RESEARCH NOTES – MEDIEVAL

AN IMPORTANT SOURCE FOR KENTISH HISTORY: THE CARTULARY OF ST MARTIN'S PRIORY, DOVER

The History of the Priory

In the early twelfth century the priory of St Martin at Dover was made dependent on the archbishop and Benedictine community of Christ Church Canterbury. Dover was always overshadowed by Christ Church, but it had some importance in its own right. It was nowhere near so handsomely endowed as the priory at Canterbury, one of the richest in England, but it had lands in some profitable areas in the vicinity as well as the tithes of fish, some profits of the port, and toll of the market. Dover was the gateway to England. The situation of the priory in the major southern port of entry into England gave it prominence. The royal court came frequently to the town and to the great royal fortress on the hill on its way to and from the Continent. The priory and its dependent hospital of St Bartholomew at Buckland, near Dover, were on a route frequented by most travellers entering or leaving England. The Maison Dieu, or hospital, founded in 1220, the year of the translation of Archbishop Thomas Becket, also received numerous travellers and pilgrims. The curious ceremony of the trendyll, when every three years a wax taper whose length was the circumference of the town walls was wound on a great reel and sent by the monks of Dover to St Thomas's shrine at Canterbury on the eve of the feast of Becket's translation (6 July),[1] perhaps symbolises a small community which, in spite of its loss of independence, showed a remarkable ability to organize itself. It is impossible to estimate the income and status that resulted from its location but it certainly seems that it gained a certain confidence and resilience from its position. Proximity to the Continent, however, was not always beneficial and the priory suffered significantly from French raids on the town in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

An ancient minster was in all probability established in the castle at Dover. Later chronical tradition attributed this foundation to Eadbald, King of Kent (d.640), who had provided for 22 secular canons. In *c.*696 Wihtred, King of Kent, transferred the canons to the church of St Martin near the market place in the town of Dover. Secular canons remained at St Martin's until King Henry I gave St Martin's to the church of Canterbury in 1130. In the following year, Archbishop William of Corbeil with the support and approval of the King replaced the secular canons with canons who lived a communal life observing the rule of St Augustine – he himself was an Augustinian canon and had been prior of St Osyth's in Essex before becoming archbishop; possibly he intended to include canons rather than monks in his household. He began the construction of a new priory on a site where the road to London divided via Canterbury and via Folkestone. William of Corbeil's successor

to the see of Canterbury in 1139, was Theobald, a former monk of the famous Benedictine community at Bec in Normandy, and sympathetic to the wishes of the monks of Christ Church, Canterbury, who wanted the priory at Dover to follow the Benedictine rule as their dependency. It was said, indeed, that the monks of Canterbury had succeeded in installing Benedictine monks at Dover while William of Corbeil (d.1136) was on his death bed. Future archbishops were to have the problem of curbing the ambitions of Christ Church.

Archbishop Theobald established the Benedictine community at Dover with great care. He obtained confirmations of Dover as a priory following the rule of St Benedict and under the authority of the Archbishop and the see of Canterbury from Popes Innocent II, Eugenius III, Anastasius IV and Adrian IV, and from Kings Stephen and Henry II. The prior of Canterbury was to have no jurisdiction over Dover priory, not even when the see of Canterbury was vacant. The monks of Dover were to make their profession at Canterbury and their prior, who was to be appointed by the archbishop, was to be a monk of Christ Church.[2] Most of the priors appointed by the archbishops until the suppression of the house in 1535 had held office at Canterbury, notably as sacrist or as cellarer and had administrative experience enabling them to run a small community. Only one monk of Dover ever became prior of the house. Prior Richard of Dover who became archbishop of Canterbury was originally a Canterbury monk; he had been chaplain to Archbishop Theobald and was promoted to the see on the death of Thomas Becket. In spite of the close links, relations between the Benedictine community at Christ Church and that at Dover were rarely good and often hostile.

The new Benedictine community at Dover were to have the same possessions and rights as their predecessors. There were some twenty prebends and Theobald encouraged further endowment. Theobald augmented the monks' income by transferring his right to levy toll. He encouraged the burgesses to give a tithe of all their fish caught in the year, not just a tithe of herring caught during October and November, promising them an indulgence of 15 days remission of their sins. Indulgences were also granted to those contributing towards building and enlarging the new priory and to those supporting St Bartholomew's hospital which had been founded in 1141 as a dependency of the priory.

The Archives of the Priory

The French raids on the town occurred sporadically throughout the medieval period; they were particularly severe during the reign of King John and in 1295 when the French carried off some of the deeds of the house. These misfortunes led to the compilation of a remarkable cartulary or register of the deeds in the fourteenth century.

