as well as monasteries and high secular church officials.[10] As the major creditors to the King Edward I, the Riccardi company received income from the export tax on wool from 1275 to 1294 as a re-payment for their numerous loans. In fact, the company ran the whole system of tax-collecting for the King.[11] The London branch of another Italian company, the Frescobaldi, was established in 1270s and in 1299, and after the withdrawal of the Riccardi, the Frescobaldi became the leading bankers to Edward I. In 1302, the company took over the control of the custom system and thus occupied a position similar to that of the Riccardi a few decades earlier.[12]

Although in this chapter, I will discuss several issues related to the economic history of Rievaulx abbey to provide background information, the main focus of this chapter is not on Rievaulx's economy, but specifically on the monastery's business dealings with the Italian merchants between 1279 and 1300, and how these contacts differed from the relationship this house developed with its neighbours. The consequences of Rievaulx's involvement into the wool trade were also significantly different from the results of neighbourhood politics and these will be discussed towards the end of this chapter.

The Cistercian economy has been an object of a long lasting debate for most of the last century. The core of this discussion has been the issue of the attitude of the Cistercian order to the economic developments of the time. The starting point of the investigation into the Cistercian economy for many economic and monastic historians were the records of the 1134 Chapter General, which banned Cistercian possession of rents, dependant peasants, mills and market. The only acceptable way of earning a living by the monks was direct labour.[13] These regulations have been interpreted by the historians as the 'ideal' of Cistercian life, practiced in the early stage of the order's development. Any indication of an adverse practice has been perceived as a symptom of declining standards. For example, James E. Madden explained the failure of the Cistercian order by their growing involvement in the trade and banking which led to the

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[9] Brian Waites, 'Monasteries and the wool trade in north and east Yorkshire during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 52 (1980), p. 117.
[10] Kaeuper, *Bankers*, p. 32.
[11] Kaeuper, *Bankers*, pp. 135-68.
[12] Hunt, *The Medieval Super-Companies*, pp. 59-60.

loss of their original ideals. In their attempts to save their exemption privileges, to which they were, in his understanding, no more entitled having entered market exchange Cistercians had to pay large sums for keeping these privileges, which contributed to the moral and financial 'bankruptcy of the order'.[14]

Moral judgments have been particularly strong in the works of monastic historians who developed a notion of the 'golden age' of Cistercian practice before the death of St Bernard, a 'golden age' characterized by austere conditions and self-sufficiency. The subsequent economic success of the order was interpreted by these scholars as an accidental by-product of self-sufficiency and papal privileges, not an original aim of the white monks.[15] The growing body of evidence that the Cistercian order, even before 1153 did not follow consistently the strict observance of St Benedict's rule and internal regulations forbidding contacts with the outside world contradicted this assumptions. Clear evidence that practices different from the prescribed ideal were present from the beginning of the order's growth (such as tithes and mills ownership, abandoning secluded sites for more economically viable areas) led to the development by Louis Lekai a theory of 'ideal' versus 'reality' in his history of the Cistercian order.[16] Although the ideal self-sufficiency never existed as a written and coherent law and the directives of the chapter general could not have been enforced across the order, he interpreted the 'ideal' as a guiding principle for the Cistercian houses. The numerous cases of broken rules or regulations did not indicate, in Lekai's interpretation, a symptom of decline. The speed of growth and geographical spread of the order required a flexible approach and without it the Order would never have succeeded in achieving what it did in the course of the twelfth century. The true symptoms of decline, according to this scholar, can be identified only after 1300, and were characterized by the sharp decline in the number of new foundations as well as chronic financial problems of many houses.[17] A stream of publications based on Lekai's thesis followed soon after publication of his influential book. These studies proved,

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[13] *Statuta*, vol. 1, pp. 14-5.
[14] James E. Madden, 'Business, Monks, Banker Monks, Bankrupt Monks: the English Cistercians in the Thirteenth Century', *Catholic Historical Review* 49 (1963), 364.
[15] For example Knowles, *The Monastic Order*, pp. 217-245; George Zarnecki, *The Monastic Achievement* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972);
[16] Louis J. Lekai, *The Cistercians: Ideal and Reality* (Kent, Ohio: the Kent State University, 1977), pp. 282-333. The elaboration of this hypothesis: Luis J. Lekai, 'Ideals and Reality in Early Cistercian Life and Legislation', in *Cistercian Ideals and Reality*, ed. John R. Sommerfeldt (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1978), pp. 4-29.
[17] Lekai, 'Ideals and Reality', pp. 23-26.

however, that more than anything else local practices were far from the 'ideal versus reality' model even at the early stages, which undermined the viability of the model.[18]

Economic historians analyzed Cistercian economic practices from a different perspective. Many earlier works stressed the innovative approach of the Cistercian order, the widespread reclamation of wasteland (known as the 'frontier thesis'), forest clearance and depopulation which brought significant increases in crop production via directly cultivated granges.[19] From this perspective, the Order was often seen as being at the forefront of the economic and technological changes in the twelfth century.[20] In contrast to the monastic historians who developed notions of the 'ideal' and 'reality' in the history of Cistercian order, some economic historians interpreted early Cistercian legislation (particularly the *Exordium Parvum*, *Carta Caritatis* and the early statutes of the Chapter General) as an conscious economic plan. In Richard Roehl's interpretation the Cistercian order had 'a definable economic plan' on the level of individual abbeys, and the Chapter General enforced a certain amount of uniformity for that purpose.[21] This system was very efficient until, as Coburn Graves explains, the crisis of the Cistercian economy caused by the high consumption in the monastic communities and the decline in direct labour, which was replaced by wool production.[22] Roehl went even further in asserting that the economic plan of the Cistercian order failed because of the success and popularity of the order. This presumed plan linked both the religious aim of austerity and seclusion and economic self-sufficiency. The high profitability of the latter and further expansion led to a change in the lifestyle and quality of the religious practice of the monks because: '[a] program of religious reform had been associated with a

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[18] Berman, *Cistercian Evolution*, pp. 55-6.

[19] For example see opinion expressed by Graves: 'If any one attribute is laid to the Cistercians, it is that they were unrivalled reclaimers of waste'. Coburn V. Graves, 'The Economic Activities of the Cistercians in Medieval England (1128-1307)', *Analecta Sacri Ordinis Cisterciensis* 13 (1957), 16. The 'frontier thesis' was developed by the German scholars in the nineteenth century in the context of Cistercian houses in the Slavic territories and the expansion of the German population and civilisation eastwards. For a modern criticism of this thesis see for example S. Epperlein, 'Gründungsmythos deutscher Zisterzienserklöster westlich und östlich der Elbe im hohen Mittelalter und der Bericht des Leubuser Mönches im 14. Jahrhundert', *Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 3 (1967), 303-335.

[20] George Duby, *Rural Economy and Country Life in the Medieval West*, trans. Cynthia Postan (Columbia: University of South Caroline Press, 1990) pp. 70-71, 199 (first publ. in 1962); M. M. Postan, *The Medieval Economy and Society* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976), p. 102 (first publ. in 1972); Edward Miller, John Hatcher, *Medieval England: Rural Society and Economic Change 1086-1348* (London: Longman, 1990), p. 33 (first publ. in 1978).

[21] Richard Roehl, 'Plan and Reality in a Medieval Monastic Economy: the Cistercians', unpublished PhD, University of California, Berkeley, 1968, pp. 17-8.

[22] Graves, 'Economic Activities', 54.

normative economic program: deviation from the ideal in one respect implied deviation in the other.'[23]

More recently this bipolar interpretation has been challenged by historians of the order. Constance B. Bouchard questioned the use of Cistercian legislative sources, particularly the 1134 Chapter General, as a reflection of the 'ideal' practices as opposed to the later practices of the corrupted 'reality'. She demonstrated that the Cistercian monasteries from the very beginning accepted 'forbidden' types of gifts such as mills, rents and serfs and did not try to hide it. The later crisis of Cistercian monasticism was not a result of simple diversion from the 'ideal' path by the monks, but an outcome of much more complex social and economic changes of the later Middle Ages.[24] Her findings have been confirmed by a critical study of Isabel Alfonso's, based on the example of Portuguese Cistercian abbeys. She points to the variety of connections between the granges belonging to these houses and the surrounding areas, which were not confined to the stereotypical organization of Cistercian economy.[25] The debate of the 'ideal-reality' issue has been summarized by Berman, who deconstructed the historical assumption of Cistercian economic practices. She asserts that:

> there was never a total divorce between ideal and reality in the early Cistercian history. For, in a variety of ways, even though ideology did not mirror the actual practice of the order, there was still a connection between its ideology and its economic practices. Moreover, ideology tended to sustain or justify practice, although often in indirect, even convoluted way.[26]

Part of the problem in the debate on the economic development of the Cistercian order is a level of generalization which ignores vastly different geographical and social conditions of the Cistercian order in France, England, Germany or Eastern Europe. By the time the Cistercian order spread to Central and Eastern Europe, the Cistercians had abandoned much of the earlier restrictions on accepting churches, tithes, rents and the like. This however, should not be considered as a symptom of any decline. On the contrary, this ability to adjust to different and changing conditions was the reason for the success of the Cistercian order in various socio-geographical conditions.

