THE PRIORY OF CHRIST CHURCH CANTERBURY AND ITS CONNECTIONS WITH LONDON IN THE LATE MIDDLE AGES

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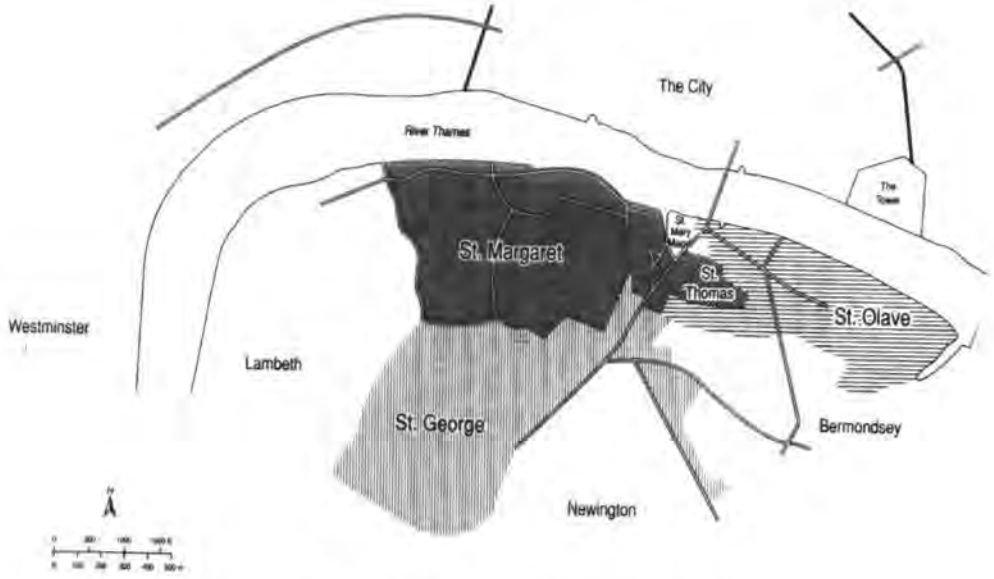
The geographical position of Canterbury, situated on the Roman road between the English Channel and its coastal ports on the one hand, and London on the other, has made it throughout history a convenient place to break a journey to or from the Continent. In the later middle ages, the Priory of Christ Church Canterbury, with its Benedictine tradition of hospitality, played an important role in providing accommodation for visitors, many of whom were travelling between London and the coast. For such travellers, an important part of their journey was to visit the shrine of St Thomas of Canterbury – still in the fifteenth century one of the most important centres of pilgrimage in Western Europe. For its part, the community of Christ Church had many reasons to have easy access to London for practical, ecclesiastical and political purposes.

By the fifteenth century, contacts between Christ Church Canterbury and London had long been established. William Fitzstephen gave a glowing description of London in the preface to his *Life of Becket* in the 1170s, stating that 'almost all bishops, abbots and magnates of England' had 'lordly habitations' in London, 'whither they repair ... when summoned to the city ... to councils and great assemblies, or drawn thither by their own affairs'.[1] In the late twelfth century a hospital had been founded in Southwark (**Map 1**), supposedly by Thomas Becket, which following his assassination was dedicated to St Thomas the Martyr. A fire in 1213 necessitated the reconstruction of the building on a Southwark site close to London Bridge, where it was noted that 'the water was purer and the air more healthy' – two of a number of reasons, perhaps, that the area became popular with those requiring property close to the city of London.[2] Already in the twelfth century the Bishop of Winchester, Henry of Blois (1129-1171), had complained of the 'many inconveniences and losses that I and my predecessor have sustained through the lack of a house of our own to use when called to London on royal or other business', so he purchased a site on the west side of Southwark High Street.[3] In medieval times the area was named St Olave's Street, or the Royal Highway – now known as Tooley Street (**Map 2**).[4] The site was conveniently situated on the banks of the River Thames opposite the City and the Tower of London and within a convenient distance from Lambeth and the Palace of Westminster. Southwark was a suburb of London outside the jurisdiction of the City.

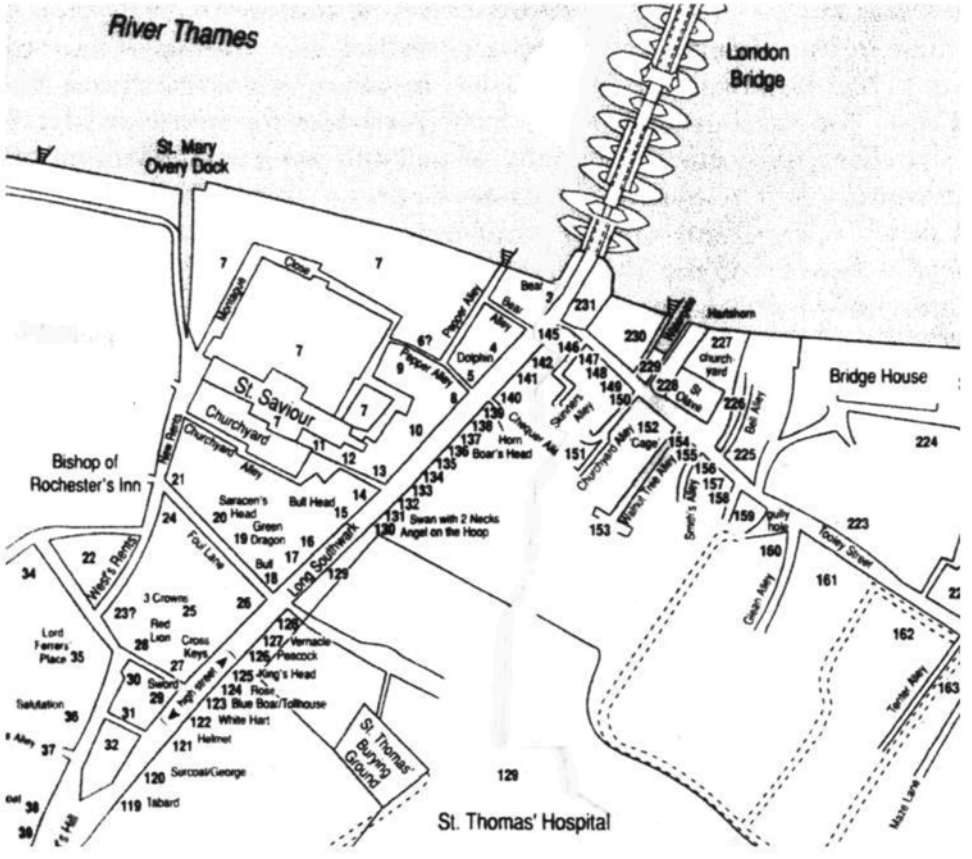
By 1300 a significant number of abbots and bishops had acquired properties in