Between 1372 and 1373, two monks of St Martin's Priory, Dover, John Whitefelde and Robert de Welle, with the assistance of the subprior, Thomas of Canterbury, and at the cost of the Prior, John Newnham, set to work to catalogue their archives. The enterprise began with a complete re-organization of the Priory's documents, many of which had suffered from loss, destruction, and removal, attributed to earlier French raids on the town. After sorting what remained, the monk-archivists produced two complete copies in book-form of all their muniments, one book or

cartulary for the priory (now Lambeth Palace Library MS 241), the other, much smaller, for their hospital of St Bartholomew. The monks thus secured the survival of many texts of their documents for posterity. They crowned their achievement in 1389 with a superb catalogue of the manuscripts in their library.[3]

Few original documents survived the Dissolution of the monastery in 1535 and of the hospital some time later. Fortunately, however, the two cartularies passed to various local men with interests in the estates. The hospital of St Bartholomew was brought to an end in 1539 and the mayor of Dover, John Bowles, was granted the property for life. The hospital was later granted by King Edward VI to Sir Thomas Palmer in 1553. The whereabouts of its cartulary is then untraced (probably it remained with the Palmers) until 1719 when it was in the possession of Walter Clavell who died in 1740. Some time after that date Bishop Richard Rawlinson (d.1755), the great collector and antiquarian, acquired the cartulary which then passed with his collection of manuscripts into the Bodleian Library in Oxford (MS Rawlinson B 335).

After the dissolution of the Priory, King Henry VIII granted its lands to the archbishop of Canterbury. Thomas Cranmer leased the properties to Henry Bingham of Wingham in 1535. The first entry in the priory cartulary by one of its new owners was written by a certain Master Byngham who wished to record the markings of two swans that he 'put to the ryver' above Westgate Mill (Canterbury) on 21 November 1559. This is more likely to be George Bingham, esquire, of the city of Canterbury, rather than Henry, from whom the cartulary passed into the possession of Henry Dyneley a lessee in Hougham – this was probably in 1570. Soon after, possibly in the same year, the cartulary was sold to John Parker, son of Archbishop Matthew Parker (1559-75), who held a number of administrative offices during his father's tenure of the archbishopric and became steward of the household under Archbishop Whitgift (1583-1604). John lent the 'leiger book' to Edward D'Arcy to produce in evidence before the Court of Wards. The Lord Treasurer espied the cartulary and 'supposyng that somewhat in itt might belonge to her Majestie' ordered it to be kept by the Court. Parker petitioned Whitgift to secure its return explaining that the leiger book would throw light on the dispute over tithes between two lessees of the Priory land in Hougham. The petition was successful; however, the cartulary was not restored to its rightful owner, but to the archbishopric, in whose possession it has remained. John Parker, whose property it was, may have been happy for it to have secured a protected home among the archiepiscopal archive for it was he who had realised its importance to the administrators of the archiepiscopal estates.

The late Melanie Barber, deputy archivist and librarian of Lambeth Palace Library, soon after her appointment in 1966, embarked on an edition of the Dover cartulary (Lambeth Palace Library MS 241) which was accepted for publication as a volume in the Series of Kent Records of the Kent Archaeological Society. But demands on her unrivalled knowledge of the holdings of the Library and Archives gained over 36 years and work in other areas precluded her finishing the task. However, her papers, now in Lambeth Palace Library include editions of some of the earlier documents (before 1300), with descriptive headings in English, and calendared entries in English for many of the post thirteenth-century documents. There are some 700 charters in all.

Melanie Barber has discussed in detail the archival scheme of the four *scrinia* (groups of documents, possibly indicating separate chests in which they were kept) and their relationship with the cartulary. (This can be consulted in the Lambeth Palace Library). Here it is proposed to clarify the contents of the cartulary in the order found in the list of Titles.

The Titles start with the charters under the heading DOVER:

FUNDACIO PRIORATUS foundation of the priory

CUSTUMA MARIS (certain rights from wrecks) and the *PISCACIO* (the fish tithes)

the *DOMUS DEI* (or *MAISON DIEU*, St Mary's, a hospital founded by Hubert de Burgh for sick poor and for poor wayfarers and pilgrims)

PENSIONS – payments to the vicars of the churches of which the priory took the rectorial income

INDULGENCES granted by archbishops, popes and others.

Then come:

LANDS AND CHARTERS NEAR THE MONASTERY

the wards of Dover (Biggin ward, St Mary ward, Nicholas ward, George ward, Canons ward, Monks ward, Mankyn ward, Halvenden ward, Cliff street, Upmarket ward, Horspole ward) – unassigned wards

THE ALMONRY

THE HOSPITAL (St Bartholomew's)

Then follow the priory's properties (all in Kent) in the following order:

Charlton (by Dover)
Buckland (by Dover)
Dudmanscombe (Buckland par.)
Guston (by Dover)
St Margaret at Cliffe
Cricklehole (Crixhall, Staple par.)[5]
Deal
Worth Minnis
Sandwich
Stonar
Canterbury
Cockering (Thanington par.)
Kingston
Sibertswold
Coldred and Popeshale
Brandred (Acrise par.)
Hougham
Farthingloe (Hougham par.)
Twetton (Twitham, Wingham par.)[4]
Poulton (by Dover)
Stansted (? part of Poulton)
Appledore[6]
Ovenhamm grange [not located]
Redynge grange (Reading Street, Tenterden par.)[7]
Cnocke (Knock, Stone cum Ebony par.)[8]
'Waldis' [not located]
'Walderne' [not located]
Isle of Harty[9]
Wingham

Some later charters were added.