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[23] Richard Roehl, 'Plan and Reality in a Medieval Monastic Economy: the Cistercians', *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History* 9(1972), p. 112.
[24] Constance B. Bouchard, 'Cistercian Ideals Versus Reality: 1134 Reconsidered', *Cîteaux,* 39 (1988), 217-31.
[25] Isabel Alfonso, 'Cistercians and Feudalism', *Past and Present* 133 (1991), 3-30.
[26] Constance H. Berman, 'The Development of Cistercian Economic Practice During the Lifetime of Bernard of Clairvaux: the Historical Perspective on Innocent II's 1132 Privilege', in *Bernard Magister,* ed. John R. Sommerfeldt (Spencer, Mass: Cistercian Publications, 1992), p. 308.

While as seclusion from the neighbouring communities was prescribed by the statutes, complete isolation, for example from the market-places, was not desired by the monasteries and could hinder the normal functioning of monastic estates. Examples from Western Pomerania show that Cistercian houses actively encouraged the development of markets on their estates, not only to derive profits from such, but also to sell their own surplus. One of the houses there, founded in 1174 at Kolbatz, set up several markets by the mid-thirteenth century. These markets, dispersed throughout the estates, served tenants of the abbey and neighbouring communities as a place to buy and sell produce. These markets established by the abbey of Kolbatz attracted so much trade, that the burgers of the neighbouring town of Grifin perceived them as a threat to their own economic interests. In the fourteenth century, similarly to their counterparts in North-Western Europe almost two centuries earlier, the Cistercians of Kolbatz entered profitable, long-distance trade to sell their surplus. In their case, however, the object of trade was not wool, but corn, sold to the merchants of the Hanseatic league.[27]

These examples show that the Cistercian houses were active participants in local and long-distance trade, not by accident, but by a calculated decision to sell produce which was not consumed internally; the liquid capital acquired could then be spent on land purchase or building projects. While links with lay neighbours were essential for procuring further grants, participation in the commercial exchange was crucial for the normal functioning of the monastic economy. Self-sufficiency was not understood as a complete separation from the marketplace, but rather a participation in it on the Order's own terms.

As we move on to discuss selected issues of economic practices of the order, and of Rievaulx abbey in particular, it is important to point out one of the most striking aspects of the economic practice developed by the Cistercians — a new approach to work. The Cistercian attitude to work was a novelty: labour was perceived as an integral part of monastic life not solely as a punishment. In practical terms the bulk of the manual work was performed by lay brothers, who were not servants but an indispensable part of the order and their work was considered to be spiritually significant.[28] The place and role of manual work and of spiritual, intellectual pursuits was often discussed by the Cistercian writers on the example of Mary and Martha, the

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[27] Krzysztof Guzikowski, 'Miasto - rywal czy sprzymierzeniec cystersów? Na przykładzie opactwa w Kołbaczu', in *Klasztor w społeczeństwie średniowiecznym i nowożytnym*, ed. Marek Derwich, Anna Pobóg-Lenartowicz (Opole-Wrocław: LARHCOR, 1996), pp. 463-466.
[28] Christopher J. Holdsworth, 'The Blessings of Work: the Cistercian View', *Studies in Church History* 10 (1973), p. 67.

sister of Lazarus. Matthew, the second abbot of Rievaulx wrote about the Cistercian way of life which combined in itself work (Martha) and contemplation (Mary), which depended on each other and could not exist in separation.[29] While there was no exactly uniform Cistercian practice across Europe, many of the features were shared by all the houses. One of these characteristics was the presence of lay brothers. In late 1100 or early 1101, the Order introduced the institution of lay brothers (*conversi*) who were recruited from the peasantry and therefore excluded from entering monastic orders as choir monks. Although they took monastic vows and wore habits, they were solely occupied with manual work and participated passively in the liturgy. Their inferior status was indicated by segregation from the choir monks in the monastic church.[30] The institution of the lay brother was not a complete novelty, but the scale of this innovation was much larger than any other such modifications introduced by the Benedictine monks previously. Their practical role in the monastic community was underlined by the fact that majority of lay brothers were assigned to the granges and the abbey itself.[31] From the purely economic point of view, the introduction of lay brothers provided monasteries with a more favourable ratio of the economically productive to the economically unproductive inhabitants of the estates than would be possible in the case of dependant peasantry with children, women, and the old who were less productive or non-productive.[32] Initially, this development was a great success and there was no problem with the recruitment. According to Walter Daniel, during Ailred's abbacy (1147-1167) there were 500 *conversi* and 140 choir monks in Rievaulx abbey.[33] It is impossible to verify these numbers but they nevertheless provide some information. Firstly, they confirm the scale of Rievaulx abbey and its popularity for the surrounding communities from which lay brothers were recruited. Secondly, if correct in relationship, they indicate that the ratio of the 'working force' to the 'praying force' was three and half to one. This clearly suggests the importance of the economic aspect of the abbey existence and the size of its estates in the early stage of its development, but also points to the universal characteristic of medieval agriculture, which was labour intensive.

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[29] Holdsworth, 'Blessing of the Work', p. 66.
[30] James S. Donnelly, 'Change in the Grange Economy of English and Welsh Cistercian Abbeys 1300-1540', *Traditio* 10 (1954), p. 400; Michael Toepfer, *Die Konversen der Zisterzienser. Untersuchungen über ihren Beitrag zur mittelalterlichen Blüte des Ordens*, Berliner Historischen Studien, vol. 10 (Berlin: Duncker & Humbolt, 1983), pp. 38-43.
[31] Chrysogonus Waddell, *Cistercian Lay Brothers: Twelfth-Century Usages with Related Texts* (Brecht: Cîteaux, 2000), pp. 53-4.
[32] Roehl, 'Plan and Reality', p. 93.
[33] *Life of Ailred,* p. 38.

The majority of the lay brothers lived and worked on the granges, that is independent agricultural units of production consisting of arable land, but also pastures, fisheries, salt-panning and iron works.[34] They were introduced in England in the early stages of the Order's development and spread among the other new orders in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Before the year 1200 Rievaulx abbey possessed thirteen granges, which were developed and consolidated by means of gift, exchange and purchase.[35] Granges were subordinated directly to the abbey and had neither economic nor spiritual autonomy. They were staffed not only by lay brothers, but also, increasingly, by paid workers and servants. Originally the Chapter General decreed that a grange should not be farther than one day's journey from the abbey in order that the lay brothers could attend masses.[36] This was not universally adhered to and many granges were located much further than the recommended distance from the abbey.

A substantial component of Rievaulx abbey granges was of pastoral character. A large part of the region was on a high moorland, which is suitable for grazing in spring and summer and only 20% of the North Riding, an area where Rievaulx acquired majority of its lands, was suitable for arable use.[37] Some of the granges developed by Rievaulx such as Bilsdale were predominantly pastoral.[38] Due to a combination of reasons, such as size of sheep flocks and improved breeding techniques, the wool produced by the Cistercians' sheep was of excellent quality and very much sought-after by the merchants. As a result the monks became exposed to the market economy very early, probably by the mid-twelfth century. Because the main concern was to provide for the community, the economic organization of the monastery was consumer-oriented in order to fulfill fixed maintenance and sustenance costs.[39] Most of the monastic estates in the north, not only Cistercians', produced foodstuffs mainly for internal consumption; only wool was the major product for sale.[40] Some wool was also sold on the local

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[34] There has been considerable literature devoted to the English monastic grange, see particularly: T. A. Bishop, 'Monastic Grange in Yorkshire', *English Historical Review* 51 (1936), 193-214; R. A. Donkin, 'The Cistercian grange in England in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries with special reference to Yorkshire', *Studia Monastica* 6 (1964), 94-144; Colin Platt, *The Monastic Grange in Medieval England: a Reassessment* (London: Macmillan, 1969).
[35] Burton, *Monastic Order*, p. 275.
[36] *Statuta*, vol. 1, p. 14.
[37] Edward Miller, 'Farming in Northern England during the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries', *Northern History* 11(1976), 2-3.
[38] Donkin, 'Cistercian granges', 108.
[39] J. A. Raftis, 'Western Monasticism and Economic Organization', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 31 (1960-61), 465.
[40] Bruce M. S. Campbell, 'Measuring the commercialisation of seigneurial agriculture c. 1300', in *A commercializing economy: England 1086 to c. 1300*, ed. Richard H. Britnell and Bruce M. S. Campbell (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), p. 133.

markets but this cannot be measured with any degree of certainty; the majority of fleeces probably being sold to overseas merchants, at least until the mid-fourteenth century.[41]

The economic system of granges and pastures developed by the Cistercians was not an aim in itself, but a scheme elaborated in order to enable monks to pursue a state of isolation in order to perform their religious and spiritual obligations. Rievaulx abbey was first and foremost a religious house and its economic activities were in a way secondary, at least on the declaratory level. As time passed the social and material structure of the monastery became more rigid and perpetuating its existence became an aim in itself. The pastoral economy based on the principle of cash crops was incompatible with a regime of self-sufficiency which was the idea behind the original accumulation of land by the Order.[42] The necessity of crop sales, in order to acquired a profit sufficient to sustain and develop community and its possessions, pushed the abbey into contacts with people who were not part of the local networks, with the merchants coming from as far as southern Europe. This had far reaching consequences for Rievaulx abbey. Although it is an opinion often expressed in the literature that the Cistercians benefited, almost by accident from their pastoral economy in the isolated regions (which turned out to be very profitable) this success was part of a much wider trend created by the demand for English wool on the continental markets, discussed in the earlier part of this chapter.