Map 1 Plan showing the parishes of Southwark in 1539 and their proximity to Westminster, Lambeth, the City and the Tower (© M. Carlin, *Medieval Southwark*, p. 20).

London or in the suburbs of Westminster and Southwark. By the late fourteenth century, as the increasing need for a London residence became apparent, most of the aristocracy, whether lay or ecclesiastical, were in possession of London properties.[5] A significant number of these properties belonged to religious houses. The monks of Christ Church Priory acquired their Southwark estates between 1203 and 1248. St Augustine's Abbey, Canterbury, had a town house in Southwark, as did the abbeys of Lewes, Hyde, Beaulieu and Merton Priory (later acquired by Battle Abbey).[6] It has been calculated that by 1520 out of some seventy-five aristocratic town houses in London around forty-five of these properties belonged to abbots, priors or bishops.[7] A location in the suburbs of London provided more privacy and more space for gardens, which were used both for recreation and for the growing of herbs, vegetables, vines and trees. The land also provided pasture for grazing and for fodder; stabling for horses and parking for wagons and carts. As Caroline Barron has observed, by the fifteenth century parking in London was already a problem and 'it was not possible simply to leave a horse tied up in the street – not least because of its value'. A property by the river also allowed easy transportation by water, often by barge. The river Thames served as a national artery for the distribution of goods and London was a port from whence many prosperous merchants engaged in overseas trade.[8]

The Christ Church estate in Southwark was set back from the street and entered through a gatehouse. Over the passage of time, houses and shops for rental were built close to the gatehouse, generating an income which helped to offset costs.[9] By the 1270s Christ Church was selling produce from their gardens in Southwark both locally and in the markets of London. In 1310 a further block of fourteen shops



Map 2 Plan of Southwark showing Tooley Street and 'Long Southwark' (High Street). In 1555 Christ Church Priory leased out their property which became the *Flower de Luce Inn* – see Numbers 133 and 134 marked on the Plan (and endnote 4).
(© M. Carlin, *Medieval Southwark*, pp. 34-5.)

was constructed, and in the 1380s the treasurer of Christ Church Priory recorded expenditure of £104 15*s*. 5*d*. for the building of new shops 'within the city and at Southwark'.[10] On either side of the High Street were public inns and drinking houses – including the *Tabard Inn* where Chaucer's pilgrims in the Canterbury Tales gathered before setting out on their pilgrimage to Canterbury. This inn belonged to the Abbot of Hyde, whose townhouse was close by. By the 1370s Southwark was experiencing a building boom, owing in large part to the presence of immigrants from the Low Countries or Germany, many of whom were engaged in the dyeing and fulling trades – hence their need for proximity to the river, and the area provided sufficient space for the hanging and tentering of cloth. In 1421-2 the Priory was collecting an annual rent of £14 3*s*. 4*d*. from houses and shops and £4 from 'LesTent'. In 1440 the prior and convent leased a 'garden' with houses and 4 'high tenters' and 2 'low tenters' to a fuller and his son for a term of sixty years. In the 1480s the paths leading to the Christ Church townhouse were known as 'Tayntour Aley'.[11] Though the level of rents fluctuated considerably over the

years, between 1422 and 1438 they increased by around 30 per cent and remained stable – probably owing to the influx of German and Flemish immigrants.

The nobility and gentry of Kent needed a London residence 'to attend to their personal business; to negotiate conflicting claims with other members of the aristocracy, to consult their lawyers, to buy cloth and other supplies, and to settle tradesmen's bills'. The needs of religious houses were similar. Christ Church Priory's Southwark property provided a guest house; a place to entertain and meet with members of the aristocracy and gentry; somewhere to gather for intellectual or cultural exchange, and for use as a London office. Supplies and produce could be transported to London from the Priory's Canterbury estates, for use and for sale, and goods could be taken back from London to the Priory. These might include liturgical items, such as wax for candles; items for the household; livery cloth, clothing and leather goods; and imported luxury goods like wine and spices.[12]

