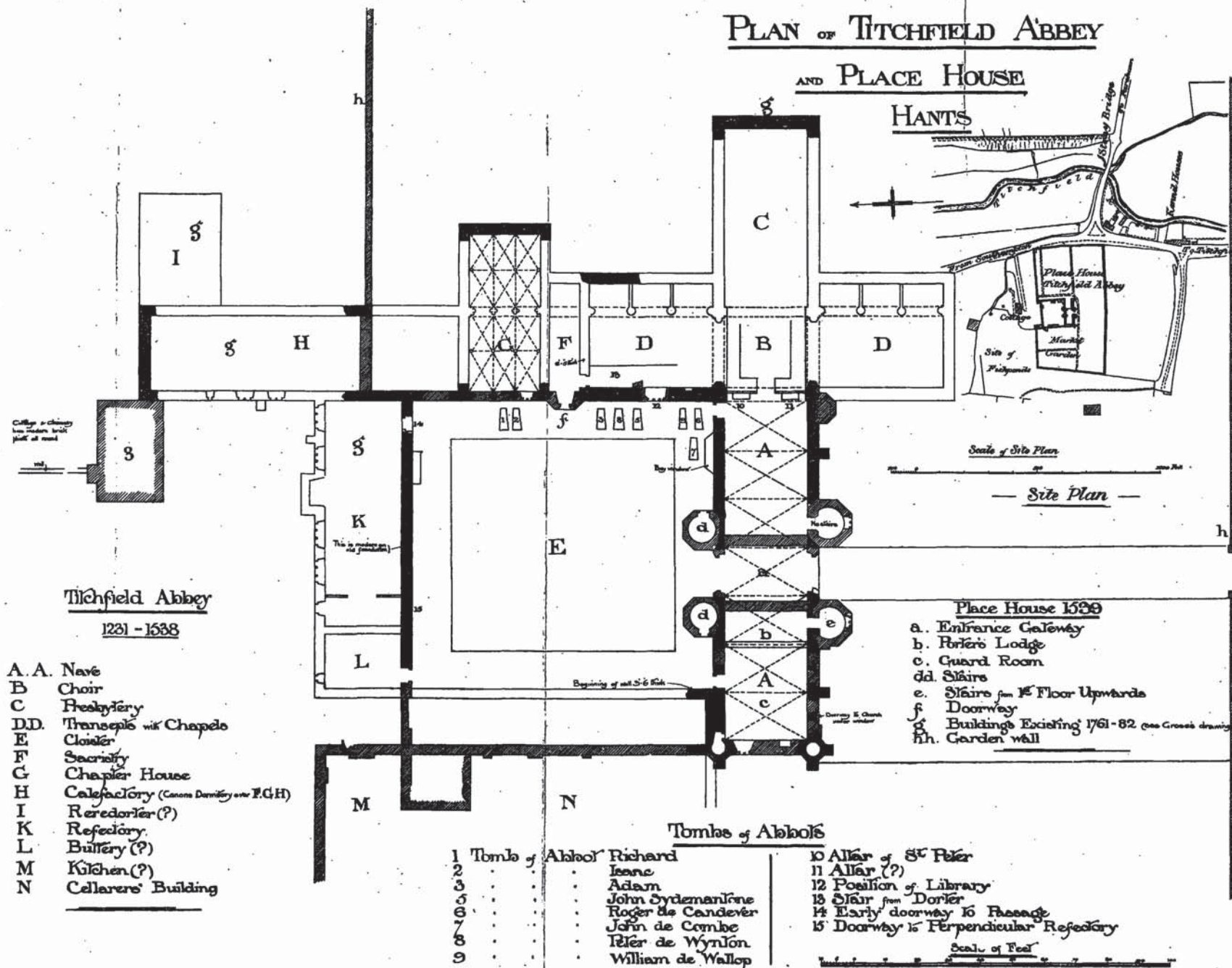


PLAN OF TITCHFIELD ABBEY

AND PLACE HOUSE

HANTS



TITCHFIELD ABBEY AND PLACE HOUSE.

BY THE REV. G. W. MINNS, LL.B., F.S.A.

Titchfield lies between Southampton and Portsmouth, about two miles from the shores of the Solent, and is the largest civil parish in Hampshire, 17,500 acres in extent. Few country towns have a history more varied or of greater interest. The Meonwara occupied the valley which extends from the mouth of the Meon or Titchfield River, two miles below the town, northward as far as East Meon.

The discovery of flint weapons and implements shows that the site of Titchfield was occupied long before the Roman invasion, and its river served as a means of communication with the inhabitants of the valley. In Domesday Book *Ticefelle*, i.e., the manor of Titchfield, is described as a berewick or village belonging to Meonstoke and held by the King, as it had been in the time of Edward the Confessor. Of 15 ploughlands nine only were under cultivation. The existence of a mill, a market, and a toll-place,¹ is recorded; there is no mention of a church, but there was one at Crofton. The King also held *Facumbe*, a hamlet in the parish, and among other owners the name of the Bishop of Winchester occurs as holding *Burnewic* (Brownwich) under the King.

With regard to Titchfield in the time of the Norman Kings, the records are silent, but less than two centuries after the Conquest an event of great importance in its history occurred.

¹ A water mill probably on the site of the Domesday mill still exists. Markets do not frequently occur in Domesday, very probably only those yielding toll to the King are returned. Two others are recorded in Hants, Neteham and Basingstoke. Toll was the money paid to the lord for the liberty of keeping market.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE ABBEY.

Henry III. "of Winchester," came to the throne in 1216, at the age of nine. At that time the whole of the South of England was held by the French. Westminster Abbey not being available, the young King was crowned at Gloucester by Peter des Roches, Bishop of Winchester, who, on the death of William, Earl of Pembroke, succeeded that nobleman as guardian and governor of the King's person, and possessed great authority. This prelate had obtained his See in 1204 through the favour of the late King John. A Poitevin by birth, he showed great partiality for his countrymen, and in other ways raised up many enemies, and was compelled to retire abroad in 1227. Returning home in 1231, he was received with honour by the monks and clergy of his Cathedral. He soon regained influence over his former pupil, and until his death (1238) enjoyed the royal favour, which he used in promoting the objects he had in view. He was especially active in establishing religious houses in various parts of the kingdom. In his own diocese he was instrumental in founding a Dominican Friary at Winchester, the Hospital of God's House at Portsmouth, a Priory of Austin Canons at Selborne, and the Cistercian Abbey of Edwardstow or Lettely (Netley), also two abbeys of the Premonstratensian Order, one at Halesowen in Shropshire and the daughter house at Titchfield. Richard Redmayne, Bishop of St. Asaph and Abbot of Shap, informs us that the house was founded on the Feast of the Assumption (Aug. 15), 1231, in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and that one Brother Richard, with certain Canons of Halesowen, came to Titchfield to take possession on the Feast of the Invention of the Cross (May 3rd) in the following year.

THE PREMONSTRATIENS.

This Order was an offshoot from the Augustinian or Black Canons, deriving its name from Prémontré in Picardy, where it was founded by St. Norbert, Archbishop of Magdeburg, in 1120. According to tradition, the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to St. Norbert and pointed out the exact place his convent should occupy—a green spot in the depths of the forest of

Coucy, near Laon. The green meadow thus pointed out was the *pré montré* or *pratum premonstratum* which gave the name to the new Order.

The Premonstratensians were a reformed body of the Canons Regular,¹ as the Cistercians were of the monks. Like them, they changed the habit from black to white, hence they were called White Canons. The Order made rapid progress, and within the space of thirty years from its foundation, possessed over one hundred houses in France and Germany, but did not appear in England till 1140, when Newhouse in Lincolnshire was founded. In a short time thirty-five houses of the Order were established, of which Titchfield, founded in 1231, was the last. The rule adopted by the White Canons was that of St. Augustine. Pope Honorius approved the Order in 1126, granting them many privileges, including freedom from episcopal jurisdiction. Their dress was entirely white, consisting of a cassock with rochet over it, a long cloak over all, and a cap.