The Italian merchants, the Riccardi, Frescobaldi, Mozzi and others were a distinctly different category from any other social group interacting with Rievaulx. They were outsiders coming from a considerable distance and never functioned as a part of the network of mutual obligations which existed locally. In contrast with the personal, and to a large extent local, these interactions with Italian wool-merchants were of a different character. Merchants were not interested in the spiritual services offered by the monastery, they simply wanted good quality wool. The nature of the producer, whether secular or ecclesiastical, was of secondary importance to them. On the other hand, Cistercian abbeys were not institutions whose original aim was active participation in the economic exchange, particularly trade. It has been argued that their economic horizon was rational only to a certain extent, because of the pressure to allocate a large proportion of the resources to the fabric of the monastery.[43] Much of the monastic

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[41] R. A. Donkin, 'The Disposal of Cistercian wool in England and Wales during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries', *Cîteaux in der Nederlanden* 8 (1954), 109.
[42] Graves, 'Economic Activities', p. 22.
[43] Raftis, 'Western Monasticism', p. 459.

agricultural business was conducted as any other producer would do, but when it came to investment and finances, the monastery had different priorities unrelated to the market rationality. Extensive building projects within the monastic house were usually so costly that monastic income could hardly sustain it. A large and expensive church was not an investment in the market sense. The monastery was primarily interested in expansion for the glory of God, and highly visible projects were particularly favoured. Such developments drained money out of the budget and did not create assets for the market either, because monks could not sell or pawn their church. In that sense, the abbey was a participant of market exchange only to a certain degree, and was not a part of the 'pockets of capitalism' represented by the merchants.[44]

Merchants' demands for continued supplies of wool were meeting abbeys' demands for large sums of money. This resulted in the widespread practice of advance sales varying from two to twenty years. This method gave great advantage to the buyers who gained large cash discounts and the guarantee of wool supplies at the agreed price level.[45] The reason for the persistence of this practice was not solely the result of greed or bad management on the part of the monastic estates but these transactions were actually, as Eileen Power observed, widely used credit deals — with the wool being a security for the loan. This was due to the imbalance in liquid capital when producers were permanently short of it and the merchants could dispose of large sums.[46] Similarly, M. M. Postan observed that the sale credits (advances for future deliveries) were present at every stage of the wool trade, not only between the grower and merchant, but also between different buyers. The terms of contracts between the merchants and monasteries varied. The advance payment might cover the whole value of the wool (a loan repayable in wool) or only part of it (wool sale).[47] Many of the contracts between Cistercian houses and merchants listed amounts of wool exceeding by far their production capacities. In such cases a monastery would buy wool from other producers, known as *collecta*. In these cases the advance payment would go not to the producer,

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[44] The notion of the 'pockets of capitalism' was created by Eileen Power to describe areas which existed in the pre-industrial Europe, but displayed characteristics of the later stages of economic development. 'The cloth manufacturing areas, as well as other centres of large-scale manufactures, were pockets of capitalism in a pre-capitalistic world'. Eileen Power, *The Wool Trade in English Medieval History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955), p. 4.

[45] Edwin S. Hunt and James M. Murray, *A History of Business in the Medieval Europe 1200-1550* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 103.

[46] Power, *The Wool Trade*, p. 43.

[47] M. M. Postan, 'Credit in Medieval Trade', in *Medieval Trade and Finance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), pp. 7-11

but to a middle-man buying fleeces from several smaller growers.[48] The *collecta* wool was always marked and priced differently from the abbey's own produce. For example at Trinity 1287, Rievaulx abbey promised, in addition to other types of wool, four sacks of *collecta* priced at fourteen marks each for the Society of Riccardi in Lucca. At Michaelmas 1288 the merchants of Lucca were contracted for ten sacks of *collecta* valued at twelve marks per sack, and at Trinity 1292 the merchants of Lucca were promised one sack of good *collecta* wool priced at twelve marks.[49] The implication is that there must have been different grades of this type of wool, reflected in the different pricing of the sacks. In all cases it was lower than the prices for the abbey's good wool which in the late thirteenth century was priced at eighteen marks per sack.

It is generally acknowledged that wool production was very profitable, but we should first take a step back and see why the abbey might need liquid capital obtained by the wool trade in the first place. The running costs of an institution of the size of Rievaulx abbey must have been substantial. The abbey was self-sufficient for the majority of foodstuffs including salt, agricultural and household tools, but had to buy highly specialized products such as spices, wine, and implements for the monastic scriptorium. Both on the abbey precinct and on the abbey granges a large number of hired servants and labourers were employed. With the lower numbers of the lay brothers in the thirteenth century, the cost of the hired labour was certainly growing. An indication that running costs took a substantial part of the monastic budget is demonstrated by the fact that permission was given to Abbot Thomas II of Rievaulx at the time of particular financial difficulties in 1291 to disperse the congregation temporarily and to send monks to other Cistercian houses in the area.[50] Such permission allowed the abbey to redirect its income from running costs to the repayment of debts.

The second area of high expenses for the monastic communities arose from the practice of hospitality. The abbey accepted important guests: nobility, bishops and kings as well as relatives of the monks and poorer travellers. There are some indications that the royal court stayed at Rievaulx and Fountains on its journeys north.[51] Also the rolls

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[48]Postan, 'Credit in Medieval Trade', p. 25.

[49] PRO, E 159/60 m. 16d; E 159/61 m. 11d; E 159/65 m. 27. The conversion of Trinity and Michaelmas dates into historical years are on the bases of entry location in the roll and the *Handbook of Dates for students of British history*, ed. C. R. Cheney, new ed., Michael Jones (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 105-6.

[50] *Statuta*, vol. 3, 1291: 61.

[51] The location of Rievaulx, Byland and Fountains abbeys close to the routes leading to Scotland meant that the royal court or its individual members were likely to use their facilities during the journeys north. Lawrence A. Desmond, 'The Appropriation of Churches by the Cistercians in England to 1400', *Analecta Cisterciensia* 31 (1975), 258.

of the Archbishops of York shows that these prelates stayed at the abbey during their journeys within the diocese of York. Although these sources show no records of it, the benefactors and patrons might have stayed in the abbey as guests, which was a common custom at that time. Each monastic house had its own, usually purpose-built, guest-house. The first wooden guest-house at Rievaulx was in existence already two years after its foundation. A more permanent structure was built in the mid-twelfth century and subsequently rebuilt and enlarged.[52] The cost of accepting guests was large and consisted of food for people and animals, and additional fuel. This could amount to as much as one-quarter of the annual income as in the Vale Royal abbey in the first half of the fourteenth century.[53] A proof that guests were a significant strain on the monastic budget at Rievaulx was the fact that permission to refuse guests was given in 1291 for three years by the Chapter General to Rievaulx abbey during its worst financial crises.[54] Charity for the poor, particularly feeding the needy outside the abbey gates and sheltering them in a separate guest house or hospital, was also practiced by many Cistercian houses. These expenses had to be budgeted for, particularly in time of crises such as crop failures, when the number of poor would certainly rise. Unfortunately, the lack of the account books from Rievaulx abbey do not permit to see this matter was dealt with in this house.

The third area of expenditure, building activities, are usually interpreted by historians as the main reasons for the monastic need of cash and a cause of financial crises. The lump sums of money secured by the advance sale were often spent on building projects whose scale often exceeded abbeys' financial capacity and actual needs. Large churches and communal buildings were erected as much for the glory of God as for the glory of a particular monastery. One of the commonly-used arguments to explain the scale of indebtedness of religious houses is their expansive building projects. This, however, could not have been the sole reason for Rievaulx abbey's troubles in the late thirteenth century, because its major buildings were finished by the time that the abbey started to trade with the Italian merchants. These might have been financed by the combination of income from the wool sold to English and Flemish merchants and loans on the security of the land. The last large building projects undertaken by Rievaulx abbey were the rebuilding of the monastic church in the Gothic style. The extensive works on the monastic choir, presbytery and the new eastern chapel took place in the second quarter of the thirteenth century, most likely during the abbacy

[52] Coppack, *Book of Abbeys*, p. 107.
[53] David H. Williams, 'Layfolk Within Cistercian Precincts', in *Monastic Studies*, vol. 2, p. 95.

of Roger II (1225-1235).[55] The building works were very costly not only because of the material, which was supplied from the abbey's quarries, but also expensive hired labours of specialist stone-masons, carpenters, smith, and glazers. There are no records of the cost, but some indication of the scale, and therefore the cost, of this work-force survive in over one hundred masons' marks on the preserved architectural elements from the monastic church.[56]