In the fifteenth century priors of Christ Church were increasingly dependent on the services of professionally trained lawyers and lay councillors both at local level and in the capital. Often it was from members of the knightly and gentry families of east Kent that the prior sought legal advice and practical support – people like Sir John Fogg, who benefited from the monastery's annual distribution of livery and was received into confraternity with the Priory in 1472.[13] The services of retained common lawyers and those providing advice on the management of the Priory's estates were all crucial in integrating the Priory's affairs within county society. However because of the complexity of much ecclesiastical jurisdiction, especially during vacancies of the see of Canterbury, it was often necessary to employ the expertise of a small group of prominent London lawyers – influential men much involved in the workings of royal government and the archbishop's court. These councillors were required to uphold the interests of Christ Church. One such was John More, father of Sir Thomas More, who served in London as an attorney-at-law for the chapter in 1530.[14]

The Priory's London properties brought in rents from London lawyers, physicians and merchants, and the expertise of such London specialists was needed from time to time, usually in return for payment or the granting of livery. A number of such men were admitted to the Christ Church confraternity, probably also in return for their services.[15] Doctors were occasionally summoned to Canterbury in extreme cases as were apothecaries and surgeons. During the last illness of Prior Elham (1446-1449), Priory accounts show that 16*s*. 8*d*. was paid to '*Roberto medico de London*'. After Elham's death, his grave slab was marked with a brass plaque bought for the sum of £10 6*s*. 8*d*. from John Rowge, marbler of London, and transported from London to Faversham by water.[16] Following the death of Prior John Salisbury's (1438-1446), his will appears to have presented problems for Prior Elham, his successor, which necessitated the dispatch of servants and horses to travel to London and to remain there for three weeks and three days for discussions with the prior's executors involving a payment of £32 19*s*. 9*d*. The Priory also had a significant number of close business associations with merchants of the City of London, who had maintained 'our great stone house in Chepe' since at least the priorate of Henry of Eastry (1285-1331). Many are named in the Priory's confraternity and livery lists.[17] For example, Mayor William Estfield, one of the Priory's most trusted counsellors, was received into confraternity with the Priory

in 1429.[18] In 1447 the Prior and Chapter bought a silver font costing £14 from John Orewell, goldsmith of London. It would seem that this font was sent up to London for royal baptisms until Henry VIII acquired it at the dissolution.[19]

Links between the archbishop of Canterbury and Christ Church Priory were of considerable significance. In Saxon and Norman times Canterbury Cathedral Priory was established as one of a group of monastic cathedrals, virtually peculiar to England, where the bishop, or in the case of Canterbury, the archbishop, had his see and where his *cathedra,* or bishop's throne, was placed within the cathedral. Following the Norman Conquest, William I's archbishop, Lanfranc, though probably originally living his life in common with the monastic community, subsequently established a separate residence adjacent to the Cathedral and the estates and landholdings of the monastery and those of the archbishop were held separately. By 1197, although there was still an archbishop's palace in Canterbury, it was Lambeth Palace in London which had become the archbishop's principal residence. As archbishop of the southern province and primate of all England he invariably played an important role in national and international affairs and it was necessary to be close to Parliament and the court.[20]

In a monastic cathedral it was the prior who for all practical purposes undertook the role of superior of the community, responsible for the overall direction of the monastery and the management of its estates. However, the archbishop remained the titular abbot of the Priory and as such could exert a significant amount of influence. In theory at least, the monastic community had the much-prized right to elect their own titular abbot.[21] In practice, though the formalities of the election procedure for the choice of a new archbishop took place in the Priory's chapter house, the controlling influence over the result remained with the crown and the papacy and the monks were seldom left to make their own choice. Even the election of priors was often not without interference from outside, except during a vacancy of the see, when Christ Church monks had considerable jurisdictional powers. Once elected, the archbishop as titular abbot retained a number of rights and privileges in the monastery, including the appointment of certain senior obedientiaries (office-holders) and the recruitment of novices. Over the centuries these rights were not infrequently the cause of friction and dispute.[22] However, the prior and chapter were often a source of advice and assistance to their archbishops and, on a personal level, individual monks were sent from time to time to consult and advise the archbishop, at Lambeth or at one of his manors, on matters of pressing interest or concern. In many instances it would have been the monk selected from the community to serve as chaplain in the archbishop's household who would have been the principal means of liaison. For example, his advice might be sought before an archbishop made a visitation to the Cathedral Priory.[23]

Many of the prior's duties and responsibilities caused him to be absent from the Priory for considerable periods of time for purposes of business or recreation. He had financial and administrative responsibilities outside Canterbury and was frequently summoned to meetings of Parliament and Convocation. As a 'mitred prior', or one entitled to wear the insignia of a bishop, a prior of Christ Church was authorized, by virtue of his ecclesiastical office, to serve with the Lords Spiritual in the House of Lords at the Palace of Westminster and he visited London and Westminster frequently. During these London visits, meetings with the archbishop

must often have taken place in Lambeth.[24] During the prior's absence from the monastery the subprior assumed his responsibilities in the Priory, aided by his assistants, the third and fourth prior.

The prior's stable in the Cathedral precincts was well-stocked and staffed by a stableman, groom and farrier. The route taken by the prior and his entourage from Canterbury to London varied, but the chosen way was often from Canterbury via Sittingbourne and Rochester to Gravesend by road. There they would spend the night, continuing their journey to their town house in Southwark by barge the following day. When Edward IV's sister, Margaret of York, set out from the Royal Wardrobe in London on 18 June 1468 for her marriage to Duke Charles the Bold of Burgundy, she left with a large retinue, including the king and his two younger brothers. Her procession crossed London Bridge and the court spent the night at the abbey of Stratford on the south side of the Thames. Their journey took three days, stopping at Dartford, Rochester and Sittingbourne en route for Canterbury, where Margaret made a pilgrimage to the shrine of St Thomas before continuing to Margate where she embarked for the port of Sluis in Flanders on Saturday 25 June, as recorded by Brother John Stone in his 'chronicle' (Stone fol. 82r and 83).