BENEFACTIONS TO THE ABBEY.

The Manor of Titchfield, as we have seen, was granted by Henry III. at the instigation of Bishop Peter des Roches, who thus came to be regarded as the founder, and is so styled in Redmayne's Visitation Book.

Peter des Roches died at Farnham (1238), seven years after the foundation of the Abbey, which, besides the Manor, received other privileges from the King. The Bishop bestowed two parts of the Manor of Porchester, and among benefactors were Eva de Clinton, Baldwin de Redvers, the Bishop of Avranches, Gilbert le Mansell, whose gifts were confirmed 2nd Edward II. In the reign of Richard III, Frodington Heath (now Southsea Common), was bestowed, and William of Wykeham in 1404 bequeathed to the Abbey one pair of vestments and a chalice.

¹ A Canon Regular must needs be a cleric, but not necessarily in priest's orders; a religious by the profession of the three vows; and attached to a particular church. These elements distinguish a Canon Regular (1) from a Monk, who though a religious, is not necessarily a cleric, and who is not attached to a particular church, but only to his own order; (2) from a Secular Canon who is not a religious by the profession of the three vows. *Life of St. Norbert*, by the Rev. Martin Geudens, C.R.P.

The mother Church of Prémontré received dues from, and exercised authority over all Houses of the White Canons in England until early in the fourteenth century, when seeds of dissension seem to have sprung up among the Order. Some houses refused to pay *tallagium*, a tribute to the Abbot of Prémontré. The disobedient Abbots, notably those of Sulby and Bylegh, were denounced in the General Chapter and excommunicated. The Statute of *Præmunire* made it prudent and convenient to cease from the payment of exactions which had become burdensome. Some houses remained faithful in their allegiance, but in time fiscal relations with Prémontré altogether ceased, and the spiritual supervision was committed to the head of a house of the Order in England. Richard Redmayne, Bishop of St. Asaph¹ and Abbot of Shap, a house of White Canons in Westmorland, was appointed Visitor. Being in episcopal Orders, and the Canons exempt from Diocesan authority, such a person was especially suited for the office, and the record of his visits during a period of twenty-five years is of great interest and affords unbiassed testimony as to the discipline and condition of the Monastery during the later years of its existence.²

BISHOP REDMAYNE'S VISITATIONS, 1475-1500.

At his first recorded visit (1475) the Convent consisted of the Abbot, Dominus William Austyn, and 12 Brethren. Thomas Redyng is Sub-Prior, the offices of *Cantor* and *Circator* (or General Inspector), are held by Richard Holwey. There is a *Sub-Sacrist* and a *Senescallus* (or Steward), Brother John Kylmeston is Vicar of "Techfelde," which Church, with Chapelries at Corhampton and Crofton, was served by the Canons. The names of four *Novicii Professi* (professed Novices) are also given.³

¹ Richard Redmayne, of Levens in Westmorland, educated at Cambridge, entered the Norbertine or White Canons, chosen Abbot of Shap, Bishop of St. Asaph 1472, translated to Exeter 1495, removed to Ely 1501, died at his Palace in Holborn 1505, buried on the North side of the Choir of Ely Cathedral. Rev. G. Oliver's "Lives of the Bishops of Exeter."

² Bishop Redmayne's Visitation Book is Ashmole MS. 1519 in the Bodleian Library.

³ Among the Premonstratensians the novitiate lasted two years and no one was professed before the age of eighteen.

Three years later (1478) the Visitor finds nothing of importance to be corrected, or worthy to be brought up at the General Chapter, *Generali Capitulo referenda*. Some points of discipline, however, need attention—the Brethren are to take their meals in common during Lent. Doubtless some had been indulging privately in forbidden luxuries. Perfect silence is to be observed at meals, and certain points of ritual, genuflexions and striking the bell at the elevation of the Sacrament, are to be attended to under pain of contempt, *sub pena contemptus*. Whereas at the last Visitation the Monastery was in debt forty pounds, it now owes only five pounds, only a trifle, *quasi nihil*. A general state of prosperity prevails in temporal matters, *omnia interiora et exteriora cum abundancia diriguntur*.

In 1482 the Visitor is thankful to find perfect harmony, *mutuam concordiam*, among the brethren, and the Monastery is managed in a manner worthy of praise, *laudabiliter ministratum et gubernatum*. The Visitor has however to notice certain delinquencies of some of the Brethren. William Gloucester, having broken bounds, *septa exeundo*, and spent the night in drinking and brawling, *bibendo et rivando*, was duly reprovved for his faults. Another Brother, Ralph Axmynster, was brought up for having by night dishonestly taken fish from the Abbey ponds, *pisces furtive lacis infra monasterium situatis extraxit*, and punished accordingly. Two others, for talking, *pro silencio fracto*, are condemned to bread and water.

In 1470 there is a new Abbot, Dominus Thomas Oke, who improves the discipline and temporal prosperity of the Convent. In 1488 the Visitor bestows nothing but praise, *nihil comperimus nostra reformatione digna*; all is prosperous and faultless, *prospera et immaculata*. Whereas the Monastery was in debt one hundred pounds in the time of the last Abbot, the new one has paid off fifty, *minoravit et solvit quinquaginta*.

In 1491 evil influence is at work, and the Visitor notes division between the Abbot and his Canons, *de quadam controversia inter caput et membra*. The good Bishop counsels more regard, *commendavit attentius*, to what Christ specially enjoined, to "Love one another," *ut diligamus invicem*, and recommends peace and unity among themselves, with dutiful obedience, *cum filiali obediencia*, to their superior.

In 1494, the counsels of the Visitor had borne fruit and peace prevails, *mutua interest concordia*. He recommends certain things deemed needful, *quædam necessaria duximus*, viz., a *Rector Chori* is to be appointed every week; the Abbot is to increase the number of the Brethren, which had fallen below the minimum, so that the offices of the dead which they were under obligation to perform, might be duly rendered, *quo inde defunctorum exequie prout tenentur debite persolventur*. The Abbot is to provide a suitable infirmary, so that the sick and aged Brethren may be properly cared for. He is to find a master to instruct the juniors in science and other things, *ut eos scientia instruat pariter et informet*. There are sundry directions about serving at meals in the refectory and elsewhere. Inquiry is made as to the conduct of Brother Thomas Ruby, a quarrelsome fellow, *idoneus non est ad concordiam*, and not clever, *neque aptus ad scientiam*, who is reprovèd and advised to behave better in future. As to animals, grain, or other necessities the house is well enough furnished, *satis laudabiliter provisum*.

At the next visitation, 1497, we find the brethren increased to fourteen, John Papworth is Vicar of Titchfield, John Brekbred, Chaplain of Corhampton, and Ralph Exminster (*sic*) Chaplain of Crofton, Thomas Blancpayn (Whitbread) is Sub-Prior. Silence and some points of ritual are the only things enjoined.

In 1500, Bishop Redmayne visits for the last time, and he is accompanied by his dear *confrater*, Robert Bedell, a Canon of Shap. Fresh breaches of discipline have to be reprovèd; the Brethren have taken to wearing tunics with tippets or hoods, of black colour instead of white, *nigris collobijs cum liripipijs*, which are prohibited under pain of the major excommunication. The tonsure must also be of proper size and form.¹

Delay of reforms after the visitor's back is turned, *post discessum visitatoris*, is condemned. Silence is again enjoined, and the Abbot is to take care to have the Constitutions and Decrees of the General Chapter copied in his books and

¹ Among some religious Orders and Friars the tonsure only left a circle of hair around the head, that of the White Canons and Secular Clergy was a smaller circle, *satis magna et aqualiter rotunda*.—See Statute de Rasura.

deposited with the Prior. The Church is well cared for, the Convent free from debt and amply provided with grain, animals and other domestic requirements.¹

HISTORICAL NOTES ON THE ABBEY.