Many of the charters that concern the foundation and endowment are royal, episcopal and papal, and have been printed. The royal charters of Henry I and

Henry II for Dover are in William Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*.[10] A new edition of Henry I's charters is promised and a new edition of Henry II's charters is forthcoming. The papal confirmations of the twelfth-century popes have been edited in *Papsturkunden in England*, ii, by W. Holtzmann.[11] The charters of the archbishops of Canterbury from 1070 to 1205 are now fully edited. Theobald's charters 1139-61 were edited and printed by Avrom Saltman in his *Theobald archbishop of Canterbury*.[12]

The charters of Thomas Becket, Richard of Dover, Baldwin, and Hubert Walter have appeared in the English Episcopal Acta series: Canterbury vol. 28 1070-1136 (2004), vol. 2 1162-1190 (1986) and vol. 3 1193-1205 (1986). All the charters from these archbishops, wherever they occur in the cartulary, are now in print.

C.R. Haines, *Dover Priory* (Cambridge, 1930; CUP reprint 2013) remains a classic of its kind; however, in the last eighty years, much work has been done on the history of estates, on monasteries (in all aspects) and on localities, as well as the structures of medieval government and administration, both secular and religious.

When Melanie Barber set out to edit the cartulary, she numbered each charter. Of the roughly 700 documents she calculated that about 100 are in the Dover division of the cartulary (see above). The majority, the other 600 relating to the properties – the Tituli – have full witness-lists. Many of these she calendared. Very few are likely to have survived in the original. After the cartulary was completed later additions were entered on folios 251-262. In the absence of court and account rolls of the priory, these charters are of significance for Kentish historians.

This article is dedicated to the memory of the late Melanie Barber (1943-2012), archivist and ecclesiastical historian.

JANE SAYERS

1 Sweetinburgh, S., 2004, 'Wax, Stone and Iron: Dover's Town Defences in the late Middle Ages', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, CXXIV, 187-8.

2 Saltman, A., *Theobald archbishop of Canterbury*, 1956, University of London Historical Studies, ii (Athlone Press), 75-9.

3 Now Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Bodley 290, edited by William T. Stoneman, *Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues: Dover Priory*, vol. 5 (University of Chicago Press, published by the British Library, 2001).

4 See Wallenberg, J.K., 1934, *The Place-Names of Kent*, Appelbergs Boktryckeri, Uppsala, p. 539. The author is grateful to Terry Lawson for help in identifying certain place names.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 525.

6 See Adams, M., 1993, 'History of the Demesne Farm at Appledore from Contemporary Building Records', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, CXII, 292; Lebon, C., 1988, The North Chapel of Appledore Church, *Archaeologia Cantiana*, CVI, 83, 86, 89.

7 Reading Street in Tenterden; see Wallenberg, pp. 359-60 and Winnifrith, Sir J., 1984, 'The Medieval Church of St Mary, Ebony', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, C, 157-67.

8 Wallenberg, p. 488.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 250.

10 J. Caley, H. Ellis and B. Bandinel (eds), London, 1823, vol. iv, 538-9, nos. 7 and 9.

11 Abhandlungen der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen Philologisch-Historische Klasse Dritte Folge, nr 15 (Berlin, 1936).

12 *Theobald archbishop of Canterbury*, 1956, University of London Historical Studies, ii (Athlone Press).

THE MISERICORDS AT ST NICHOLAS, SOUTHFLEET, AND SOME FURTHER THOUGHTS ON THOSE AT ST MARTIN, HERNE, AND ELSEWHERE

As one of the listed sources in the article on Kentish misericords this author was disappointed by the omission of those at St Nicholas at Southfleet.[1] This is very odd as, at p. 212, it is said that the church 'has modern furnishings, including modern misericords'. There are misericords at Southfleet, but they are not modern.[2] There are five, all of the same design, a design which is also seen on the single example at Cobham and dates from *c.*1360-70 **(Figs 1 and 2)**.

Fig. 1 The design common to the five medieval misericords at St Nicholas, Southfleet.

Fig. 2 St Mary Magdalene, Cobham, misericord.

The remarkable thing about the Southfleet stalls is the giant leaf bench end **(Fig. 3)**. Misericords are not stand-alone pieces of woodwork; they are part of a composite entity comprising stalls, bench ends, poppyheads, desks and frontals. To ignore their context is surely to return to the days when compartmentalisation was the *in* thing; when, for instance, brass rubbers never glanced up from their

Fig. 3 The giant leaf bench end at St Nicholas, Southfleet.

Fig. 4 Elbow with small head wearing a bascinet, St Helen, Cliffe at Hoo.

heelball to see the products of the same workshops, rendered in stone or glass. The Southfleet misericords may be simple, but that bench end transforms the view we might entertain of the carver. Flair and passion reside in that one leaf.