In the fifteenth century, John Stone, a monk of Christ Church Priory, wrote a manuscript, a contemporary copy of which survives in Cambridge Corpus Christi College Manuscript 417. In introducing his work, Stone declares it to be the 'book of John Stone, a monk of Christ Church Canterbury, which was compiled as a result of his great work in the year 1467 in his fiftieth year as a monk' (Stone fol 1).[25] Stone took the habit of a monk in 1417 and lived in the monastic community for a large part of the century, dying around the year 1480 in the monastic infirmary. In 1461 Stone was appointed to the busy and responsible office of third prior. His writing reveals much about Canterbury Cathedral Priory in the fifteenth century and provides a considerable insight into the convent's relationships with the diversity of visitors who for various reasons availed themselves of the Priory's hospitality. Interestingly, though Stone spent all his life in Kent, he had a personal link with London in that he was ordained priest on 20 December 1421 in St Paul's Cathedral together with two fellow junior monks with whom he had served as a novice. The ordination was carried out by the newly translated bishop of London, John Kemp, who was born in Olantigh in the parish of Wye, close to Canterbury.[26] There is no known record of any other Christ Church monk ever having been ordained at St Paul's at least during the period 1320-1535.

Stone lived at the Priory through the reigns of four archbishops of Canterbury: Henry Chichele (1414-1443), John Stafford (1443-1452), John Kempe (1452-1454) and Thomas Bourchier (1454-1486). Despite the fact that Chichele was much involved in national politics and that his principal residence was in London at Lambeth Palace, during his twenty-nine years as primate much of his time was spent in his Kent and Surrey manors and he was regularly to be seen at his Canterbury palace. The Priory was well-prepared for his election in chapter on 12 March 1411, three weeks after Archbishop Arundel's death, and he was provided to the see by Pope John XXIII (antipope 1410-29) without objection.[27] As titular abbot, Chichele was on the friendliest terms with Prior John Woodnesburgh (1411-1425), sharing his artistic tastes and love of books and his delight in order and ceremony. Chichele maintained a good relationship with the Priory throughout

his time as archbishop, bestowing on it numerous gifts and using his influence unstintingly on the Priory's behalf. He even successfully acted as the tactful and impartial arbitrator between the Priory and the city of Canterbury in a number of legal disputes and his servants were active in county matters.[28] Chichele's influence was to be seen also in the culture and educational standards of the monastery, where he caused a new library to be built above the prior's chapel, stocking it with a magnificent collection of books and encouraging university attendance for suitably able monks.[29]

Chichele's death on 12 April 1443 would appear to have been a matter of genuine regret for the Christ Church community. His obit gives details of his funerary cortege. From Lambeth Palace

> his body was carried to Canterbury … with 200 horsemen and a great many noblemen and many servants. One hundred torches were burning continuously around his catafalque with a most carefully prepared image of his likeness clothed in episcopal robes on top of the coffin in which his body was enclosed which was carried on a hearse … The whole convent went to the Westgate of the city of Canterbury to meet the body which was received with honour by the prior and the sub-prior … The convent then went in procession up to the door of the church singing devoutly … And the coffin with the image was taken from the hearse by eight senior brothers of the church on their shoulders and reverently placed on the ground near the high altar. The solemn exequies for his soul were celebrated the same day with solemn sung Mass at dawn, and his body was buried with honour beneath the floor near the north wall of the choir (Cawston, fol. 25v).[30]

Following the death of an archbishop his great seal was returned to the king in accordance with the decrees of ecumenical councils.[31] Stone refers to the procedure adopted for the installation of archbishops Stafford, Kempe and Bourchier in some detail, indicating not least the importance of maintaining the correct procedure. The papacy had an immediate interest in the appointment of an archbishop, wanting on the one hand a metropolitan who would be loyal to Rome, but who would also serve as a good intermediary between the pontiff and the king. For his part the king sought to limit the power of the papacy. In wishing to limit papal interference in England's affairs, the king insisted on the right to grant permission for the election of a new archbishop (*congé d'élire*). The significance of the affect that these two powerful external forces could have upon the Priory, and the complications this could cause, is well illustrated in Stone's record of what happened following Archbishop Chichele's death. Stone records that on 22 April 1443, Brothers John Elham and Robert Linton, 'bachelor of sacred theology, were sent to the king … for a licence to elect the archbishop' (Stone fol. 27v). Great importance was attached to the following of custom and the proper canonical procedure, and it was required that one of the brothers selected to seek permission to elect the new archbishop should be a graduate. They returned on 1 May with the 'will of the king to the prior'. On 19 May 'Humphrey, earl of Stafford arrived at the Priory on the king's behalf and … came into chapter', declaring the will of the king. The election of John Stafford took place in the chapter house on 20 May, with three doctors of canon law and notaries present 'according to the form of the oath' (Stone fol. 27v). However, Stone notes that it was on 15 May that 'John Stafford bishop of Bath and Wells was translated by Pope Eugenius IV to the Church of Canterbury, that is

to say *before* the election'. He records that it was on 19 May that the result of the election was carried to the Roman Curia, in order to obtain a papal Bull granting approval. The papal Bull was finally delivered to the prior on 5 August 1443, read out in chapter and promulgated 'in the presence of everyone'.