In the Taxation of Pope Nicholas 1291, the Church of Titchfield was returned at £56 6s. 8d. and the tenth at £5 6s. 1d. which was paid by Titchfield Church. In 1295 the Abbot was summoned to Parliament, also in 1296, 1300, and 1302. About the end of the 13th century the town of Southampton had a dispute with the Abbot of Titchfield about his weir at Cadlands. King Henry V. stayed here while his troops were embarking at Southampton for the campaigns which resulted in the victory of Agincourt. Here, according to some chroniclers, Henry VI. was married to Margaret of Anjou, 1445; others affirm that the marriage was solemnized at Southwick, a Priory of Austin Canons near Portsmouth.² A grant to hold a fair at Titchfield was made to the Abbot, 26th Henry VI. (1468).

Some valuable records of the Abbey are preserved in the library at Welbeck, comprised in four MS. volumes. Reference to these has been permitted by the noble owner, the Duke of Portland, who is descended from the Wriothesleys in the female line, and the title Marquis of Titchfield is borne by his eldest son. One, entitled *Rememoratorium de Tichefeld*, contains a record of the tenth and fifteenth in Hampshire, 8th. Edward III. (1334), and other interesting details. The temporal condition and possessions of the Monastery at the creation of various Abbots is also given. An inventory was

¹ The Visitor's progress day by day is recorded, when he arrived, at whose expense he was entertained, and where he passed the night. Thus on a certain July 19th he was at Arundel, on the 20th he supped at Titchfield, where he stayed till the Feast of St. Mary Magdalene (July 22nd), at the expense of the Abbot of Titchfield.

² Dr. Milner and Miss Strickland, quoting Stowe and Hall, favour Titchfield. In "*The Life and Times of Margaret of Anjou*," by Mary A. Hookham, Southwick is mentioned. It appears the Royal bride landed at Porchester April 10th, 1445, and the following day was rowed to Southampton, where she lodged in the hospital called God's House, and there fell ill of smallpox. Henry remained in suspense at Southwick, and it is not improbable when the Princess was sufficiently recovered to travel, they met at Titchfield, and were there married April 22nd.

rendered on such occasions, and at the creation of Thomas Thorny, June 27th, 1370, the state of the Monastery and Manor stood thus:—Wheat, none in the Monastery or in the Manors; barley v. qr.; malt ij. qr.; oats xvi. qr. ij. bus.; and so it will be necessary to provide wheat and grain before harvest for the requirements of the house, and dependants of the Manors. *Remanent* (in hand)—nags and draught animals xxij.; mares xxvij.; colts xxj.; oxen c. four score and x.; bulls x.; cows lxvi.; heifers xliij.; steers xxxvij.; yearlings xvi.; calves xxviii.; boars ix.; sows xx.; pigs l.; hogs c.; little pigs xxv.; shearlings dcc. and three score (760); rams xix.; ewes dl. (550); lambs cc. and four score; wool v. sacks vii. cloves.¹

PLATE AND VALUABLES.

A small cross, the foot of silver gilt. A text (*book of the gospels*), silver gilt, set with relics; iii. reliquaries, of crystal; xvii. chalices, of which ix. are gilt; i. cup, silver gilt, for reserving the Body of Christ on the high altar (*a ciborium*); iiij. ampuls (*cruets*), of silver; vi. silver basins (*for holding the cruets*), ii. large and iv. small, for doubles (*feasts were divided into doubles, semi-doubles, and singles, the first being greater solemnities*); ii. pastoral staves (*emblems of the Abbot's jurisdiction*); iii. silver candlesticks, one small, for masses on the night of the Nativity; iii. thuribles, silver gilt; iiiij. cups, silver gilt, of which three have covers; v. silver cups, with covers; iii. great silver bowls, with feet and covers; xliij. silver tankards, five with feet and covers; v. silver dishes, with feet and covers; ii. silver stoups for wine; ii. small hand basins of silver; i. silver waiter, with feet; i. pipe (*fistula*), silver gilt, for giving drink to the sick; iiiij. score and i. spoons; in the treasury, no money; owed to various creditors ccij. £ . xvi s. ix d.

Bishop Redmayne's Visitation Book reveals a steady decline of discipline and prosperity as regards the Abbey of Titchfield. Thomas Oke, Abbot in 1497, was succeeded

¹ In a list (circa, 1280) of various monastic houses which supplied wool to the Florentine and Flemish markets, Beaulieu, Netley, Quarr, and Titchfield occur, see Cunningham's *Growth of English Industry*, i., 548.

by Thomas Blancpayn, who had been Sub-Prior, and John Max and John Sampson conclude the list of Abbots who presided over the Monastery from the time when Richard of Halesowen took charge (1232) until the surrender to the King's Commissioners (1537). At the suppression the Convent consisted of an Abbot and twelve Canons, endowed with £249 16s. 1d. as given by Dugdale, or £280 19s. 10d. according to Speed. Among the treasures of the house was the library, of which the catalogue, dated 1400, is extant,¹ and enumerates several hundred volumes, comprising copies of the Bible with glosses thereon, works of the Fathers, treatises on Theology, Canon and Civil Law, Medicine and other learning of the Middle Ages. The rule of the White Canons prescribed that they should preach the Gospel and teach the ignorant, and their Abbots were designed to be abodes of learning and seminaries for the training of missionaries and parish priests.

From the *Rememoratorium* above referred to, and other sources, the following list of Abbots has been compiled :—

ABBOTS OF TITCHFIELD.

- 1.—*Richard*, of Halesowen, 1232, buried at Titchfield before the chapter house door.
- 2.—*Ysaac*, buried at Titchfield to the right of Abbot Richard.
- 3.—*Henry Branewyk*, afterwards Abbot of Halesowen, where he died.
- 4.—*Henry de Spersholte*, resigned. Buried in the cloister. Vicar of Titchfield between 1302 and 1332.
- 5.—*Yvo*, resigned, buried in the cloister.
- 6.—*Adam*, buried in the cloister on the left of the tomb of Peter de Wynton.
- 7.—*William de Byketon*, buried in the church before the altar of St. Richard, occurs as Abbot 20th and 22nd Edward I (1293).
- 8.—*John Sydemontons*, buried in the cloister between the library door on the south and the tomb of Abbot Peter de Wynton on the north, occurs 34th Edward I. (1305).
- 9.—*Roger de Candevere*, 2nd Edward II. (1308) ruled about eighteen years; buried in the cloister at the church door by the altar of St. Peter.
- 10.—*John de Combe*, 3rd of Richard III. (1328-29), ruled twenty years; buried in the cloister at the head of the tomb of Roger de Candevere in the middle.

¹ This catalogue is among the documents relating to the Abbey of Titchfield in the possession of the Duke of Portland at Welbeck, formerly an Abbey of White Canons, and is in course of publication by the Hants Record Society.

- 11.—*Peter de Wynton*, 1348, ruled one year and six months. Vicar of Titchfield 1332; buried in the cloister between the tombs of Abbot Adam on the north, and that of Abbot John de Sydemontone on the south.
- 12.—*William de Wallop*, 22nd Edward III. (1347-8), ruled twenty years nine months and three days; Vicar of Titchfield 1348; buried in the cloister to the north of the tomb of Abbot Roger de Candevere.
- 13.—*John de Thorne*, 1370, ruled nineteen years, thirteen weeks and five days; buried in the cloister at the foot of the image of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
- 14.—*John de Romesie*, 1390.
- 15.—Omitted.
- 16.—*Thomas Benstedde*, ruled thirteen years and was compelled to resign.
- 17.—*William Winchestour*, alias *Fryer*, ruled six years and a half.
- 18.—*William Austyn*, ruled sixteen years. He constructed the house called the Great Place, the windows of all the chambers, beside another house by the cross in the middle of the town, and is buried near the tomb of John Thorny.
- 19.—*Thomas Ook*, ruled twenty-one years.
- 20.—*Thomas Blankpayne*, ruled thirty-one years and resigned.
- 21.—*John Max*, Bishop of Elphin, Abbot Commendatory of Welbeck possessed the Abbey *in commendam*; restored the monastery and the church, which had become ruinous.
- 22.—*John Sampson* was the last Abbot at the surrender, 8th February, 1538.