This restricted approach also leads to statements such as 'The style of armour, especially helmet types, can suggest an approximate date; unfortunately there are no such depictions on Kentish misericords'.[3] Technically true, but between S4 and S5 at Cliffe there is on the elbow **(Fig. 4)** this small head wearing a bascinet which would suggest a date of around 1400. The two medieval misericords can be dated stylistically to the early 14th century so we can immediately deduce that the stalls and misericords are a hybrid, a *marriage* of elements of different dates. Therefore caution is required. So to date misericords by reference to adjacent stone architectural features without providing proof that they are coeval, or because the hinges and nails are handmade, as is proposed for Lenham,[4] is unwise, especially so when there is adequate conjoined dating evidence on the bench end, a finial of early 15th-century form.

Herne, St Martin, can be used to illustrate what can been missed or misinterpreted by students of misericords and why it is important not to be misled by printed secondary sources. Remnant in his catalogue got himself in a bit of a muddle

by misattributing the illustrations and describing S6 as 'a crowned angel holding open a large open book which he appears to be reading aloud'.[5] Pellett correctly identifies it as a scroll but the reading aspect is retained and, more confusingly, it is said that it is not possible to read the script on the cover.[6] But it is not a book. The angel is holding the scroll like a medieval placard. And it is this misericord **(Fig. 5)** which settles the issue of who had the stalls installed. It is not definitive to say that the presence of St Andrew crosses means that Andrew Bensted, the vicar from 1511 to 1531, was responsible for them, but an angel holding a scroll with his name displayed is convincing proof, as is the presence on his nearby brass of two St Andrew crosses, showing that he was indeed personally associated with that cross.

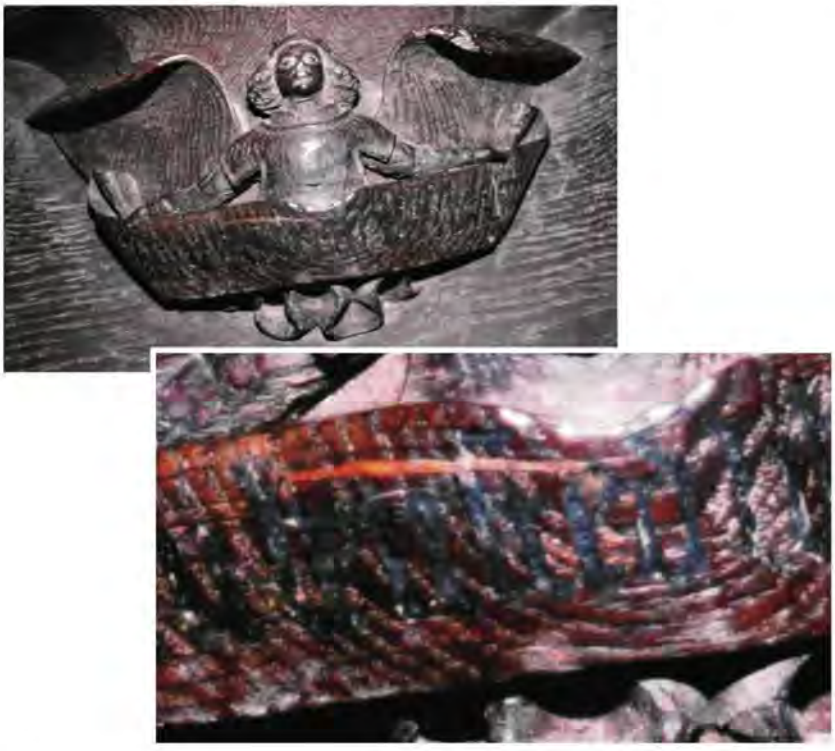

Fig. 5 Misericord S7, St Martin, Herne, with an enhanced image of the scroll.

Remnant correctly lists only six medieval misericords in Herne church, noting that there are modern misericords on the north side, without giving the number. Here this is given as six;[7] but there are seven stalls either side, including a modern one on the south side. (The modern stalls are rather important in themselves because they are associated with a later remodelling of the chancel and have been associated with the eminent Victorian sculptor Thomas Earp.[8])

It was unfortunate, too, that space was given to a repeat the nonsense Marshall Laird wrote about Herne.[9] Anxious to establish a link between place and the animal on misericord S5 **(Fig. 6)**, Laird decided it must be a heron and, in a flight of fancy,

Fig. 6 The quadruped, misericord S5 at St Martin, Herne.

concluded that the supporters must be leg rings, claiming them to be the earliest illustration of these. Pellett obviously has doubts about the heron (Remnant thought it was a duck) though she offers no alternative. But there is a clearly visible left hind leg. So it is not a heron, it is not a duck, it is a quadruped. The hook on the beak suggests an eagle, now seen as having the hindquarters of a lion, whose long hairy tail winds its way over the eagle's left wing. In other words, it is a griffin. A further glance along the stalls at the elbows which depict the back view of flowers **(Fig. 7)** quickly establishes that the 'leg rings' too are a fiction. Pellett says 'The carver is no ornithologist'. Perhaps not, but he knew a griffin when he saw one! The further use of the *heron* as the only quoted example of a patron proposing a design appropriate to their church is doubly unfortunate.[10]

Fig. 7 Elbow at St Martin, Herne.