A further significant drain for the monastic economy was royal taxation. All the Cistercian houses in England became increasingly targeted for money, particularly from the time of King Richard I, although in the beginning demands were more ad-hoc than regular, fixed obligations. In 1193-94 all the Cistercian houses in England had to give a year's clip of wool to contribute to King Richard I's ransom. This indicates above all that almost hundred years before the coming of the Italian merchants, the wool production of the monasteries was well established to the degree that the royal treasury wanted to tap on its proceeds. Another big financial blow for the order came during the interdict placed by Pope Innocent III on England (1206-13) when King John extracted over twenty-four thousand marks from the Cistercian Order.[57] Despite their cash-flow problems large northern houses were rich enough to provide large sums on rather short notice to the kings embarking on expensive military campaigns. The Cistercian Order secured from King Henry III in 1226 a guarantee of its privileges for 2000 marks, but this warranty was broken on several occasions.[58] In May 1256 Rievaulx paid 400 marks for the king's proposed expedition to Sicily.[59] A large drain on the abbey's finances in 1278 was the payment of £633, six shillings and eight pence together with Waverley and Binden abbeys, an instalment of the £1,000 promised by the Cistercian Order in England to the Edward I.[60]

A significant change in royal demands occurred in the mid-1290s when King Edward I started his military campaigns in France and Scotland. The pressure of prolonged wars put a significant strain on taxation and thus shaped the political and economic development of the country. Moreover, the military campaigns of Edward I were more expensive then those fought by his predecessors from the mid-twelfth century. Edward's taxation covered larger sections of society through both direct and

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[54] *Statuta*, vol. 3, 1291: 61.
[55] Fergusson and Harrison, *Rievaulx Abbey*, p. 172.
[56] A reference in the letter from Prof. Peter Fergusson to Emilia Jamroziak, 26.09.2000.
[57] Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders*, p. 260.
[58] *CPR 1225-1232*, p. 40.
[59] *CPR 1247-1258*, p. 516.
[60] *CPR 1272-1281*, p. 264.

indirect taxes, which became regular and fixed.[61] On 20 July 1298 several Yorkshire abbeys, including Rievaulx, were summoned to pay aid to the king's exchequer at York on 9 September 1298.[62]

Taking into consideration both expensive building projects in the first half of the thirteenth century and royal taxation in the second half of it, it is possible that Rievaulx abbey had accumulated a substantial debts by the time it entered business relations with the Italian merchants. In fact, the debts of the individual Cistercian houses had become a noticeable problem already in the late twelfth century. In 1182 the Cistercian Chapter General forbade the buying of land or the erecting of new building to any abbey where debts would exceed fifty marks, unless there were exceptional circumstances requiring special permission from the mother houses.[63] As usual this regulation was widely ignored by the houses.

Another reason for difficulties involving the fulfillment of the contracts to the Italian merchants was fluctuation of the wool production. Various natural causes, such as livestock diseases, significantly reduced the amount actually harvested by the monastery and put monks into great difficulties and inevitably indebtedness. The fluctuation of the amount of wool produced on manors, as shown by export, is particularly noticeable between 1275 and the early fourteenth century, due to recurrent attacks of sheep scab.[64] The scab, known in the medieval sources as 'murrain', was first recorded in England in 1272, and attacked Lincolnshire flocks in 1276, and Yorkshire flocks in 1278, persisting at a high level in the West Riding until 1284 and then remaining endemic. The entries from contemporary chronicles confirm its widespread character:

1275: 'In that year [fell] a general plague upon the whole stock of sheep in England'. (Lanercost Chronicle)[65]

1277: 'In this year fell a universal scab of the sheep through all the territory of England, which in the vernacular is called Clausite, by which all the sheep in the land are infected.' (Annals of Waverley)[66]

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[61] J. R. Maddicott, *The English Peasantry and the Demands of the Crown 1294-1341* (Oxford: Past & Present Society, 1975), pp. 1-3.

[62] *CR 1296-1302*, p. 216.

[63] *Statuta*, vol. 1, 1182:9.

[64] M. J. Stephenson, 'Wool Yields in the Medieval Economy', *Economic History Review* 41 (1988), p. 381. It has to be stressed that the recorded fluctuation of the yearly amount were heavily dependant on the ports' account system.

[65] *Lanercost Chronicle*, trans. Herbert Maxwell (Glasgow: James Maclehose, 1913), p. 10

1276-77: 'In the fifth year of King Edward there was a general death of young sheep throughout the whole of England.' (Barlings Chronicle)[67]
1279: 'Mortality of sheep in this year began in Lindsey and lasting through many years, it spreads throughout nearly the whole of England.' (Louth Park) [68]

The scab was not a lethal illness, but caused destruction of the wool on the affected animals. The only known medicine was sulphur, which had only limited effectiveness, it could possibly alleviate some of the symptoms, but did not cure the animal. It was therefore likely, in the opinion of Robert Trow-Smith, that many of the losses of the sheep flocks from the scab, recorded in the sources were the result of slaughtering the animals before they became completely worthless.[69]

Before we can examine contracts with the Italian merchants, there should be some clarification about information concerning the actual level of wool production on the estates of Rievaulx abbey. In the absence of the manorial accounts from the abbey we have to rely on the estimations, which themselves pose several problems. There are two estimations of the level of wool production on the estates of Rievaulx abbey. First one, mentioned before by Burton, is based on the evidence from the charters. Rievaulx abbey received donations of pastures for 5140 sheep by the late twelfth century. It means the abbey would be capable of producing at least 21.2 sacks of wool per year.[70] This figure, which cannot take into account pastures on the high moor which the abbey possessed, remains in startling contrast to the second estimation, the production figures from the Pegolotti list, compiled by a representative of the Bardi company. According to this source, Rievaulx abbey could produce sixty sacks of wool per year, which means that the house must have had a flock of 14,000 sheep.[71] This list was compiled probably between 1310 and 1340, but partly on the bases of earlier lists, even as early as late

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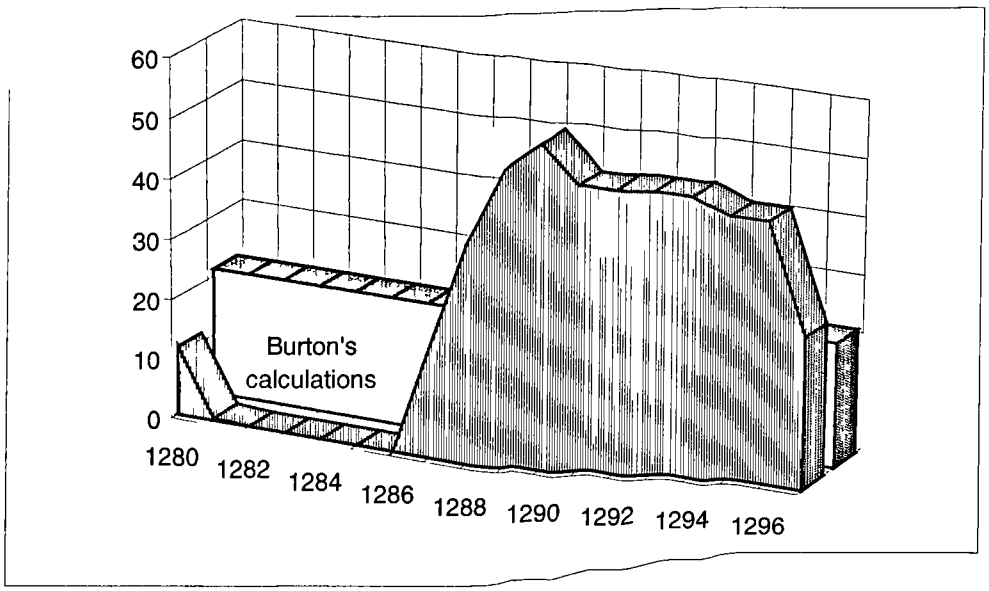
[66] 'Hoc anno invaluit generalis scabies ovium, per universam regionem Anglie, quae a vulgo dicebatur Clausite, per quam infectae sunt omnes oves terrae.' *Annales Monasterii de Waverleia*, ed. Richard H. Luard, in *Annales Monastici*, part 2, Rolls Series, vol. 36, (1865), p. 388.
[67] 'Anno regis Edwardi quinto erat communis morina bidentium per totam Angliam.' *Barlings Chronicon,* in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Edward I and Edward II*, vol. 2, p. cxvii.
[68] 'Mortales ovium hoc anno incepit in Lindeseia, et per plures durans annos, per totam fere Angliam dispergebatur.' *Chronicon Abbatie de Parco Lude*, ed. Edmund Venables, Lincolnshire Record Society Publications, vol. 1 (Lincoln, 1891), p. 18.
[69] Robert Trow-Smith, *A History of British Livestock Husbandry to 1700* (London: Routlege and Kegan Paul, 1957), pp. 155-6.
[70] Burton, 'The Origins and Development', p. 428.
[71] Francesco Balducci Pegolotti, *La Practica Della Mercatura,* ed. Allan Evans (Cambridge, MA: Medieval Academy of America, 1936), p. 260.

thirteenth century.[72] Moreover, it may not reflect the total production capacity of the abbey, but instead only the amount sold to the Bardi company.