THE SURRENDER.

John Sampson, titular Bishop of Thetford, the last Abbot of Titchfield, surrendered the vast possessions of the Abbey to the King's Commissioners in 1537-8, and by Letters Patent, bearing date December 30th, in the same year, the building and estates were granted by the King to Thomas Wriothesley "Our trusty servant." The document recites that:—"John, Bishop of Thetford, late Commendatory and Abbot of the Monastery of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Titchfield, possessed the Manors of Tichefeld, Abshot, Posbroke, Newe court Parva, Fountley, Swanwyke, Crofton, Mirabyll, Newland, Wallisworth, Portsey, Copnor, Wyker, Cadland and Corhampton, with appurtenances, and 200 messuages, 100 cottages, 60 tofts, 6 dovecots, 6 water mills, 4 windmills, 1,500 acres of land, 1,000 acres of meadow, 2,000 acres of pasture, 1,000 acres of wood, 1,500 acres of marsh, 2,000 acres of furze and heath, 200 acres of alder, 200 acres of broom, 1,000 acres of land covered with water; £140 of rent and a rent of 6lbs. of pepper, 4 red roses. 1 eagle, 6lbs. of cummin, 10 quarters of

wheat, 20 quarters of barley and 10 quarters of white salt, with appurtenances in Tichefelde, Abshot, Posbroke, New Court Parva, Fountley, Swanwyke, Crofton, Mirabyll, Newlond, Wallisworth, Portsey, Copnor, Wicker, Cadland, Corhampton, Wikeham, Warishassefeld, Broke, Sethage, Sarisbury, Southbroke, Quab, Pagham, Hoke, Whiteleggh, Clowhill, Markys, Seginworth. Ward Lee, Wydeley, Portchester, Fawlegh, Loomer, and the rectories of the churches of Tichefeld, Loomer, and Corhampton, with appurtenances, and also advowsons of the churches of Tichefeld, Loomer and Corhampton, in the County of Southampton, and the Manor of Inkepen with appurtenances in the County of Berks."

The above were granted by the King with all the "site, circuit, and precinct" of the Abbey of Titchfield, in consideration of his "good, true, and faithful service to us," to "our trusty servant Thomas Wriothesley."

In the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, 1534, the Vicarage of Titchfield, Thomas Godfrey, Vicar, was valued at £6 17s. 3d. The Abbot and Convent presented, as appears from the Institution books, from 1302 until 1539, July 25th, when upon the death of their last nominee, Sir Thomas Wriothesley presented one Martin Tyndal.

PLACE HOUSE.

The Abbey was henceforth to be known as "Place House," a corruption of Palace House, of which other examples are to be found. Here the Wriothesleys made their home for four generations, as Earls of Southampton, and from the positions of importance they held, Place House was the scene of many historical events.

"Thomas Wriothesley, Esquire; our trusty servant," as he is styled in the Letters Patent of Henry VIII., had been employed by that sovereign in the matter of the dissolution of the monasteries, of which he was a "joint visitor," 1535-6. As the reward for his services, he was granted or allowed to acquire much property belonging to religious houses in Hampshire. Besides Titchfield; Beaulieu Abbey; Stratton, Micheldever, and North Stoneham, part of the possession of

Hyde Abbey;¹ and St. Elizabeth's College, Winchester, fell to his share. The latter valued £112 17s. 4d., was at once sold to the Warden and Fellows of Wykeham's College, and immediately pulled down. So expeditious was the destruction of Hyde Abbey that when Leland visited Winchester, as King's Antiquary, in 1539, he found only the Abbey site. Titchfield Abbey was in part demolished, but the church, refectory, Chapter House, and other buildings were converted into a residence with all possible speed. Journeying through Hampshire, and coming to Titchfield, Leland notes: "Master Wriothsesley hath built a right statelie house and a conducte casteled in the middle court of it, in the very same place where the late Monastery of the Premonstratensians stood." Leland had returned from his travels in 1542, so, about four years had elapsed since the suppression, during which time a complete transformation had been effected. The Canons' Cloister Garth was converted into a fountain court, an entrance gateway driven through the nave of the church, the south front denuded of its buttresses, and flanked with embattled towers, and square headed windows took the place of double lancets; so complete was the change effected that the "statelie house" swept away almost all traces of monastic arrangements.

Thomas Wriothsesley received knighthood 1537, was created Baron Wriothsesley of Titchfield in 1544, having become possessed of the Monastery and the lands thereto belonging. From May, 1544, until March, 1547, he was Lord High Chancellor of England, K.G., 1545. Henry VIII. dying, January 1547, he became one of the sixteen executors to the late King's will, and at the coronation of Edward VI., February 20th, 1547, bore the sword of state.

¹ In 1533, Salcot, the last Abbot of Hyde, a zealous Protestant and Papist in turn, in a letter to Cromwell, mentions his "friend Master Thomas Wrythesley." Abbot Salcot obtained the Bishopric of Bangor, and Thomas Wriothsesley was appointed joint Seneschal of the Abbey of Hyde, 24th July, 1533. On the surrender of Hyde, April, 1538, Wriothsesley obtained a large share of the lands, including those of Micheldever and Stratton. He had a lease of the entire site of the Abbey, its Church and appurtenances for a short term and for a specific purpose. Wriothsesley pulled the Abbey down with amazing speed, and sold the rich materials. Edward's *Liber Monasterii de Hyda*. Introduction, Rolls Series.

Although attached strongly to the Roman Catholic faith, he was not averse to sharing the spoils of Monasteries, and accommodated himself to the caprices of the King, by whom he was employed on business of importance. He was one of the Council assigned to receive the declaration of Anne of Cleves, by which she abandoned her matrimonial rights. He afterwards pursued the fifth unhappy Queen, Catherine Howard, till her young head was laid upon the block. With Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, he endeavoured to compass the fall of Catherine Parr, and he is also accused of having himself applied the torture to Anne Askew, when the common executioner compassionated the sufferer. On the death of Henry VIII., he became joint governor of Edward VI. in 1547, in which year he was created Earl of Southampton,¹ and died 1550.

Thomas Wriothesley was succeeded by his son Henry (doubtless named after the King), while yet a minor. The second Earl entertained Edward VI., who came from Portsmouth, on Aug. 10th, 1552, and went on Aug. 14th to the Earl of Hertford's at Netley Abbey. In September, 1569, Queen Elizabeth was received at Titchfield, in one of her progresses. Henry, the third Earl, offered an asylum to Sir Charles and Sir Henry Danvers, who, having killed a Wiltshire gentleman, fled to Place House, Titchfield, until they could effect their escape to France. This Earl was the friend and

¹ The title of Earl of Southampton, according to the old chroniclers, was borne in Saxon times by Osric 860, Aelfegus 981, and Alfelme in the time of Canute, also by the legendary Bevois, of Hampton, at the time of the Conquest. We hear no more of the title until it was conferred, 1537, on William Fitzwilliam, High Admiral of England, at whose death it expired (1542). In 1547 it was revived, in the person of Thomas Wriothesley, first Earl of Southampton of that name. Fitzwilliam and Wriothesley were friends and associates. The great naval commander left, by will, the best of his gilt cups (*Testamenta vetusta* 708) to Wriothesley, who not only adopted the title, but in the adaptation of Titchfield Abbey copied the architecture of Cowdray, the house of his friend, as will be seen below.

Of Wriothesley, Dugdale writes that the first of whom he finds mention was John Wrythesley, or Wrythe, Falcon Herald, temp. Edward IV. and Garter King at Arms 1st, Richard III., who had two sons, Thomas, who became Garter King at Arms, and William, York Herald. This latter, by his wife, Agnes Drayton, had issue a son, Thomas, who was educated at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, and entered at Gray's Inn, 1534. He obtained the place of Clerk to the Signet and other offices under Henry VIII., was one of the King's Secretaries, 1507, and knighted in that year.

benefactor of Shakespeare, who dedicated his Sonnets and other poems to him.¹ It is more than probable, considering the intimate relations between them, that our great poet was a visitor at Place House.