In Pellett's note 6, surely it would have been useful to point out that the Theilmann Kerver drawing is illustrated by both Anderson and Grössinger and a Bodleian reference would have been helpful.[11] Precise sources would also have helped to check some comments, especially when dealing with bestiaries. For example, at

Fig. 8 The griffin at St Mary of Charity, Faversham.

p. 209 'The griffin could also be used as a symbol of Christ' needs qualification because it appears in Dante's *Divine Comedy* and, as Peter Armour says:[12]

> [the Christ] interpretation is not very convincing and this griffin may well stand for something which for Dante was similarly a mixture of the divine and the human – the Roman Empire.

The griffin was largely regarded as cruel, greedy and more akin to the devil. The carver's eye view of the Faversham griffin (S6, **Fig. 8**) reveals that base character, in an arousal of heraldic proportions.

LESLIE SMITH

1 I. Pellett, 2013, 'The Medieval Misericords of Kent's Parish Churches', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, CXXXIII, 185-213.

2 John Newman, 2012, *The Buildings of England: Kent: West and the Weald* (Yale UP), p. 557.

3 Pellett, 2013, *op. cit.*, see note 1, p. 200.

4 *Ibid.*, 188, 191.

5 G.L. Remnant, 1969, *A Catalogue of Misericords in Great Britain* (Oxford).

6 Pellett, 2013, *op. cit.*, see note 1, 197.

7 *Ibid.*, 191.

8 The chancel was again deemed unseemly in 1869, described by the then vicar Rev. J.R. Buchanan in his *Memorials of Herne* of 1887 as 'quite bare, and open to the nave and north chantry chapel. The ancient choir stalls called 'misérére'very fine, and beautifully carved, were scattered about the church'. The chancel was repaved with encaustic tiles, and, in a general re-ordering, the old stalls reinstated and new stalls added; the sculptor was a Mr Earp who was the sculptor of The Eleanor Cross at Charing Cross.

9 Marshall Laird, 1986, *English Misericords*, p. 30 and fig. 55.

10 Pellett, 2013, *op. cit.*, see note 1, 196.

11 M.D. Anderson, 1954, *Misericords: Medieval Life in English Woodcarving* (King Penguin), p. 18; Christa Grössinger, 1997, *The World Upside Down* (Harvey Miller), fig. 104, p. 69.

12 *Mythical Beasts*, 1995, ed. John Cherry (British Museum Press), p. 94.

A SEAL MATRIX IN SANDWICH: ORIGINALLY THAT OF THE SANDWICH WHITEFRIARS (CARMELITES) OR THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM?

This puzzling medieval seal matrix was thought to belong to the Carmelite Priory of Sandwich by the Kentish historian William Boys (1792), but it bears the legend of John, Patriarch of Jerusalem [probably John of Vercelli, Patriarch 1278-1279]. This article describes the seal and the evidence of the various casts, and suggests various possibilities for its history.

This copper-alloy seal matrix is now in the Sandwich Museum. It is first mentioned by William Boys in his *History of Sandwich* (1792), where it was said to be the medieval seal of the Carmelite community of Sandwich **(Figs 1-4)**.

Fig. 1. The seal matrix found at Sandwich, with the Patriarch inscription. This has been flipped (i.e. the matrix is reversed so that it appears to be an impression).

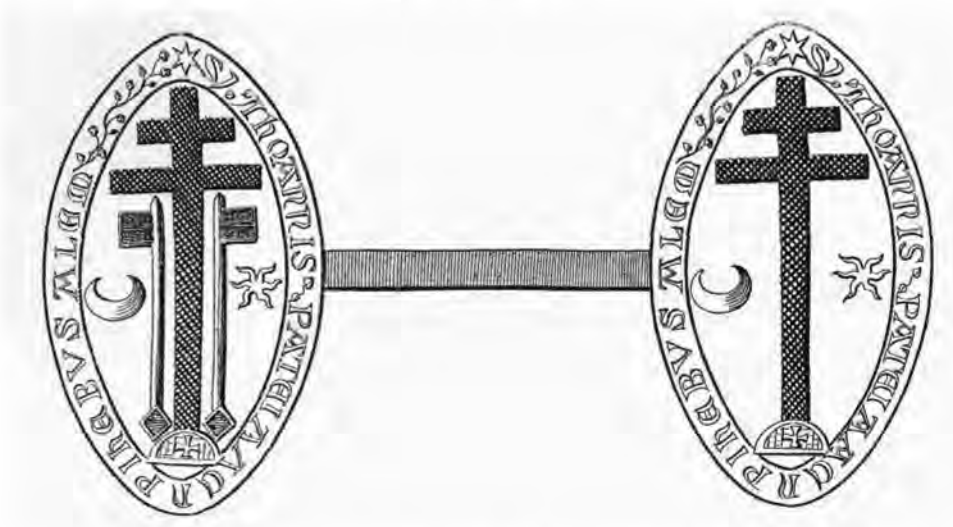

Fig. 2. The printed illustration from Boy's, *History of Sandwich* (1792).