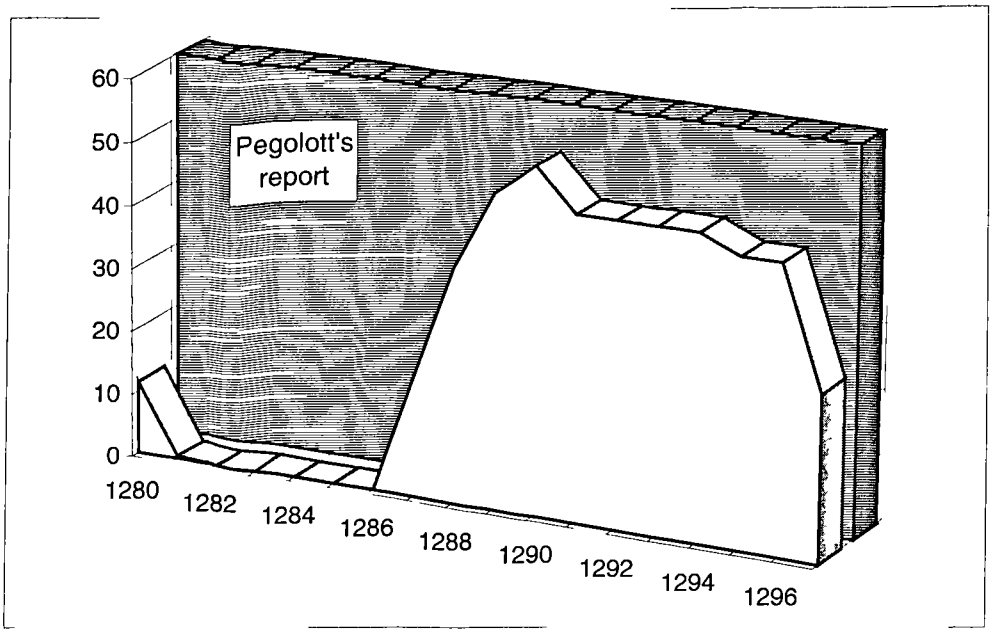
This two figures are set against the estimated amounts of contracted wool in the Figure 2 below. These amounts of contracted wool are derived from the information in the surviving contracts with Italian merchants about abbey's own produce, but not the *collecta*. In the upper graph, Burton's calculation remains below the level of contracted wool between 1286 and 1296, but Pegolotti's figure in the lower graph exceeds even the highest level of contracted wool in the late 1280s. If the abbey's real production in the late thirteenth century was anything near to the Pegolotti's figure, Rievaulx's financial difficulties could have been caused by the losses of sheep due to murrain only, but if the Burton's estimation is closer to the reality, the amounts contracted to the merchants would have been above production capacity even without the interference of sheep decease.

Figure 2.

Levels of Production and the Estimated Amount of Contracted Wool



[72] Pegolotti, *La Practica Della Mercatura*, p. xiv.



Before moving on to a discussion of Rievaulx abbey's involvement in the wool trade and its consequences, we should considered the extent of the written sources. The documentation, which allow us to see the abbey's dealings with the Italian merchants before 1300 is not large, but it provides an indication of many aspects of these contacts. The unpublished Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer's Memoranda Rolls (PRO, E 159) contain seven records of the agreements between the merchants and Rievaulx as well as enrolments of the debts acknowledged by the abbey. Very similar information survived from other Yorkshire monasteries, Cistercian, Augustinian and Gilbertine alike, but many of these enrolments in the rolls were in fact outcomes of the court cases against these houses which failed to deliver the produce. If the parties could not agree as to the number of sacks which should be delivered, a sum of money representing the amount of wool was often given.[73] Two pre-1300 examples of recognition of debts were also recorded in the Assize Rolls. The fundamental problem of interpretation arising from those agreements copied to the Memoranda Rolls is that they were created at a time of crisis. The merchants requested their official recording in order to secure repayments of the abbey's financial obligations to them. The great majority of earlier, or contemporary, contracts between the abbey and the merchants did not survive because there was no need to register them in governmental records because Rievaulx was delivering wool on time as promised in the contracts.

Table 2

Rievaulx Abbey's Wool Trade 1279-1297

	Source	Date	Merchants	Details				Delivery Date
				Good wool	Collecta	Mediocre	Money	
1.	Assize Role, 8 Edward I, publ. in *Cartulary* pp. 209-11	1279	Merchants of Florence	3.5 sacks	.	.	144 marks	1280
2.	Assize Role, 8 Edward I, publ. in *Cartulary* p. 206	1280	Merchants of Florence	.	1 sack	.	50 shillings	1281
3.	PRO, E.159/59 m. 9d	Mich. 1285	Society of Mozzi, Florence	168 sacks	.	.	.	1287-96
4.	PRO, E.159/60 m. 16d	Tri. 1287	Society of Ricardi, Lucca	18 sacks	4 sacks	2 sacks	.	1288
5.	PRO, E.159/61 m. 11d	Mich. 1287	Merchants of Lucca	16 sacks	10 sacks	.	.	1289-90
6.	PRO, E.159/62 m. 14d	Mich. 1288	Society of Mozzi, Florence	.	.	.	1582 pounds	1289-1295
7.	PRO, E.159/62 m. 14d	Mich. 1288	Society of Guido Frescobaldi, Florence	.	.	.	250 marks	1289-93
8.	PRO, E.159/62 m. 14d	Mich. 1288	Society of Cerchi Bianchi, Florence	.	.	.	1600 marks	1289-97
9.	PRO, E.159/65 m. 27d	Tri. 1292	Merchants of Lucca	.	1 sack	.	.	1294

Although there is not a clear reference in the sources, first contacts between the Rievaulx abbey and Italian merchants must have occurred in the early 1270s because the first bankruptcy of Rievaulx abbey as a direct result of its involvement in the wool trade, had occurred already in the mid-1270s. Abbot William V applied for the King's custody who granted it on 13 July 1276 and appointed Alexander de Kirketon to oversee payment of the abbey's debts.[74] This collapse of the abbey's finances coincided with the first wave of murrain; it is possible, therefore, that a sudden loss of a large number of sheep combined with the accumulated debt and advance-payment contract, resulted in the abbey's financial insolvency. The first recorded contracts are dated three and four years later in 1279 and 1280, and were signed between Rievaulx abbey and the group of merchants from Florence. The subsequent contracts and their details are shown in the Table 2 below. These are certainly not all the contracts which were signed between the abbey and Italian merchants at that time, but these which survived were certainly typical for this type of documents.

As we can see from Table 2, in 1279 the abbey had to acknowledge a debt of 144 marks and three and half sacks of good wool to Florentine merchants Hugelino de Vithio and Lotherio Bonaguide for which they had paid in advance. Abbot William V and the abbey promised to deliver the wool one month after the feast of St John the Baptist's birth (24 June) on the market day in Boston in 1280. If the delivery was delayed, the monks would pay ten marks for every two months and one mark of compensation to the merchants and cover all the expenses associated with the delay.[75] Another debt to the Italian merchants was acknowledged in 1280 by Rievaulx. Two Florentine merchants Guido Chessani and Cope Contenue expected fifty shillings and one sack of good *collecta* wool to be delivered at the same time and place in Boston.[76]

The first surviving, explicit contract for the advance sale of wool was given at Michaelmas 1285 between the abbey and the Society of Mozzi from Florence. Abbot Thomas II received in advance payment for 168 sacks of wool and was obliged to repay it within nine years in instalments of eighteen sacks and twenty stones of wool starting on 9 July in 1287 or 1288. The good wool of young sheep (two-tooth sheep) properly prepared, weighed and packed was to be delivered to the abbey's houses in York. If any sack contained deficient wool, the abbot was under obligation to pay a ten pounds fine for each such sack.[77] Next, at Trinity 1287, the Riccardi Society received

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[74] *CPR 1272-1281*, p. 152.
[75] Assise Rolls, 8 Edward I, in *Cartulary*, pp. 409-11.
[76] Assise Rolls, 8 Edward I, in *Cartulary*, p. 406.
[77] PRO, E 159/59 m. 9d.

acknowledgements for the debt Rievaulx with specifications of repayment. Abbot Thomas and the convent declared that they were indebted to the said merchants to the amount of eighteen sacks of good wool priced at eighteen marks each, two sacks of middling quality wool valued at twelve marks, and four sacks of *collecta* wool each priced at fourteen marks. All this wool was to be delivered to York at the abbey's expense. The last line of this entry testifies that the abbey did indeed pay off this debt.[78] In the same year, at Michaelmas term 1287, the Abbot Thomas II acknowledged that the group of merchants from Lucca paid him for ten sacks of *collecta* priced at twelve marks each. The wool was to be delivered to the abbey's property in York at the next feast of the St John the Baptist. The same merchants also paid to Rievaulx abbey an advance for sixteen sacks of abbey's own superior wool, which the abbot agreed to deliver in two instalments of eight sacks each over two years. Both debts were repaid by the abbey.[79]

Evidence that the abbey's finances went badly wrong a year later are in three debt acknowledgements to three different companies copied on the same folio of the Memoranda Roll at Michaelmas 1288. First was a debt of £1582 to the Society of Mozzi of Florence. This very large sum was to be repaid in eight instalments. In 1289 and 1290 the abbey was to deliver instalments of £266 and then from 1291 to 1298 yearly payments of £150 to the merchants' house at Boston. The merchants secured a priority for the repayments of this debt over any obligation the abbey might have to other people. The wool produced on the Rievaulx's estates was not to be sold to anybody else in order to cover debts other than this one.[80]

It is impossible to say if this exclusive deal was broken or not, but two other companies received debt acknowledgements from Rievaulx at the same time. The abbey owed 250 marks to the Society of Guido Frescobaldi of Florence to be repaid in yearly instalments of fifty marks from 1289 to 1293. The money, as before, was to be delivered to Boston.[81] Furthermore, the Society of Cerchi Bianchi from Florence expected a repayment of £1600 (written mistakenly as £1060), forty marks (£26.6) in 1289 and then in the annual portions of 240 marks (£160) for ten years until fully recovered.[82] None of these acknowledgements specified if the debts were the result of borrowing of

[78] PRO, E 159/60 m. 16d.
[79] PRO, E 159/61 m. 11d.
[80] PRO, E 159/62 m. 14.
[81] PRO, E 159/62 m. 14.
[82] PRO, E 159/62 m. 14.

cash, or advance payments for the wool, although the debts were expressed as to be repaid in money, not in wool, as in the previous contracts.