The fourth Earl, Thomas, espoused the Royalist cause, and Charles I. was received here in 1647 by the old Countess, in the absence of her son. It was in one of the stately rooms that Ashburnham announced the presence of the Governor of Carisbrooke Castle, when the King, striking his breast, exclaimed: "Oh, Jack, you have undone me, for I am by this means made fast from stirring," and hence Charles was conveyed to Carisbrooke to remain a prisoner for the remainder of his days.²

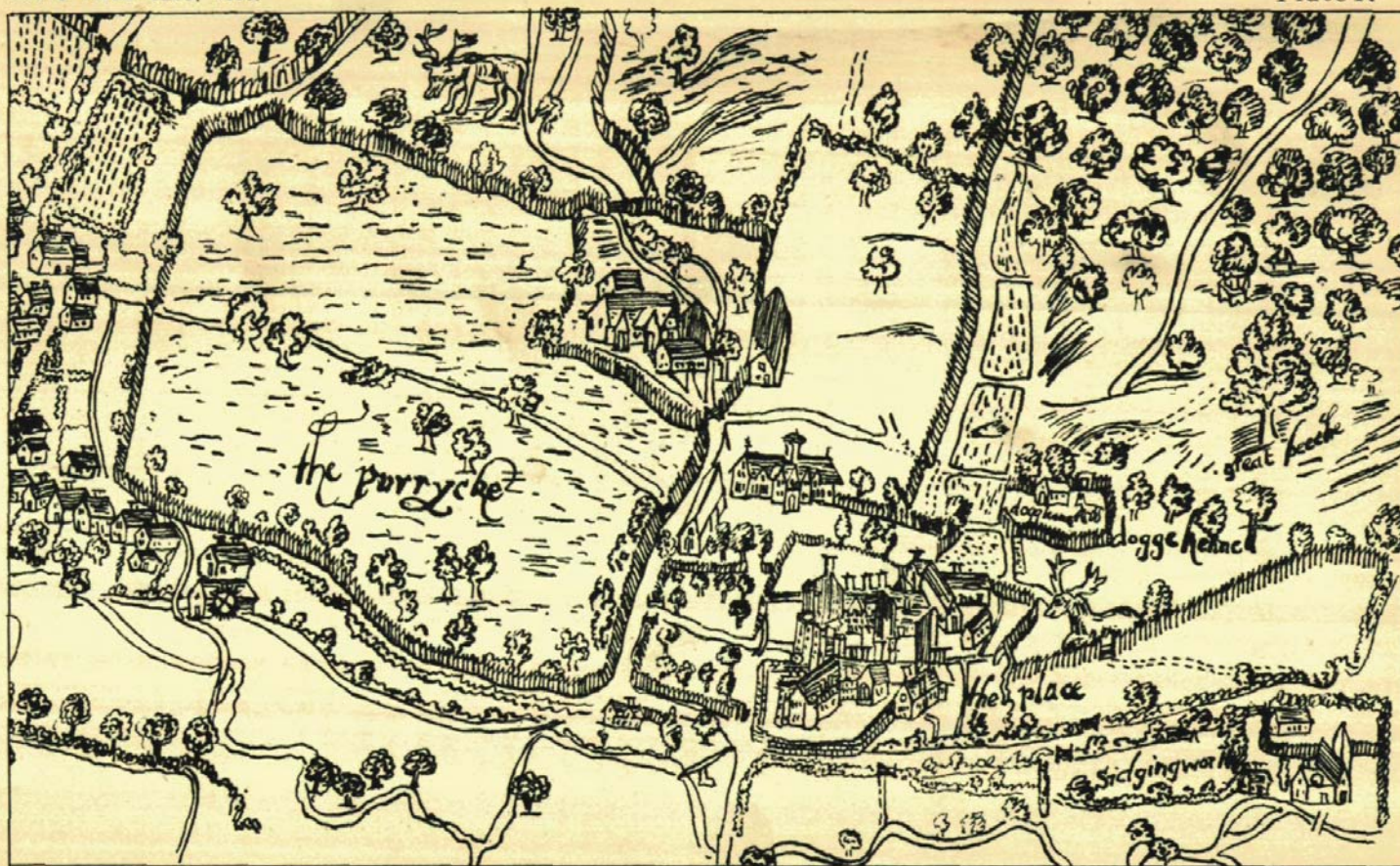
In the time of the Wriothesleys, Place House was surrounded by a deer park, and extensive buildings served for the numerous retainers and dependents, commensurate with the importance of the noble owners. Some idea of its appearance is conveyed by our illustration.

PLATE I.

We have here the central portion of an ancient map on vellum of the Titchfield estate, which hung in the billiard-room at Cams Hall in 1894. The original measures 6ft. 9in. by 4ft. 8in. The portion here given shews "Stony Bridge," on the road leading from Fareham, and the eastern side of the extensive building, forming "The Place." To the south-west are the stables, of which portions remain; and on the south side the "purrycke," or park, a water mill, and part of the town of Titchfield. To the west are the fish-ponds, a "dogg kennel," a wood with a "great beeche," and deer in the surrounding chase. Sidgingworth marks the site of a farm still so called.

¹ According to Mr. Gerald Massey, the disastrous courtship of Henry Wriothesley and Elizabeth Vernon suggested the play of Romeo and Juliet.

² Of Thomas Wriothesley II, the 4th Earl of that name, his contemporaries tell us that he was "melancholie and reserved in conversation." Lord Clarendon says "he was small in stature, his courage and all his other faculties very great." The gossiping Pepys makes frequent mention of "my Lord Southampton," whose "parks and lands" he passed, riding from Gosport to Southampton, and seems to have envied the possessor for that "in one view he could see £6,000 per annum."



PLACE HOUSE, TITCHFIELD, FROM AN ANCIENT MAP.

On the death of Thomas Wriothesley, fourth and last Earl of Southampton of that name (1667), his vast estates were shared by three daughters, the Ladies Elizabeth and Rachel Wriothesley, children by his first wife Rachel, daughter of Baron de Ruigny, and another daughter, also named Elizabeth.¹ Lady Elizabeth, the eldest, took Titchfield. The Stratton property fell to Lady Rachel (married Lord William Russell), from whom it passed to the Bedford family, and was sold by the fifth Duke to Sir Francis Baring, ancestor of the Earl of Northbrook, the present owner. Titchfield passed, by the marriage of Lady Elizabeth with Edward Noel, 1st Earl of Gainsborough, into the possession of the Noels. The second Earl Gainsborough dying without issue male, it was divided between two co-heiresses, Lady Elizabeth Noel (married Henry, first Duke of Portland) and Lady Rachel (married second Duke of Beaufort). The third Duke of Beaufort acquired both moieties and the fifth Duke sold the entire Titchfield property to Peter Delmé, Esq., who possessed it in 1779.

Mr. Delmé, descended from a Walloon family settled at Norwich in 1589, married Lady Elizabeth Howard, daughter of Henry, fourth Earl of Carlisle, and made his home here for a time. In 1781 Mr. Delmé bought Cams Hall, Fareham, and dismantled Place House, removing some of the materials for the enlargement of his new residence. Mr. John Delmé in 1789 succeeded his father, and continued the enlargement of Cams Hall, making further devastation at Place House, and pulling down a large portion of the buildings. He died in 1809, leaving seven sons and four daughters. On the death of his last surviving son, Mr. Seymour R. Delmé, in 1894, the property was shared by the descendents of the two co-heiresses, Elizabeth, wife of the Rev. C. Delmé Radcliffe, and Julia, wife of Capt. James Arthur Murray, R.N., the

¹ This daughter by his second wife Elizabeth Leigh, daughter of Lord Dunsmore, inherited Beaulieu and married Ralph, Duke of Montagu. The Barony of Montagu passed by marriage into the family of the Duke of Buccleuch, and became extinct in 1845, but was revived in the person of Lord Henry Scott, who was raised to the Peerage by the title of Baron Montagu, of Beaulieu, and enjoys the estates.