> After dinner that day, the prior of this church set out to carry the crozier to the lord archbishop and arrived at his residence in London the following day. Immediately after dinner [that day], there was a short collation [a talk or reading] given in the presence of the archbishop … and other lords. The prior handed the crozier to [the elect], which he accepted with great reverence and humility.

The enthronement of an archbishop was a great event in Canterbury, involving the presence of numerous guests. Included were bishops and abbots, of course, but also members of the aristocracy and wealthy gentry, a number of whom had properties both in London and in Kent. The proximity of the royal court and central administration in London on the one hand, and of the Channel ports on the other, encouraged a number of those with influence at court to settle in the county.[32] Such men were of great importance to the Priory, which had at least as much to gain from their influence and support as from their generosity as benefactors. On 26 January 1454 Stone records the enthronement of Archbishop Thomas Bourchier at Canterbury Cathedral (Stone fol. 52-52v). The list of those in attendance at the dinner following the ceremony illustrates well the distinguished nature of the gathering. Dining in the Archbishop's hall the archbishop took the central position, with John Kempe bishop of London, the bishop of Rochester and the prior of Christ Church to his right, and to his left William Waynfleet, bishop of Winchester, the suffragan bishop of Ross, and John Tiptoft, earl of Worcester, a member of the king's council and treasurer of England. Also in the Archbishop's hall were abbots and priors of religious houses, a number of whom had participated in the liturgy.

In a second hall, the 'White Hall', the powerful Humphrey Stafford, Duke of Buckingham was present with his son Humphrey, Earl of Stafford. Buckingham was Archbishop Bourchier's half-brother, through their mother Anne – granddaughter of Edward III. Buckingham was married to Margaret, daughter of Edmund Duke of Somerset. Buckingham was constable of Dover Castle and warden of the Cinque Ports. After the death of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester in 1447, Buckingham was granted Gloucester's manor of Penshurst in Kent, and was accorded precedence over other English dukes. He had served with Henry VI in France, and was one of the best-connected and wealthiest landowners in England and, during the early 1450s, among the most influential of Kent's magnates.[33] A loyal member of the royal council, Buckingham sought to achieve some reconciliation between the factions of Lancaster and York. He remained faithful to his oath of allegiance to Henry VI until his death at the Battle of Northampton in 1460. Buckingham supported the regime headed by Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, who in 1453 obtained a lease of the house in the Cathedral Precincts known as *Meister Omers* (see below). In 1454, when Edmund's daughter Isabella died in London, her body was brought to Canterbury Cathedral for burial, as reported by Stone (fol. 48v). Edmund's eldest son Henry Beaufort, marquis of Dorset, was present at Bouchier's enthronement representing the Beaufort family – ardent Lancastrian supporters and major benefactors of Christ Church Priory. Also seated in the White

Hall were the Archbishop's brothers, Henry, Viscount Eu, William Lord FitzWarin and John, Lord Berners; as were Edward Neville, Lord Bergaveny, son of Ralph, Earl of Westmorland and Joan Beaufort, daughter of John of Gaunt; John, viscount Beaumont, married to Katherine Neville, sister of the earl of Warwick; and John Talbot, earl of Shrewsbury – who was well-known as a visitor to the Priory. Talbot became treasurer of England in 1456 and was killed with Buckingham defending King Henry VI at the Battle of Northampton (1460). As can be seen, kinship networks were sometimes much interwoven and it was not uncommon for families to be interrelated several times within two or three generations.[34]

Representing the senior ranks of the gentry was Sir John Cheyne, who served as Member of Parliament for Kent. By 1452 he was victualler of Calais and by 1455, sheriff of Kent. From 1450 to 1460, Cheyne was deputy constable of Dover Castle, second in command to the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports. He was also the presiding official in the county court and the shire's chief financial officer. He was a kinsman of the Beauforts and steward of some of Queen Margaret's properties. These activities gave Cheyne a position of influence at the heart of local and national affairs that, together with his wide circle of contacts, would have made him a valued adviser both to the archbishop and the Priory. Sir Thomas Kyriell, was an important figure locally who had served in France as part of the Beaufort retinue and was Buckingham's lieutenant of Dover. Sir Thomas Brown was a Londoner, who had purchased the Kent manor of Eythorne, been Member of Parliament and sheriff of Kent during the 1440s, and had served John Tiptoft, earl of Worcester and was to remain loyal to King Henry.[35] Many such men, holding local office and being well versed in legal and administrative matters, were also active at court or in Parliament at Westminster, and the Priory was increasingly dependent on their services and advice.[36] Many were also associated with the Priory in confraternity and were often in receipt of a livery.

Members of the royal family visited Canterbury Cathedral on numerous occasions, though not all royal visits originated in or led directly to London. The itinerary of Henry VI shows him to have been constantly on the move.[37] Unlike the aristocracy, the king and his immediate family had no town house as such, other than the Tower of London, though he often spent time in Westminster. From time to time it was found convenient for the king or his family to stay overnight in one of their royal 'wardrobes' – places principally designed as storehouses for valuables and other goods. In 1361 Edward III purchased a house in the parish of St Andrew 'by the wardrobe', close to Blackfriars, to serve as his Great Wardrobe and his Queen and the Black Prince also had wardrobes in the City which included ample accommodation in which it might be convenient to break a journey.[38]