The direct result of the accumulation of this debt, combined with the loss of fleeces due to the sheep epidemic, was the bankruptcy of the abbey. On 28 April 1288, King Edward I took the abbey under his protection, which was 'in a state of decay through murrain.' At the request of Abbot Thomas II, the monks Bishop Anthony Bek of Durham was appointed as the keeper.[83] This prelate was already experienced in dealing with high finance and Italian merchants. In March 1288 he accepted a sole obligation of a debt of £4000 to the Society of Mozzi, which had been undertaken jointly by the bishop, prior and convent of Durham.[84]

In 1291, the situation became so critical that the Chapter General permitted the abbey to disperse the congregation temporarily and send monks to other Cistercian houses. It also gave permission to refuse guests for three years, as this was a well-known financial strain on monastic houses.[85] In the aftermath of the worst crisis caused by murrain, Rievaulx abbey borrowed money from the Chapter General. First, in early 1291 the abbey borrowed £250 to be repaid by yearly instalments of twelve pounds and ten shillings starting in 1292.[86] Then, in September 1291, 1000 deniers of Tours (100 shillings), on the security of the abbey property, to be paid back in the yearly instalments of fifty deniers (five shillings) from the following year onwards.[87] These financial arrangements, in the form of memoranda between the abbey and Cistercian Chapter General, were copied into the cartulary on the empty folios left by the twelfth century scribe. This act of copying the memoranda indicates not only that these were important documents to be preserved in the cartulary, but also shows how the economic horizon of the abbey had changed. All the earlier documents in the cartulary are concerned with land possession, but these two memoranda deal with financial issues expressed in the monetary terms.

While the abbey was presumably paying all these large sums, it was still contracting wool to other buyers. At Trinity term 1292, Abbot Thomas II promised to a group of Lucca merchants to deliver to York in 1294 one sack of good *collecta* wool for which he had already received twelve marks.[88] Once the great crisis was over, Rievaulx

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[83] *CPR 1281-1292*,p. 294.
[84] *Records of Antony Bek Bishop and Patriarch 1283-1311*, ed. C. M. Fraser, Surtees Society, vol. 162 (Durham: Andrews, 1953), pp. 10-14.
[85] *Statuta*, vol. 3, 1291: 61.
[86] BL, MS Cotton Julius DI, f. 116 [f. 123].
[87] BL, MS Cotton Julius DI, ff. 116-116v [ff. 123-123v].
[88] PRO, E 159/65 m. 27.

continued to borrow from local landowners throughout the 1280s and in 1318, 1333 and 1338, to remedy continued problems of cash flow, although the sums were smaller, most of which were acknowledged as having been paid off.[89]

Table 3.

Estimated Amount of the Yearly Contracted Good Wool

Year	Contracts[a,b]								Sum
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	
1280	11.5	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	11.5
1281	.	0.38	.	.	.	.	.	.	0.38
1282	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
1283	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
1284	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
1285	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
1286	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
1287	.	.	18.7	.	.	.	.	.	18.7
1288	.	.	18.7	18	.	.	.	.	36.7
1289	.	.	18.7	.	8	22.17	.	.	48.87
1290	.	.	18.7	.	8	22.17	2.78	2.22	53.87
1291	.	.	18.7	.	.	12.5	2.78	13.33	47.31
1292	.	.	18.7	.	.	12.5	2.78	13.33	47.31
1293	.	.	18.7	.	.	12.5	2.78	13.33	47.31
1294	.	.	18.7	.	.	12.5	2.78	13.33	47.31
1295	.	.	18.7	.	.	12.5	.	13.33	44.53
1296	.	.	18.7	.	.	12.5	.	13.33	44.53
1297	.	.	18.7	.	.	12.5	.	13.33	25.83

[a] - Measurement: 1 pound = 1.5 marks
1 shilling = 0.125 marks
1 sack = 18 marks

[b] - Rounded to hundreds

Table 3 provides an estimation of the contracted abbey's own good wool on the bases of contracts from the Table 2, which indicates how great the problem at Rievaulx was. It clearly shows that between 1289 and 1296 the repayments were particularly high. In the 1290s, despite the fact that Rievaulx abbey accumulated large debts which it

[89] To William de Hamelton of £176 in 1281, then of £120 in 1285 and finally a debt of £480 on 4 December 1298. This debt was cancelled upon payment which was acknowledged by the executors of William's will. Then, the abbot and convent of Rievaulx acknowledged a debt to Master Gilbert de Sancto Leoffardo of 106 marks in 1285; to Walter de Balrehouse of Stockesleye and his wife Margaret of 450 marks on the 29 October 1318; to Robert son of James de Bulford of 40 marks on 3 July 1333; to Thomas de Bamburgh, a clerk, £25 on the 11 October 1338 (the debt was paid and therefore cancelled). *CR 1279-1288*, pp. 120, 354; *CR 1296-1302*, p. 289; *CR 1279-1288,* p. 120; *CR 1318-1323*, p. 104; *CR 1333-1337*, p. 122; *CR 1337-1339*, p. 270.

was unable to fulfil, the monastery continued to contract wool to further Italian companies.

How, therefore, can we explain the abbey's bankruptcies? Why did they let themselves reach such a point? One possibility is offered by the deterministic explanations of the crisis. The probability that the monks allocated their income incorrectly is very low. During the disease-free periods, sustaining wool production at the previous-period level did not require any additional investment, therefore the whole income could be directed towards the abbey's running costs. It has to be stressed that the presence of the disease-free periods is only hypothetical since sheep scab was endemic. The lower levels of contracts, in the first half of 1280s (see Figure 2) well below the Pegolotti's estimation, can be perceived as the response to losses in the sheep-flocks, but unfortunately we know nothing about the abbey's efforts to re-stock its flocks.

The possibility that the monks were risk-loving investors should be discussed further. For that reason, we should consider another piece of evidence, which is the Exchequer Kings' Remembrancer Roll, Accounts Various of 1294.[90]

Table 4

The amount of wool contracted for 1294

Year	Contracts[a]								Sum
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	
1294	.	.	18.7	.	.	12.5	2.78	13.33	47.31
	PRO, E 101/126/7[b]								
	38								38
	Total amount of contracted wool								85.31

[a] - rounded to hundred
[b] - contracts negotiated to be delivered in 1294

This source refers to the wool contracted by the abbey to the Riccardi, Spini and Cerchi Neri companies for this one particular year as being thirty-eight sacks. If we add this number to the other known obligations which the abbey already had towards other merchants for the year 1294, it is clear that the total of eighty-five sacks exceeded not only Burton's, but even Pegolotti's estimations. Can we therefore say with any certainty that the monks were the victims of the natural causes or were they unscrupulous cheaters who willingly contracted their produce knowing that they could not be able to

[90] PRO, E 101/126 m 7. The summary of this document in the tabular form was published in: T.H. Lloyd, *The Movement of Wool Prices in Medieval England,* The Economic History Review Supplements, vol. 6 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), pp. 31-6.

fulfil these obligations? Of course, the abbey could, and did, buy wool produced by others, but this could hardly be used to fulfil the obligations described above, because contracts and debt acknowledgement specified that the Italian merchants wanted abbey's own wool, not *collecta*. If delivery of such wool was part of the contract it was always clearly distinguished (see Table 2).

Rievaulx abbey was not an isolated case in its struggle with indebtedness. Many other houses were forced to seek royal help when they found themselves unable to pay debts, Fountains abbey was taken into king's custody in 1274, Kirkstall in 1276, Flaxley in 1277, 1281 and 1283 and Missenden in 1281.[91] Their difficulties in keeping up payments were not, however, a deterrent for the merchants. Wool produced by the Cistercian flocks was considered to be of superior quality, carefully prepared and packaged. Another indication that the financial difficulties of the late thirteenth century were overcome is the list made by Pegolotti, which was created in the mid-fourteenth, century probably on the basis of the older lists. According to this estimation, Rievaulx abbey could produce for the Bardi company, sixty sacks of wool yearly. Its best wool was priced seventeen and a half marks per sack, middling was charged at ten and half marks, and the lowest quality wool was worth nine marks per sack. In comparison, Fountains was capable of providing Bardi merchants with seventy-six sacks, with its best produce priced at twenty one marks. Byland's wool was priced at the same level as Rievaulx's fleeces but was only able to deliver thirty-five sacks for the Bardi.[92] Overall, Rievaulx abbey was the second largest Cistercian producer of wool in England according to this list, though this estimation has to be considered carefully since the Pegolotti's might have based his information on the older sources and may refer only to the production bought by the Bardis.