A very complete pedigree of the Wriothesleys, with an account of their tomb in Titchfield Church, compiled by the late Mr. B. W. Greenfield, F.S.A., will be found *Hants Field Club Papers*, Vol. I., Part iii.

present joint owners being Colonel Emilius Charles Delmé Radcliffe and Mr. Charles Delmé Murray.¹

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION.

The existing building, the remains of the Abbey, or "Place House," as it is now called, suggests the ruin of a Tudor mansion rather than of a religious house, and it is only after close examination that traces of the original arrangement can be identified. Some excavations carried on by the writer in 1893 have thrown light upon the subject, and the accompanying Plan, to which the reader is invited to refer, will show the results.

The digging was necessarily limited, the site occupied by the buildings east of the Nave being now an orchard, and if this impediment had not existed, there is no reason to suppose that more traces would have been laid bare. The grantee at the Dissolution, although, as we have seen, attached to the Romish religion, not only willingly shared the plunder, but showed great expedition and completeness in the destruction of those buildings which fell to his share. The entire building is now roofless, tenanted by jackdaws and starlings, the walls covered with ivy.

THE PLAN.

It is characteristic of the churches of the Premonstratensians, or White Canons, that they are without aisles and cruciform in plan, and with this general rule Titchfield agrees.

The western wall of the church and the squinched turret at the S.W. angle, are but little altered, and from this wall, at a distance of about 115 feet, the western piers of the crossing are intact, their bases towards the church being cut away for the choir stalls. At a point 95 feet beyond these piers, which may have supported a central tower, an excavation revealed the foundation of the East wall of the church. A break in the East wall of the cloister gives the length of the transept to have been 40 feet, and the foundation of the wall opposite indicates the width, viz: 35 feet.

¹ For an account of the Delmé family, see the Author's Notes on Reynolds' portrait of Lady Batty Delmé, *H.F.C. Papers*, Vol. III., p. 99.

The dimensions of the church, therefore appear to have been :—

Total length of church inside, East to West...	200-ft.
Width of Nave and Presbytery, North to South	25-ft.
Length of Transepts, North to South	115-ft.
Do. Do. East to West	35-ft.
Length of Choir and Presbytery ...	85-ft.
Length of Nave ...	115-ft.

At the South-west corner of the nave may be seen a slender banded shaft, with capital and spring of vaulting. This, with traces of similar shafts, hacked away, on the face of the walls, show that the nave consisted of seven vaulted bays, each containing a pair of lancet windows, high in the wall with string course beneath. The lancets, now stopped and mutilated, were 5ft. wide on the face next the church and deeply splayed.¹

The splay of the West window shows an opening of about 20ft. and the turreted stairs at the N.W. and S.W. corners had doors into the church. The walls of the nave were plastered and coloured with a masonry pattern, traces of which remain on the South side. A pretty corbel of a vaulting shaft may be observed by the pier at the North-east corner of the nave, near to a door-way which led into the cloisters; a similar door-way in the South wall lower down led into the western walk.

The cloisters, (vide E. on plan) on the North side of the church, formed a square of about 95ft. enclosed by buildings arranged as usual, this northward position, though less common, being adopted for convenience of water supply and drainage. Proceeding along the East walk, we find a recess (12) in the wall, probably the *armarium*, which contained the library above referred to. Beyond we come to the Sacristy, F., which has now a Tudor door-way f. with the arms of the town of Southampton in the spandril, viz., "Per fesse, argent and gules, three roses counter-changed of the field."²

¹ Windows of similar character existed at Halesowen, also founded by Peter des Roches (1215), and the mother house of Titchfield. Vide Grieg's View in the *Antiquarian and Topographical Cabinet*, 1807.

² These arms were granted by patent of August 4th (17th Eliz.), 1575.

The Chapter-house, G., had at its entrance three arches, the central one forming the door-way. The arches were carried upon Early English columns of Purbeck marble, still to be seen embedded in the wall. An excavation to the East of this wall showed the Chapter-house to have been 22ft. by 48ft., and from the foundation of a pier found about the middle, as well as from Grose's drawing (Plate IV.) we may conclude that the room was vaulted, probably in twelve bays. North of the Chapter-house there appears to have been another chamber of uncertain purpose, and North of this the Calefactory or warming house (H) with the Reredorter (I). The Canons' dormitory extended over F. G. H., and a staircase was probably at 13, where some heading stones in the wall indicate such an arrangement.

In the North wall of the cloister there is an early doorway (14) leading to a passage as at Shap,¹ and another doorway (15) into the Refectory, which bounded this side of the cloister. Of this building, only a portion of the South wall is standing, but judging from Grose's drawing, 1782 (Plate V.), it must have been of Perpendicular character. The probable sites of the buttery and kitchen are L. and M. and that of the cellarer's buildings at N. These comprised the principal architectural features of the Abbey as it existed from its foundation, 1231, to its dissolution, 1538.

From the "Rememoratorium" preserved at Welbeck, to which reference has been made, we are enabled to indicate the exact burial-places of several of the Abbots, which are noted on the plan, and may be compared with the list of names given, p. 325.

The altar of St. Peter, near to which the Abbot Roger de Candever was buried, was within the Church, near to the door leading from the East walk of the cloister, probably at 10, with another altar corresponding in position at 11, by the entrance of the choir. This latter may have been the altar of St. Richard, before which Abbot William Byketon was buried. In the cloister was an image of the Blessed Virgin

¹The general plan of Titchfield much resembles that of the Premonstratensian Abbey of Shap, described by the Rev. G. W. Weston and Mr. W. H. St. John Hope in the Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Archaeological Society.

Mary, placed against a buttress, near which was the grave of John de Thorney, buried *ad pedes imaginis beate Marie Virginis quam ibidem in honorem ejusdem genetricis Dei ipse construxit et ordinavit ac in quodam boteras ipsam imaginem stare fecit.*

The list of Abbots in the "Rememoratorium" affords the above information and also records various benefactions, manors, and other property bestowed or acquired by different Abbots. It also tells that William Austyn, the eighteenth Abbot did extensive repairs to the buildings, but about sixty years later the monastery and church are described as again dilapidated *ruinosa* and were restored by John Max, commendatory abbot, 1535,¹ who was succeeded by John Sampson, the last abbot, whose brief rule terminated with the surrender Feb. 8th, 1538.

Place House was henceforth the name of the buildings, which for three hundred years had been known as The Abbey of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Titchfield. Its new possessor "Master Thomas Wriothesley" was equally anxious to change the ancient title and the architectural arrangements of the place. A "statelie house" in the prevailing Tudor style, commended itself to his ambition and taste.² He proceeded accordingly to construct an entrance archway,

¹ John Max, Bishop of Elphin, also held Welbeck Abbey *in commendam*, which shows that the office of abbot in these monasteries was a void, and the administration of both houses as it were in trust.