The most recent history of the seal matrix is uninformative. According to the predecessor of the present curator, 'it was in a box with other corporation seals and items in a cabinet in the Mayor's Parlour. He (his predecessor) didn't use it to make any wax impressions. He doesn't know anything about it before then, so presumably it had been in the Mayors' Parlour since Boys looked at it'. Description as follows:

> It is 82mm top to bottom, 48mm across at widest part, 3mm thick at edge, and 100m high at the top of the handle. The seal from face to top of the handle and it is 40.46mm. From face to thickest part from which the handle rises is 12.42mm.The face dimensions which are 81.76 x 48.81mm.The seal weighs 170g.[1]
>
> Pointed oval: on a hemispherical mount a patriarchal cross hatched lozengy. On the mount a small cross. The cross is placed between a crescent moon and a key on the left and a wavy star of six points and a key on the right.
>
> The inscription reads: Star S' IOHANNIS PATEIAAC H [or N] P IHEBUSALEM (*sic*)

The individual letters are quite clear with the exception of the letter between patriarch and Jerusalem which may be an H or N. The engraver avoided the use of the letter R replacing it with the letter E in Patriarch and B in Jerusalem. The most likely interpretation of the inscription is that it was the Seal of John Patriarch (if P is to be interpreted as Pro) of Jerusalem. If the seal matrix had been commissioned by a Patriarch of Jerusalem the inscription would undoubtedly have been clearer. The lack of clarity suggests it may have been a medieval forgery.

The Patriarch of Jerusalem functioned as the archbishop of the city of Jerusalem from the eleventh century. After the fall of Jerusalem in 1187, the Patriarch moved to Acre, and after the loss of Acre in 1291 to Cyprus, and after 1374 to Rome. The

Fig. 3. Wax impression of the seal matrix found at Sandwich.
Redwax, but damaged.

only John in lists of Patriarchs is John of Vercelli, Patriarch 1278-9. John of Vercelli (not Versailles as in *Wikipedia*), was the master general of the Dominicans and was provided to the Patriarchate of Jerusalem on 15 May 1278 by Pope Nicholas III (died 1280). At this time, John was 73 years of age and busy with affairs of the Dominicans, so he resigned the appointment on 1 Oct 1278. This resignation was not accepted by the Pope. So he sent in a second resignation on 4 Feb 1279, which the Pope accepted. John remained as Master General of the Dominicans until his death in 1283.[2]

Fig. 4. Gold coloured impression of the seal matrix found at Sandwich.

Elements in the seal such as the patriarchal cross, and the sun and moon suggest a connection with Jerusalem. The keys suggest a relationship with St Peter and Rome. The crescent and star/sun emblem is to be associated with the East and particularly the Byzantine Empire. The most recent discussion of this motif is by Dr David Dykes who, from a study of twelfth- and early thirteenth-century coins and seals, concludes that Richard I used it as an image of the Crusade and that King John, on whose Irish coins it occurs, continued to use it as an image associated with royalty.[3] The device is also found on deniers of Bohemond III (1163-1201) or IV (1201-1216; 1219-1233), prince of Antioch. So the choice of this motif for the seal of the Patriarch of Jerusalem is not unreasonable

The seals of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem were discussed in detail by Gustave Schlumberger in 1943. The eleventh-century seals take the form of lead bulla. They

have a seated bishop on one side and the Holy Sepulchre on the other. A seated bishop is the motif of the earliest wax seal known, of Geraud (Patriarch 1225-1239). The motif of the seated bishop continues in the seal of William II (Patriarch 1261-1270), but Thomas Agni de Lentino, a Dominican, chose a heraldic device on the obverse of his seal (Patriarch 1272-1277). So, if the seal from Sandwich was engraved in 1278/9 for a Patriarch, it could neither have heraldry nor a bishop since John of Vercelli, as a friar was not armigerous and was never a bishop.[4]

The seal may not have belonged to John of Vercelli since he was never formally installed nor did he visit the Holy Land. Possibly the process of engraving the seal may have been put in hand by the Papal authorities before he resigned the post. This seems unlikely and, even if it was, one would expect the matrix, especially with such a poor inscription, to have been either cancelled or melted down after John's second resignation. The cost of providing the matrix would have normally fallen on John himself, and he would hardly commit himself to ordering a seal, if he was determined not to accept the appointment. All this supports the suggestion that the original matrix is a forgery.

The seal was published by Walter de Gray Birch in his *Catalogue of Seals in the British Museum* (1894), vol. 6, part 2, no. 23, 193 from an impression. William Doubleday, who made many impressions of seal matrices for the British Museum, had made or obtained a sulphur cast from a good impression. This cast was acquired by the Museum shortly after 1830. Boys in 1792 made the comment about the matrix – 'The engraving of the keys, till lately, was filled with pewter'. The interesting point about the Doubleday cast (or at least Birch's description) is that the keys are not mentioned. This suggests that Doubleday obtained the cast which had been made before the lead (or pewter) had been cleaned out of the keys.