It is clear that the Cistercian order was aware of the consequences of the involvement in the trade. The risky practice of advance wool sale with its disastrous consequences was explicitly forbidden by the Chapter General of Cistercian Order as early as 1157, repeated in 1181 (with the clause allowing the sale of wool one year in advance) and again in 1277 with an additional threat of punishment for an abbot and cellarer who broke this rule.[93] But these rules were opposed so strongly by the houses belonging to the order that the regulation was changed a year later. It was permitted to sell wool for up to five years in advance.[94] In 1297 the Chapter General allowed the sale

[91] Lloyd, *English Wool Trade*, p. 290.
[92] Pegolotti, *La Practica Della Mercatura,* p. 260.
[93] *Statuta*, vol. 1, 1157: 48; 1181: 10; vol. 3, 1277: 30.
[94] *Statuta* vol. 3, 1278:5.

of wool for even longer periods of time provided that the lump sums received were not larger than the value of one year's crop, and the money obtained in this way was used to erase existing debts.[95] These measures were introduced as a response to the financial problems of Cistercian abbey across Europe, but the issue of liquid capital and the way in which the white monks tried to obtain it was a much earlier phenomenon.

Although the abbey's contacts with the Italian merchants exposed Rievaulx to a new set of problems different from those it could encounter locally, Cistercian houses were seeking liquid capital much earlier then the arrival of Italian merchants. This could be raised on land rather than wool. One of the ways to relieve the cash-flow problems which was commonly used in the twelfth centuries by both lay and ecclesiastics was borrowing money from the Jews. The earliest evidence of a large indebtedness by nine English Cistercian houses (Rievaulx, Roche, Newminster, Kirkstead, Louth Park, Revesby, Kirkstall and Biddlesden) to Aaron of Lincoln exceeded jointly 6400 marks in 1189, though Rievaulx was a chief debtor. This enormous sum of money, the largest debt owed to any Jew in the twelfth century, was, according to R. B. Dobson, a result of 'trafficing in encumbered estates on the part of the monks'.[96] In fact, the extensive building projects of the abbey, particularly the south range, in the 1160-80s might have been financed in that way.

Because of the rule that upon the death of any Jewish person the debt owed to him became automatically owed to the king, the Cistercian abbeys applied to King Richard I to cancel their debt to Aaron of Lincoln. This law was a very useful tool for the king, since any sum of money recovered in this way was his gain. The debtors could also hope that they would pay much less than the real value of the liability. This in fact happened in the case of the above mentioned Cistercian obligation when the king cancelled the debt upon the payment of 1000 marks by the monks on 16 November 1189.[97]

Some Cistercian houses expanded their estates by the means of buying land from people who mortgaged their land to the Jews. The monastery would give money to the debtor to clear the liability and the monks would receive the land in return.[98] The indication that Rievaulx may have been involved in buying encumbered estates is seen in one case of late copy of a charter in the cartulary. In 1230, Abbot Roger II of

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[95] *Statuta,* vol. 3, 1279:2.
[96] R. B. Dobson, *The Jews of Medieval York and the Massacre of March 1190* (York: St. Anthony Press, 1974), p. 17, note 60.
[97] J. Jacobs, *The Jews of Angevin England: Documents and Records* (London, 1893), pp. 108-9.
[98] Madden, 'Business, Monks, Banker Monks', 347.

Rievaulx testified in the presence of the Justices of the Jews that the abbey received a grant of land in Cayton from its patron Robert II de Ros.[99] The previous owner of this land, William de Cayton, became indebted to the Jews of York, Bosa and Manasses, but the abbot denied his liability to pay the debt, because William contracted his debt after selling land in Cayton.[100]

Because Cistercians all over Europe were engaged in these risky financial dealings with Jews, which often led to chronic indebtedness of the monasteries, the General Chapter issued edicts forbidding any business with Jews in 1189, 1190 and 1289.[101] By the middle of thirteenth century, particularly after the Provisions of 1269, , forbidding Jewish people to take land on mortgage, the Church was no longer profiting from the Jewish usury and began attacks on usury and the Jews.[102] In that sense, Italian merchants became, in the late thirteenth century, an alternative for the Jewish money-lenders. With the change of economic conditions and a great demand for the wool from the continental markets, the abbey could profit from its produce without the risk associated with the direct loans.

While borrowing money from the Jewish bankers had its risks, the contracts with the Italian merchants exposed the abbey to a new set of ideas and problems. Although the land given to the abbey was given to 'God and the Church of Holy Mary at Rievaulx and the monks serving God there', when it came to contracts with the Italian merchants, the contracts stated that the security of the deal was on all properties of the abbey, 'from lands, goods, holdings and chattels of him and his monastery and monks and movable and immovable goods in whoever's hand they should be', which could be taken to recover the debt, if such necessity arises.[103] These drastically different descriptions of the nature of the abbey's possession illustrate how different were the relationships between the abbey and its benefactors on one hand, and the abbey and the Italian merchants on the other. In the first context, the land belonging to the abbey, as property of a sacred order, was removed from the realm of the normal exchange. In the second case, the same land was the property of particular people — the abbot of Rievaulx and the convent — and therefore could be used to cover the liabilities of these men. Rievaulx abbey, or any monastic house for that matter, signed contracts with Italian

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[99] See p. 48.
[100] *Cartulary*, n° 275.
[101] *Statuta*, vol. 1, n° 1189:15; 1190: 14 and vol. 3, n° 1289: 12.
[102] Robin R. Mundill, *England's Jewish Solution: Experiment and Expulsion, 1262-1290* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 44.
[103] For example PRO, E 159/62 m. 14, 'de terris, tenementibus bonis et catellis suis et monasteri sui mobilitis et immobilitis quorumcumque manus devenerit'.

merchants not as a religious institution, but as producers. As a result, contacts between the merchants and the abbey were purely commercial. Many lay people who exchanged or even sold property to Rievaulx abbey expected 'spiritual products' as a part of the deal, but this was of no interest to the Italian buyers of the wool. They traded with monastic houses only because the wool produced on their estates was of supreme quality.

It appears that seeing Rievaulx abbey's dealings with the Italian merchants in terms of success or failure is asking a wrong question. The involvement in the wool trade was only one aspect of the life of this institution and though it caused severe problems, even bankruptcy, it was not an end of the abbey's existence; it recovered as a wool-producer and continued to be successful in this field. The surviving documentation is also biased heavily towards the abbey's debts and much less towards routine contracts which Rievaulx undoubtedly signed with the merchants and fulfilled. While sources illuminating Rievaulx's relationship with lay people are biased towards conflict rather than cooperation, in the same way the Memoranda Rolls project the failure of the house as the wool producer not its largely successful trading. Until a more extensive research on the monastic wool trade in England in the late thirteenth century is carried out the picture will be still very incomplete.

Bringing the issue of Rievaulx abbey and the Italian merchants to a more general level, we can see that the complicated relationship between the abbey and pockets of capitalism was part of a much wider phenomenon. Business in all its medieval forms had an uneasy relationship with the Church and moral considerations conflicted with the desire for profit on the side of the Church.[104] Because all the spheres of its activities were intertwined, an artificial division between them may only hinder our understanding.

> Because the medieval Church was a complex and pervasive organization that mixed worldly and spiritual concerns, no single explanation of its institutional behavior, that is, one based solely on economic reasoning, is likely to resolve all historical issues concerning its effect on medieval society.[105]

Rievaulx, like any monastic house, had this contradiction deeply rooted in itself, that the expansion and accumulation of land was done for the glory of God as much as being result of the need for self-perpetuation by the abbey.

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[104] Hunt, Murrey, *A History of Business,* p. 69.
[105] *Sacred Trust*, p. 169.

CONCLUSION

The early history of Rievaulx abbey up to 1300 exemplifies many conventional characteristics of Cistercian houses, but also shows many features peculiar to this one institution and the conditions in which it existed. The origins of the abbey are rooted in the twelfth-century's rapid development of the Cistercian Order and its popularity among the new men. The possibility of becoming a founder of a monastic house opened up to people who could not afford to establish a Benedictine house. This emergence of the new order gave them the possibility of acquiring the status of patron, something which previously marked only members of the social stratum above them. Walter Espec, the founder of Rievaulx abbey, exemplified many characteristics of these new men who owed their political and material advancement to the king, but also needed a visible assertion of their social standing. Rievaulx abbey was undoubtedly Espec's favourite foundation, but his childless death left this monastic house without a supportive patron. Robert de Ros, who inherited his uncle Walter's estates and the patronage of Rievaulx abbey, never developed an affinity with the abbey, nor did his heirs and descendents. Comparison between the relationship of the Ros family and Rievaulx abbey with that of the same family and Kirkham priory, uncovers not only the changing expectations of the patrons over several generations, but also the different expectations of religious houses of different orders towards their patrons.