² The great similarity between the front of Place House, Titchfield, and that of Cowdray House, Sussex, is remarkable. (See Storer's *View Antiquarian Cabinet*, Vol. VII.) The gatehouse and embattled towers are almost identical. Cowdray was given in the time of Henry VIII. to the heirs of John Neville, Marquis of Montagu (ob. 1471) and came to Lucy, his fourth daughter, who married first Sir Thomas Fitzwilliam, of Aldware, Co., York. The son of this marriage, Sir William Fitzwilliam, created Earl of Southampton 1537, was the builder of Cowdray. On his death, 1542, Sir Anthony Browne, his half-brother, succeeded to the property. There was great friendship and close connection between the families at Cowdray and the Wriothesleys. Wm. Fitzwilliam, Earl of Southampton, Sir Anthony Browne, and Sir Thomas Wriothesley were all contemporaries at the Court of Henry VIII. Henry, second Earl of Southampton, married Mary Browne, grand-daughter of Sir Anthony above mentioned and daughter of Anthony Browne, created Lord Montagu, 1554. Mr. Greenfield has pointed out that the Wriothesley monument at Titchfield and the tomb of the Montagus, of Cowdray, at Midhurst are almost identical and probably the work of the same hand. The Wriothesleys seem also to have copied the mansion of the Cowdray family, in adapting Titchfield Abbey to domestic requirements.

of which the gates still remain, through the nave of the Church, flanked on the North and South sides with semi-octagonal embattled towers to contain stairs by which access should be gained to the upper floors, which were laid on joists inserted in the walls. Square headed windows took the place of lancets, a porter's lodge (*b.*) and guardroom (*c.*) were arranged on the ground floor. The Chapter House was converted into a chapel, by which name it was known in 1782 (Plate IV.). The cloister became the fountain court with a conduit embattled in the middle; many of the buildings were pulled down, others were adapted to domestic purposes, and the change effected without and within was complete and thorough.

PLATE II.

The present appearance of the South front differs but little from the *South-East view of Titchfield Abbey* (Plate II.) as drawn by Buck in 1733. The buttresses of the Church were removed, but their position may still be observed on the flat surface of the wall. The rafters were shortened and the roof lowered, above which appeared Tudor chimney shafts. The walls were ornamented with loop-holes and embattled at the top. An ogee plinth took the place of a plain chamfer at the bottom, and some grotesque, rudely-carved heads looked down from the string course above. The easternmost bay, which formed the Presbytery and is shewn in Buck's view, no longer exists.

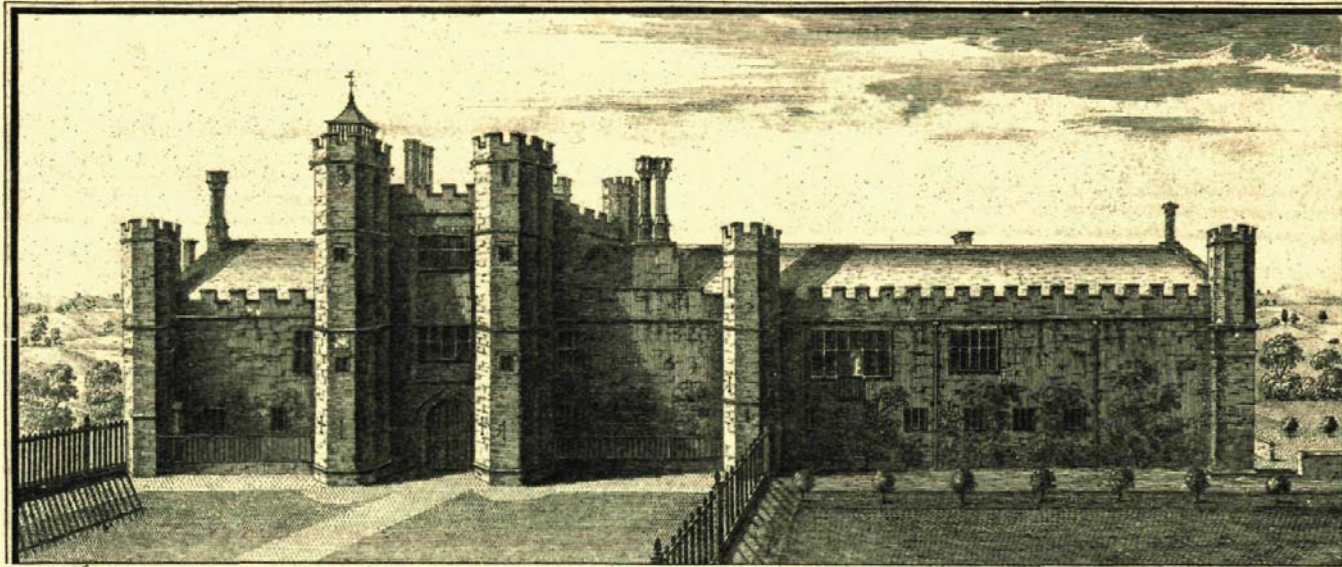
PLATE III.

Grose in his Supplement gives a view of *Titchfield House, Hampshire*, drawn in 1761 (Plate III.). This view, taken from the East, shows many buildings not existing at the present day. Amongst them we recognize the Refectory, with a long roof and embattled parapet; the East end of the Church shortened; the Chapter House; and, to the right of the picture, the buildings marked H. and I. on the plan.

PLATE IV.

Titchfield House Chapel (Plate IV.), also drawn by Grose, 1782, gives the interior of the West wall of the Chapter-House, which had served the Earls of Southampton as a chapel and

THE SOUTH EAST VIEW OF TYCHFIELD ABBY, IN HAMPSHIRE.



Titchfield Abby, was founded by Peter de Rupibus Bishop of Winchester, in y. 16.th of H. 3.^d for Premonstratensian Canons. The Marriage of H. 6.th with Margaret of Anjou was here solemniz'd. It was y. Seat of Wriothesly Earl of Southampton; but he dying without Issue Male, it came by Marriage of his Daughter, to Edward 1.st Earl of Gainsborough; and for want of Issue Male again to two Daughters. The present Proprietors are, his Grace y. Duke of Beaufort & her Grace y. Dutches of Portland.

*Am. Val. { £49 - 16 - } Pres.
 { 250 - 10 - } Incl.*

1801 Black skin. engr'd 1733.

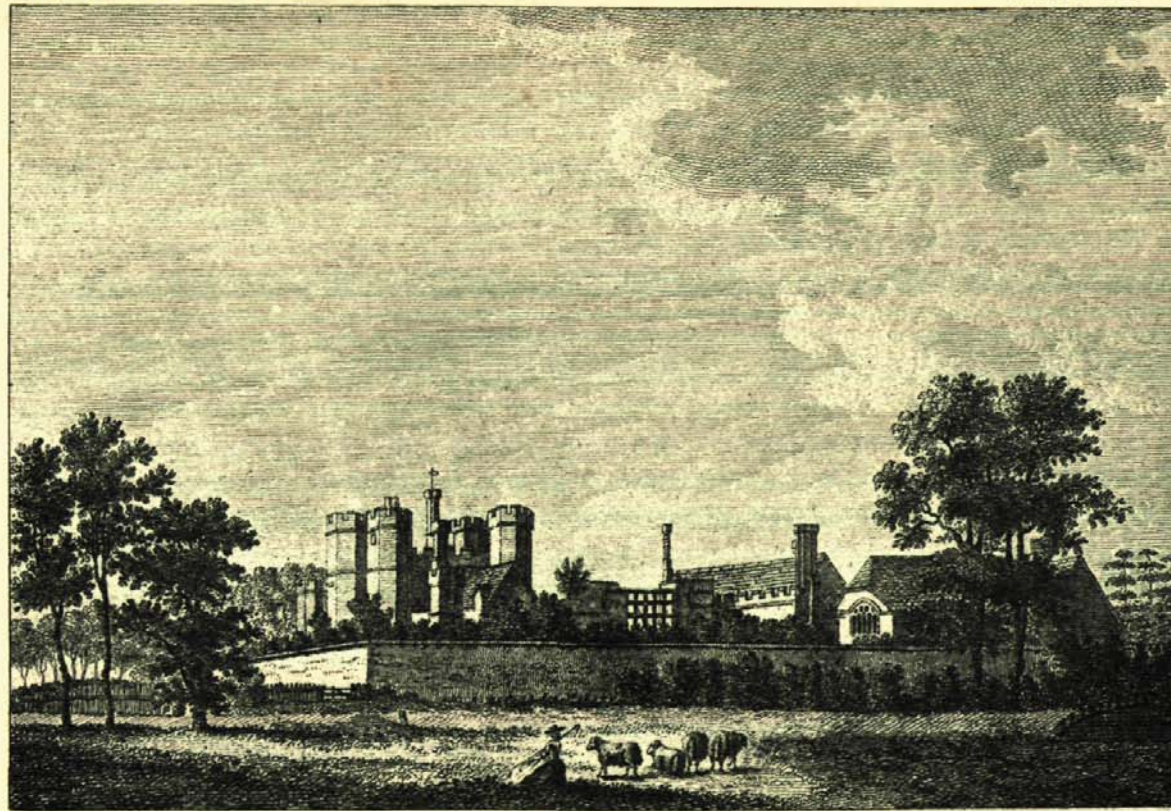
TITCHFIELD ABBEY.