John Stone records at least a dozen visits by Henry VI to the Priory, the first being in April 1430 as the young boy-king of England made his way to France to be crowned as king of the French in 1431, the only English king to have such a coronation. He and his Lancastrian predecessors had been accepted as lawful kings and allegiance to Henry and loyalty to the Lancastrian dynasty on the part of Stone, and of the monastic community, was not questioned. Moreover Henry had been duly anointed as king of England at Westminster Abbey in 1429 with the holy oils of consecration believed to have been given to St Thomas of Canterbury by the Vigin Mary.[39] Stone's record of Henry's visits noted that they were for the

purpose of pilgrimage and he observed the manner in which the king participated fully in the liturgy and in procession. The Henry whom the monastic community of Christ Church had observed over the years from their places in the choir and in procession would, no doubt, have confirmed Polydore Vergil's view of a king 'careful for his soul's health' and 'such things as tended to the salvation thereof'.[40] Even the iconography of the figures of kings on the pulpitum of Canterbury Cathedral (*c.*1450) from Ethelbert, the founder of the church, to Henry VI appears to emphasise the legitimacy of the Lancastrian dynasty.

The number of Edward IV's visits recorded by Stone is similar to those he noted for Henry VI. However for Edward the matter of pilgrimage is seldom mentioned. Edward IV's visits were motivated more by politics than piety and the Cathedral Priory served as a comfortable and convenient venue to conduct his business. On some occasions the City of Canterbury also provided hospitality for royal visitors though usually there was little display or pageantry for such visits. A tent, or 'pavillion' called 'le Hale' was erected in Blean Woods, about a mile outside the city, supplied and provisioned for the visit by local citizens. In the city accounts records of expenses occur such as 'making the Hale in Blean against the coming of the king' and 'paid for work done at Le Hale'.[41]

By 1460 many of the elite of Kent had deserted the Lancastrian crown and Edward IV's marriage to Elizabeth Woodville in 1464 further altered the structure of Kentish politics. Before the triumphant Yorkist success at the Battle of Towton in 1461, Queen Elizabeth's father Lord Rivers and his sons had been loyal to the Lancastrian cause. Following Henry VI's defeat at the battle of Towton on 29 March 1461 the Woodville family made their peace with Edward IV. The Woodvilles had long-established ties within Kent and their growing prominence at court brought about an increase in the political influence of their kinsmen, especially the Kentish Fogg and Haute families. Fogg had, with Sir John Scott and Robert Horne, been amongst the first to join the Yorkist earls on their arrival in Kent in June 1460 – a defection recorded by Stone (fol. 65). These men rose swiftly to prominence under the Yorkist administration and the new royal affinity dominated local administrative machinery in Kent from the beginning of Edward's reign.[42] The visits of Edward to the Priory recorded by Stone, if extracted from the text and read together, suggest a strained relationship with the Priory.[43]

The road between London and Canterbury was, of course, travelled in both directions, and Stone records the arrival and departure of bishops and abbots, emissaries and ambassadors, rebels, penitents and pilgrims. Cardinal Beaufort, half-brother to Henry IV and bishop of Winchester, visited the Priory regularly, engaged in peace negotiations and in diplomatic affairs. He was distinguished, wealthy and well-connected and was a powerful ally to Christ Church and was received into confraternity in 1433 in return for 'the great benefits he had conferred upon their house'.[44] He was granted the right to construct a purpose-built hall in the range of buildings within the Cathedral precincts known as *Meister Omers*. The new hall was sometimes referred to as 'Le Cardinallys Place'.[45] In his later years the Cardinal spent much of his time at his new residence in the Cathedral precincts, even having his vestments and episcopal throne moved to Canterbury, although he died at his palace in Winchester (Stone fol. 35). He also had a town house in Southwark. Between 1438 and Cardinal Beaufort's death on 11 April

1447 ambassadors of France and Burgundy visited the Priory, often on their way to London to confer with the king, and their visits are recorded briefly in the folios of Stone.

In 1440, Zeno de Castiglione, bishop of Bayeux, 'a member of the household of Pope Eugenius IV', came to Canterbury 'by royal licence' on his way to London. Stone notes that he 'attended all the offices, both day and night' (Stone fol. 25v). In June 1442, Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester came to the Priory on pilgrimage, and the following day Lord Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury came – at that time Constable of France (Stone fol. 26-26v). Ambassadors of the 'king of the French' came to Canterbury in July 1445, and were present on 7 July to participate in the liturgy of the feast of the Translation of St Thomas, leaving the following day for London (fol. 32-32v). And in August 1451 ambassadors were again in Canterbury en route to negotiations in London (fol. 44). These examples of visits recorded by Stone are just a few of many.

The scope and focus of this essay has necessarily been selective. However, its intention has been to convey something of the complexity, diversity and importance of the network of contacts which existed between Canterbury Cathedral Priory and the world beyond the precincts, especially London, in the fifteenth century. On the one hand the monastic community was charged with the offering of prayers for the souls of the living and the dead, particularly of those associated with them in confraternity. On the other hand the constant arrival at the Cathedral and Priory of distinguished visitors engaged in local and national affairs, on matters of state or on pilgrimage, could be disruptive to monastic routine. Using in part the evidence of John Stone's account of life at the Priory in the fifteenth century, it is possible to envisage something of the nature and scale of the secular influence exerted on the Priory by people of all levels of society, but by royalty in particular. The presence of royalty could be inconvenient and expensive. For example, in 1469, Stone records that on 'Wednesday [14 June] the duchess of York came to Canterbury, the mother of the most illustrious King Edward IV. She slept in the prior's lodging, occupying it as had the duke of Clarence, but not with so great a household' (Stone fols 87 and 87v).