This may suggest that the keys are an afterthought. This could have happened quite quickly after the engraving of the seal, and may have been intended to stress that John was appointed by the Pope in Rome. The seal matrix passes to a new owner who does not want to have the keys of St Peter so emphasised on the seal matrix, but does not wish a new seal matrix to be engraved. So the keys are filled with lead. An impression was taken of the seal matrix with keys filled with lead. The pewter or lead in the keys may have decayed somewhat and Boys cleaned it out, so that it could be drawn for his publication, and this is how we see it now.

A seal with very similar devices of the double-armed cross and two keys was shown to the Society of Antiquaries of London on 4 March 1830 by Thomas Duffus Hardy. This leaden matrix was found in a wall at Dunwich in Suffolk. It had the inscription *Sigillum Penitentarii Erosol* and Hardy commented that the device, 'consisting of the patriarchal cross of Jerusalem with a key on each side was the symbol of the office of a confessor'. He further comments that the 'Penitentarius or Confessor was appointed by the Patriarch, who was the primate of his peculiar church. In the early church there were five – Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, Constantinople and Jerusalem; each of which churches had its Penitentarius as has the Roman church at this day'. It may well be that the engraver of the Sandwich seal was confused as to whether he should put Patriarch or Penitentarius. Certainly the iconography of this 'penitentarius' seal and the Sandwich seal is very similar **(Fig. 5)**.[5]

Another seal with similar curious alteration to the Sandwich seal is that of the

Fig. 5. The 'Penitentarius' seal as illustrated in *Archaeologia*.

collegiate chapel of St Mary and the Angels in York, now in the British Museum. This was found on the coast near Dunwich in Suffolk shortly before 1827. The seal matrix dates to the mid thirteenth century and shows traces of an earlier design in that the side shafts of the arcade over the figure of the Virgin Mary were filled with a white metal, possibly a lead alloy, and then re-engraved to serve as candles.[6]

What should the seal of the Carmelite Friary of Sandwich look like?

There seems to be no evidence from documents or existing impressions of the seal used by the Carmelite friary in Sandwich. Carmelites, apart from the seal of the Prior Provincial or Prior General, usually had two seals for each friary – that of the Prior and the Friary, though the smaller houses may have only had one.

Seal matrices of the Priors exist for Marlborough and Oxford and both show the Virgin Mary. The seal, though not the seal matrix, survives for the Prior for London. This shows standing figures of St Peter and St Paul with a half-length figure of the Virgin above.[7]

The common or Friary seals of the Major Carmelite houses normally show the Virgin and Child, such as that of London (together with a saint, possibly Paul), Nottingham or (in Scotland), Perth. Other seals have the saint to whom the site was dedicated, in addition to the Virgin or including local saints. The circular seal of the Carmelite Friars of Northallerton, Yorkshire, has the Annunciation in the centre of a triple canopy with St Batholomew and St Cuthbert on either side.[8]

Some of the more elaborate seals refer to the founder in some way such as Oxford, which shows Henry III giving the friars a charter, or Nottingham which shows the Virgin and Child with a kneeling figure holding a shield of arms of Grey of Wilton, the founder.[9]

Conclusion

One would expect the seal of the Carmelite friars of Sandwich to show the Virgin and Child or the Annunciation or a local saint. One can only conclude that Boys was mistaken in attributing the seal to the Carmelite house. It would appear that the seal matrix was a medieval forgery which happened to get lost on the site. It may be that the Carmelite house was providing hospitality to a traveller or foreign priest, since Sandwich was a popular port of entry to England. Why the keys were firstly engraved, and then filled in, remains a mystery.

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1 William Boys, *Collections for an history of Sandwich in Kent* (1792), 177, plate opp. p. 175. This shows both states of the matrix, with and without keys.

2 The author is grateful to Father Richard Copsey for providing these details of John of Vercelli, and commenting on this note.

3 David W. Dykes, 2014, 'King John's Irish Rex coinage revisited. Part II: The symbolism of the Coinage', *British Numismatic Journal*, 84.

4 G. Schlumberger, *Sigillographie de L'Orient Latin* (Paris 1943), pp. 73-86, and plate 2; T.A. Archer and C.L. Kingsford, *The crusades: story of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem* (1894).

5 T.D. Hardy, 'The Seal of the Penitentarius of Jerusalem', *Archaeologia*, XXIII (1831), Appendix 409-410 – now BM P and E, reg. no. 1863,0210.1, Tonnochy, *op. cit.* in note 6, no. 890. The author has not been able to find any other examples of a 'penitentarius' seal.

6 *Archaeologia*, XXII (1829), p. 423; A.B. Tonnochy, *Catalogue of Seal dies in the British Museum* (London, 1954), no. 863 P and E 1929, 0114.1.

7 For Marlborough, see Tonnochy, *op. cit.* in note 6, no.846 P and E. 1876, 0720.3. This was found at Colston's Hall Ground, Bristol. Oxford Ashmolean Museum Rawlinson no. 14. For the Prior of the London house, see R.H. Ellis, *Monastic Seals: Volume I* (London, 1986), No. M 509.