The lack of supportive patrons did not, however, prevent the abbey from successful development throughout the twelfth century. Grants of land came from barons, among them Roger de Mowbray, and knights of various status, and from their subtenants. Among the benefactors of Rievaulx abbey there was not only a great variety of wealth, but also a variety of local and national importance and ambitions. The most important and affluent individuals were not necessarily the most generous ones; some of the most benevolent benefactors of the abbey came from the strata of local wealthy or middling knights, among them the Birkin and Lasceles families the most striking examples. The key for the successful accumulation of land through grants was based on the continuity of relationships for several generations, and also on creating new connections through family and tenurial bonds. The expanding network of the abbey's benefactors was in fact based on the 'small world phenomenon'; the procurement of each new benefactor opened connections for the abbey to several further people associated with this individual: relatives, tenants, and associates of various kinds. Understanding these connections, both vertical and horizontal, was important for the institution's

strategies of interaction with its benefactors and neighbours. The cartulary's design is an interpretation of these connections; the grouping of the charters, as we have seen discussed throughout this work, gives an indication of this phenomenon.

The statistical data from the cartulary, also indicates that the security of possession was a prime concern of the abbey. In fact, the number of confirmation charters copied to the volume is equal to charters of grants (both 30% of total 248 documents). Quitclaims, the most secure form of confirmation, amount to as much as 11% of all entries. Charters of agreement and settlement (7%) are not as numerous as one may expect, if we take into account a number of conflicts in which the abbey was involved. Among the grants, the great majority of them were given in free alms, free from any secular services (80%), and instances of counter-gifts, among the charters copied to the cartulary were rare, only 4% of charters indicate that the benefactors received some material compensation.

Apart from the most obvious interactions with its patrons and benefactors, the abbey had other links with further elements of its social environment. A distinct group was formed by its monastic neighbours. Yorkshire was a region characterized by a large number of religious institutions, Benedictine, Augustinian, Cistercian, Gilbertine, Knights Templars, and hospitals. Some of these houses were close neighbours of Rievaulx abbey, for example Byland abbey, but many came to be its neighbours and competitors because they received donations from the same people in the close vicinity of each other, as in the case of Rievaulx and Bridlington. Despite the ideology of brotherly love and co-operation between the monasteries, in reality they had to find consensus based on the negotiation of the territorial spheres of influence and areas of expansion as did Byland and Rievaulx abbeys. There was a clear pecking order among religious houses. Rievaulx abbey was among the top ones which were able to claim a wide area of growth, but smaller houses, particularly nunneries, were towards the bottom of this order and often had to retreat from the lands which powerful monasteries wanted to control. In that way, Rievaulx abbey eliminated Kirklees and Esholt nunneries from the race for the landholdings in the vill of Harden.

The relationship of Rievaulx abbey with the archbishops of York and bishops of Durham showed not only the changing attitudes of the secular and monastic arms of the Church towards their mutual roles, but also the importance of personal connections and friendships between abbots and bishops. These affinities, so crucial in attracting new benefactors, mattered also in the Church arena. The involvement of Abbot William of Rievaulx in the contested election of William Fitz Herbert to the archbishopric of York

was the highest point of Rievaulx abbey's active participation on the wider ecclesiastical scene. From the mid-1150s onwards, local considerations took over and the documented contacts between archbishops of York, canons and chapters concerned mainly with either land acquisitions and confirmations or conflicts about tithe payment. Despite this shift, contacts with bishops remained important on many levels. In the 1150s, the abbey of Rievaulx secured a special protection from Bishop Hugh du Puiset of Durham who promised to act as its patron. In the York diocese, Rievaulx abbey's relations with Archbishop Roger de Pont L'Évêque were significantly better than his relations with Fountains — this has to be attributed not only to the lack of economic rivalry between them, but also to the diplomatic skills of Abbot Ailred. His reputation of exceptional piety has been seen for a long time as one of the reasons for the success of Rievaulx abbey, but in the course of this work it became visible that it was predominantly the political and administrative skills of Ailred on which the material success of Rievaulx abbey was built.

In the course of the discussion of various groups of neighbours it also became clear that important individuals, both lay, such as Roger de Mowbray or Gilbert de Gant, and ecclesiastical, such as Archbishop Thurstan or Bishop Hugh, were significant part of the abbeys network of support. In unstable times, particularly during the reign of King Stephen, this support was particularly needed when the alliances were changing very fast and possession became insecure.

The social environment of Rievaulx abbey was based on local networks. However complicated and intertwined, they were largely confined to the region. The only exception were the connections that the abbey acquired in its involvement in the wool trade. Italian merchants were not based locally and their wealth was not based on land, but on long-distance trade. Merchants' relationships with the abbey were purely commercial and restricted to only one product of monastic estates — wool. Serious financial crises at the end of the thirteenth century, which resulted from the abbey's involvement in the wool trade, were partially due to the sheep scab, and partially due to the fact that the monks were risk-loving investors. While the sources are fragmentary, there are strong indications that the abbey knowingly contracted wool which it would have great difficulty in supplying.

In the course of this thesis it frequently appears that conflict was the most common way of interacting between Rievaulx abbey and its social environment. This is due primarily to the nature of the records. Conflicts, particularly severe ones, which reached courts, left their traces in the sources, but everyday cooperation rarely did.

Among the conflicts we can distinguish several types: conflict about boundaries, conflicts about the use of property, particularly common pastures or forests, and outright disputes over possession. Some of the conflicts were solved in the courts of the lords whose tenants were involved, for example Mowbrays or Gants. The decisions reached there were often based on the consensus of the local communities concerning the correct position of borders, not the arbitrary decision of the lord. The abbey was a part of the local community of landowners and even if protection of a great lord could help to maintain integrity of its estates, this could not have been done against other neighbours, but in consultation with them. Those cases which were tried in royal courts, either by itinerant justices or even at Westminster, made use increasingly of the charters to decide possession rights. During the course of Rievaulx abbey's law-suits with William de Ros, several charters were displayed by the abbey's attorney to prove its legal rights. Obviously if the case was tried away from the location of the disputed properties it would be difficult to obtain testimony of the local community, but this shift from the oral testimony to written documents was part of more fundamental changes.

Glimpses of recorded cases of cooperation can be seen in some of the donation charters, which list particular agreements between the abbey and its benefactors. For example Ralph de Wath promised to go on the abbey's business in Yorkshire. Many of the grants of common pastures required in practice a fair share of neighbourly cooperation to accommodate the needs of various users. Also grants of free passage through the benefactors' land necessitated at least patience from these who worked on these properties if the abbey's employees and their vehicles often crossed them.

The comparative element of this work –- with other northern houses and the Cistercian houses of Germany and Poland — revealed that Rievaulx abbey, similarly to many other houses of this order, did not avoid contact with the lay world, in fact, these contacts were often developed and sustained by the abbey's initiative. The counter-gifts or quasi-sales can be almost certainly attributed to the abbey's initiative to secure grants which would not be given without some material incentive. All the Cistercian houses existed in particular social and political setting, which created various kinds of demands. The Stuteville family put considerable pressure in Rievaulx in order to reclaim some of their family estates. By the mid-thirteenth century many noblemen, including patron William de Ros, demanded hunting rights within the abbeys woods. One of the most visible aspects of monastic-lay interaction, the role of an abbey in providing prestige and commemoration for patrons and benefactors, was certainly present in the case of Rievaulx abbey, but the prestige was of even greater concern to

the Polish founders or these from Pomerania, who were not so much the 'new men', but rather the 'new Christians', who wanted to assert their new role of noblemen and Christians. In this way monastic foundations could fulfil certain social expectations of their patrons and benefactors, which differed over time and space.

The focus of this work is on the Rievaulx's relationship with the outside world and the centre of the investigation is the institution. Inevitably, the abbey appears as a focal point of the networks, of which it became a part. In reality, the web of social interactions had many centres and Rievaulx was only one of them. The complexities of this social world can be uncovered only by large scale study. Therefore, the next step should be a comparative study with other religious houses in Yorkshire, which should examine several religious houses in twelfth and thirteenth-century Yorkshire and their relationships with their neighbouring communities and among themselves, to uncover the network of vertical connections across the social strata, the importance of which was far greater then just an expression of religious affinities. Although the present work exposed only one part of this network it gives more than a glimpse of the ways in which people, both ecclesiastical and lay, lived in their localities, quarrelled, resolved their conflicts and strove for prestige, status and wealth.

In the complex world of medieval Yorkshire, Rievaulx abbey needed its neighbours and benefactors not only to procure grants, but also to secure this support for generations to come. The peasant communities were not only victims of ruthless depopulation, but more commonly a pool from which lay brothers or paid workers were recruited. The monastic community prayed for its benefactors and remembered them in the entries of the cartulary and possibly in a necrology. Its foundation gave prestige to Walter Espec and in the fourteenth century members of the Ros family chose the splendour of the Cistercian church as their resting place. To a large extent, the history of Rievaulx abbey in the first two centuries of its existence confirms the findings of many other historians of the Cistercian order, who have stressed the multitude of connections between the abbeys their surroundings. In the light of these findings, the Cistercian idea of separation from the world should not be seen as an institutional detachment from secular domain, but rather selective participation within it. While individual monks were cut off from the outside world, the institution could not have survived and flourished as Rievaulx abbey did if it had existed in a true isolation.

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