Drawn by BUCK, 1733.

HANTS FIELD CLUB, 1896.

HANTS FIELD CLUB, 1896

PLATE III



INK PHOTO. SPRAGUE & CO LONDON.

TITCHFIELD HOUSE.

From "GROSE'S ANTIQUITIES." Drawn 1761.

HANTS FIELD CLUB, 1896.

PLATE IV.



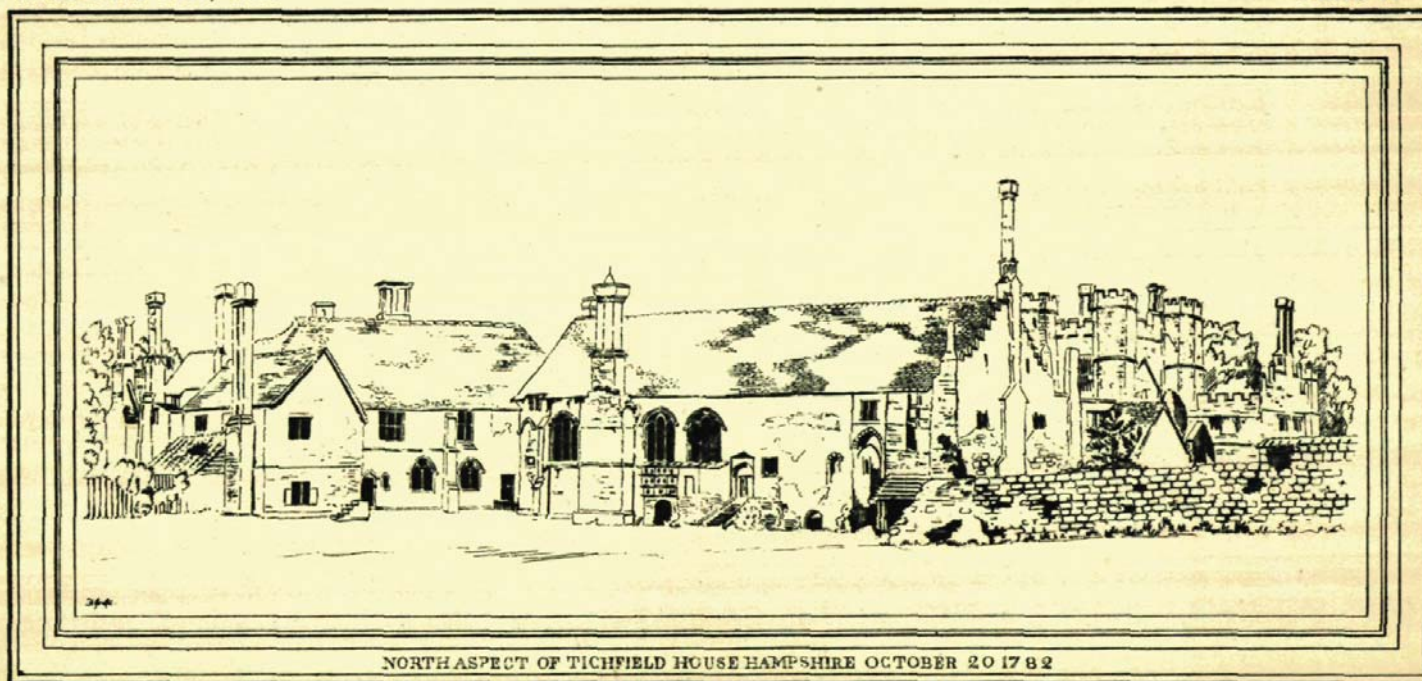
INK-PHOTO. SPRAGUE & CO LONDON.

TITCHFIELD HOUSE CHAPEL.

From "GROSE'S ANTIQUITIES" (Supplement). Drawn 1782.

HANTS FIELD CLUB, 1896.

Plate V.



FROM A DRAWING BY GROSE, 1782, IN THE POSSESSION OF J. R. FIELDER, ESQ.

is here so called. The remains of vaulting appear above the arches; high up in the walls may be seen the windows of the Canons' dormitory, and a broken space in the walls has been utilised as a dove house. The eastern end of the nave appears to be closed with weather-board; between this point and the arches of the Chapter-House are the walls of the sacristy.

PLATE V.

North Aspect of Titchfield House, Hampshire, also drawn in 1782 (Plate V.) is from a charming coloured drawing by Grose, now in the possession of T. R. Fielder, Esq., of Titchfield, and appears never to have been published. In this view the cottage to the left of the picture still exists, but the building beyond with pointed windows (H. on the plan), also the remains of the Perpendicular refectory have since been pulled down and removed.

Grose, in his description says, "Great part of this mansion has either fallen or been taken down, but the entrance or gateway, with the hall and several other rooms, are still standing and at times inhabited by the owner: there likewise remain some fine stables." These latter are shown to the West on the Site Plan.

There is a drawing by Alexander, 1760, now in the possession of C. H. H. Candy, Esq., of Southampton, which shows in ruins the ancient Presbytery, C., which existed in Buck's time, and is now gone. The entrance gateway of the wall which enclosed the garden on the South side has two piers which are examples of neatness and skill in brickwork, the bricks being of the finest quality, probably imported from Holland, and laid with the neatest possible joints. The brick piers were flanked by stone volutes, each being surmounted by a pine-apple, also of stone, and shewn in Alexander's drawing. These stone ornaments were recently lying about at Cams Hall, and many walls, cottages, and farm buildings around have incorporated in them fragments of the once famous Abbey and home of the former noble owners of Place House. In the wall of the farm yard at Seginworth may be seen a floriated volute of Renaissance character, and in the hall of

the Bugle. Inn is a panel of *intarsia* work, containing the Wriothsesley arms as borne by the Chancellor, done in coloured woods and surrounded by a carved frame. Fragments of the Abbey may be seen at the neighbouring Mill, where a small collection of local curiosities has been formed by the tenant, Mr. Eames.

Nothing of interest was dug up during the excavations, except some fragments of encaustic tiles, of which four specimens are given in the illustration. The patterns are of 13th century date, and they measure six inches square, and one and a quarter inches in thickness. Five rudely made hollows are on the under side.

A finger ring now in the possession of Captain G. Spencer-Smith, of Bursledon, was picked up near the site. It is of gold, half round; divided into eight compartments, with emblems of the Passion rudely incised, viz.: 1. The Sacred Heart surrounded by a crown of thorns; 2, Cross with spear and sponge on reed; 3, The Sacred Hands; 4, Scourging pillar; 5, The Sacred Feet; in the remaining three compartments, 1 to 3 are repeated. From the cross hatching, it is probable that the ring was in part enamelled.

The excavations carried on in 1893, were made at the expense of the Hants Field Club, supplemented by a grant from the Society of Antiquaries of London. To these bodies thanks are due, and the writer also desires to acknowledge valuable information and assistance most kindly rendered by Mr. W. H. St. John Hope, Mr. Edmund Buckle, Mr. C. H. Norman Nisbett, Mr. A. Gutteridge, Mr. Wilberforce Cobbett and other friends. Facilities were also generously afforded by Mr. J. Griffiths, at that time Steward of the estate, and Mr. J. D. Smith, tenant of the garden and orchard, which now enclose the building on the South side.



1



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