The offering of hospitality was, and is, an important part of Benedictine practice. In the later middle ages Christ Church Priory was required to receive kings, queens and the aristocracy; foreign dignitaries; cardinals, abbots and other ecclesiastics; ambassadors and commanders of armies; the local gentry and pilgrims. However, one thing that emerges from a close study of Stone's manuscript is the way in which visitors were received at the Priory and the amount they participated in its liturgical life. The overall impression gained is of the centrality for this Benedictine community of the *opus dei* – the work of God. This can be easily lost in the multiplicity of recorded occurrences, from the visits of royalty to the weather. However, the fact remains that whoever entered into the precincts of Christ Church Priory, it was their participation in the rhythms of the liturgical year and the canonical hours, the Masses, the liturgy, the commemoration of the dead and the ritual and traditions of this religious house which are unfailingly recorded throughout Stone's book. He noted how visitors were received; what prayers were said; what services they attended; whether they took part in processions; where

they sat in the choir; who was the celebrant at Mass; what vestments were worn; whether they visited the shrine of St Thomas. Whatever the disorder of local, national or international affairs, and however much external demands affected the community, it is the order, the ceremony, the regulation and the tradition of the monastery which ensured that, in general, a central feature of Benedictine life – its stability – was maintained.

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ENDNOTES

1 Martha Carlin, *Medieval Southwark* (London, 1996), p. 192.

2 H.E. Malden (ed.), 1967, *A history of the County of Surrey*, Victoria County History, vol. 2, p. 120.

3 Caroline Barron, 1995, 'Centres of Conspicuous Consumption: the Aristocratic Town House in London 1200-1550', in *The London Journal*, vol. 20, No. 1, pp. 1-15, 4.

4 The prior seems to have leased out the Christ Church property in Southwark by 1512-13. By 1555 the house had been converted into a public inn called the Flower de Luce' probably the area marked out on the Plan and Gazeteer of Southwark High Street *c.*1550 as numbers 133 and 134, Flower de liz Court and Flower de liz Yard. (William Morgan, *The A to Z of Charles II's London 1682,* ed. Ann Saunder (London Topographical Society, 2013), p. 66). Diagram shown in Carlin *Medieval Southwark*, p. 34 (partly reproduced in this article at Fig. 2). The great growth of innkeeping made it unnecessary by this time for provincial houses to maintain their townhouses for their original use (Carlin p. 62).

5 Baron, 'Conspicuous Consumption', p. 4.

6 Carlin, *Medieval Southwark*, pp. 26, 62.

7 This information has been derived from that to be found in M.D. Lobel (ed.), *The British Atlas of Historic Towns: The City of London from Prehistoric Times to c.1520* (Oxford, 1989).

8 Caroline Barron, 2004, *London in the Later Middle Ages* (Oxford), p. 46.

9 Carlin, *Medieval Southwark*, pp. 54, 62.

10 Mavis Mate, 1984, 'Property Investment by Canterbury Cathedral Priory 1250-1400', in *Journal of British Studies*, Volume 23, No. 2, pp. 1-21, 19.

11 Carlin, pp. 48, 54-55.

12 Baron, 'Conspicuous Consumption', pp. 6, 9.

13 See Canterbury Cathedral Archives DCc. Register S, fol.250v.

14 Barrie Dobson, 1995, 'The Monks of Canterbury in the Later Middle Ages, 1220-1540', in *A History of Canterbury Cathedral,* eds Patrick Collinson, Nigel Ramsay and Margaret Sparks (Oxford), pp. 69-153, 147.

15 The prime objective of confraternity was the offering of prayers for the living and the dead. The prayers of the living could benefit the souls in purgatory, and equally the saintly dead could intercede on behalf of the living. The daily singing of the office of the dead had been a feature of Benedictine monasticism from at least the mid-tenth century and monks and priests commemorated those in confraternity with them, especially the lately dead. For further information about the Confraternity of Christ Church Priory, see Meriel Connor, 'Brotherhood and Confraternity at Canterbury Cathedral Priory in the Fifteenth Century: the Evidence of John Stone's Chronicle', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, CXXVIII, 2008, 143-164.

16 C.E. Woodruff, 1941, 'Notes on the inner Life and Domestic Economy of the Priory of Christ Church Canterbury in the Fifteenth Century, in *Archaeologia Cantiana*, LIII, 4-16, 6; Christopher Wilson, 'Medieval Monuments', in *A History of Canterbury Cathedral*, pp. 450-510, 492.

17 For priory livery lists see Oxford Bodleian Library Manuscript 165. See for example fols 186, 191, 196, 201v.

18 Dobson, 'Monks of Canterbury', pp. 146-147. A number of accounts survive referring to expeditions to London undertaken by the prior and other monks. For example, CCA DE 16, 17, 18, 96; *Literae Cantuariensis*, vol. i., 200-1, 268, 400-1. The importance of those providing specialized and professional skills as councillors was analysed in detail by R.A.L. Smith, *Canterbury Cathedral Priory: A Study in Monastic Administration* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 68-82.

19 C.E. Woodruff, 'Inner Life and Domestic Economy', p. 12.

20 Greatrex, Joan, *Biographical Register of English Cathedral Priories of the Province of Canterbury, 1066-1540* (Oxford, 1997), p. 51.

21 In practice it was often the case that the need to obtain *Conge d'elire* from the king, and consent in the form of a papal bull meant that the prior and Chapter's choice was rejected.

22 See for example the papal appointment of Archbishop Stephen Langton following the death of Archbishop Hubert Walter in July 1205, and many other examples Dobson, 'Monks of Canterbury', pp. 67-83.

23 *Ibid.*, pp. 78-9.

24 *Ibid.*, pp. 90-1.

25 Cambridge Corpus Christi College MS 417. For a full translation of the text of this manuscript with an extended introduction and notes, see Meriel Connor, 'John Stone, Monk of Christ Church Canterbury and his Chronicle, 1417-1472 (unpubl. M.Phil. dissertation, University of London, 2001. See also, Meriel Connor, *John Stone's Chronicle Christ Church Priory, Canterbury 1417-1472, a selected translation and introduction* (Medieval Institute Publications, Kalamazoo, 2010). For a transcript of the Latin text, see Searle, W.G., ed., *Chronicle of John Stone: Monk of Christchurch Canterbury, 1415-1471* (Cambridge, 1902). All these works are available for reference at Canterbury Cathedral Library.

26 Joan Greatrex, *Biographical Register*, p. 292.

27 Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury (1399-1414), played a leading part in the revolution that established Henry IV on the throne following the deposition of Richard II.

28 E.F. Jacob, 'Chichele and Canterbury' in *Studies of Medieval History presented to F.M. Powicke*, eds. R.W. Hurst, W.A. Pantin and R.W. Southern (Oxford, 1948), pp. 386-404, pp. 386-388. E.F. Jacob, *Archbishop Henry Chichele* (London, 1967), pp. 10-20; David Grummitt, 'Kent and National Politics 1399-1461', in *Later Medieval Kent 1220-1540*, ed. Sheila Sweetinburgh (Woodbridge, 2010), pp. 235-271, 241.

29 Nigel Ramsay, 'The Cathedral Archives and Library', in *Canterbury Cathedral*, pp. 341-407, 364.

30 Canterbury Cathedral Archive DCc Lit.MS D12 (Profession and Obit Lists of Thomas Cawston), fol. 25v. Expenses incurred by the prior for travelling to London at the time of Chichele's death appear in CCL DCc Prior's Roll 6 (1442-1443).

31 Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils: Nicea to Lateran, ed. Norman B. Tanner (London, 1990), pp. 470-471.

32 Peter Fleming, 'The Landed Elite, 1300-1500', in *Later Medieval Kent, 1220-1540,* ed. Sheila Sweetinburgh (Woodbridge, 2010), pp. 209-233, 223.

33 For the election and the enthronement of Archbishop Bourchier see Stone fols 50v-53. Guests recorded as being in attendance at Bourchier's enthronement include the following listed in the Christ Church confraternity lists in BL MS Arundel 68: John Talbot, earl of Shrewsbury (fol. 58v), who also received a livery from Christ Church (Bodl. MS Tanner 165, fol.122); William Bourchier, Lord Fitzwarin (fol. 60v); John Bourchier, Lord Berners (fol. 60v); William Bourchier, count of Eu (fol. 58v), together with other family members. For the Stafford family, see Carole Rawcliffe, *The Staffords, earls of Stafford and Dukes of Buckingham, 1394-1521* (Cambridge, 1978). For John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, see A.J. Pollard, *John Talbot and the War in France, 1427-1453* (London, 1983). For the political influence of these families, see Malcolm Mercer, 'Kent National Politics, 1437-1534: the Royal Affinity and a County Elite' (unpubl. doctoral thesis, University of London, School of Economic and Political Science, 1994).

34 Fleming, 'Landed Elite', p. 232.

[35] David Grummitt, 'Kent and National Politics, 1399-1461', in *Later Medieval Kent,* ed. Sheila Sweetinburgh (Woodbridge, 2010), pp. 235-250, 248-250.

[36] Dobson, 'Monks of Canterbury', p. 147.

[37] See for example Bertram Wolffe, *Henry VI* (London, New Edition 2001), the Itinerary of Henry VI, 1436-1461, pp. 361-371.

[38] Caroline Barron, 'Centres of Conspicuous Consumption', p. 8.

[39] For the legend of the holy oil, see Christopher Wilson, 'The Tomb of Henry IV and the Holy Oil of St Thomas of Canterbury', in *Medieval Architecture and its Intellectual Context,* eds Eric Fernie and Paul Crossley (London, 1990), pp. 181-88; Roy Strong, *Coronation. From the 8th to the 21st Century* (London, 2005), pp. 116-120.

[40] See Henry Ellis, ed., *Polydore Vergil's English History* (Camden Society, 1844), pp. 70-71.

[41] Canterbury Cathedral Archive and Library CC/FA/2, ff.20v, 34, 95v; CC/FA/3, ff.11, 19v; CC/FA/1, ff.61v.

[42] Malcolm Mercer, 'Kent and National Politics, 1461-1509', in *Later Medieval Kent*, ed. Sheila Sweetinburgh (Woodbridge, 2010), pp. 251-271, 251.

[43] The political interests and loyalties of the monastic community of Christ Church Priory during the fifteenth century are discussed in Meriel Connor, 'The Political Allegiances of Christ Church Priory 1400-1472: the Evidence of John Stone's Chronicle', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, CXXVII, 2007, 383-406.

[44] For the Cardinal's confraternity, see BL MS Arundel 68, fol. 58.

[45] Margaret Sparks, *Canterbury Cathedral Precincts. A Historical Survey* (Canterbury, 2007), pp. 49-50; 144; C.E. Woodruff and W. Danks, *Memorials of the Cathedral and Priory of Christ in* Canterbury (London, 1912), p. 201.