8 For London, see Ellis, *op. cit.* in note 7, No. M508, for Northallerton, see Ellis, M615; C. Clay, 'The Seals of the Religious Houses of Yorkshire', *Archaeologia*, LXXVIII (1928), 1-36, esp. 27; and Ellis, *op. cit.* in note 7, M 615.

9 This Oxford seal is only known from a nineteenth-century cast. On 15 December 1815 Samuel Lysons exhibited to the Society of Antiquaries of London an impression of the seal which showed a King (then identified as Edward II) presenting to a party of Friars his manor near the north Gate of Oxford (illustrated in *Archaeologia* XVIII, 1817). In March 1908 Philip Nelson offered a matrix to the Ashmolean Museum, apparently of pewter set in a wrought iron collar, but they did not purchase

it. This object is not now traceable in the records that survive of his collection in Liverpool Museums. Since this matrix is described as cast and not chased, and since it failed to show details visible in a lead cast (given to the Ashmolean by T. Whitcombe Green, the notable collector of plaquettes, in February 1899), its authenticity must be doubted. See Birch no. 3812, which is a sulphur cast from the matrix: *Archaeologia*, XVIII (1817), 427; Gale Pedrick, *Monastic seals,* no. 74; Pauline Rushton, 'A Liverpool collector: Dr Philip Nelson (1872-1953)', *Apollo*, January 2001, 41-47. For Nottingham, see Ellis no. M644.

THE DISCOVERY OF A MEDIEVAL DUNGEON IN MIDDLE ROW, FAVERSHAM

An unexpected discovery was made in late May/early June 2013 by archaeologists working with Kent Archaeological Projects on behalf of South East Water during a watching brief. This took place as part of the installation of a new water main, focused on Middle Row, a narrow lane running parallel to Court Street and flanked on both sides by Late Medieval and, predominantly, seventeenth-, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century buildings (**Fig. 1**).

A test pit cut approximately one metre north of the old Fire Engine House (built in 1810, now a Shelter charity shop) exposed a layer of large and medium-sized flint nodules and fragments within crushed light grey-white mortar, the layer extending in part immediately beneath bedding layers for the present paving blocks. The flint and crushed mortar layer was clearly a demolition layer of some antiquity but was of unknown origin at the time of exposure. Further excavation revealed part of a thick (approximately 0.85m) curved wall built of large and medium-sized flints set in light grey-white mortar and clearly the source of the overlying demolition material (**Fig. 2**). A plaque on the wall of the adjacent Fire Engine House identified the location as the site of the town's second Guildhall, said on the plaque to have been use from 1546 to 1603.

Fig. 1 Trench location plan.

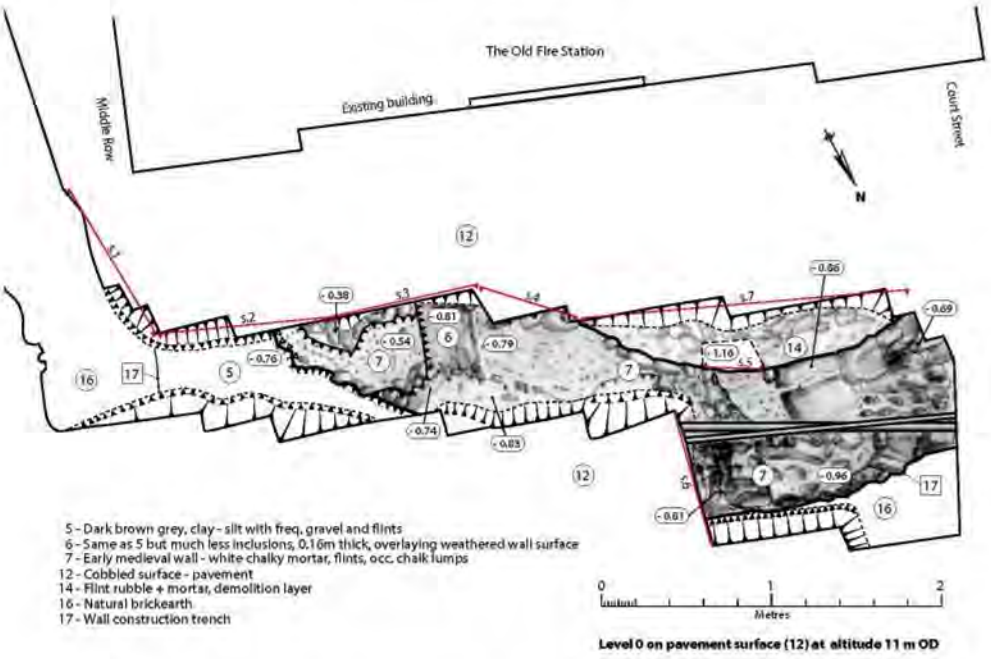

Fig. 2 Plan of the pipe trench with exposed northern wall of dungeon.

A preliminary interpretation was therefore that the exposed structure was part of the foundation of the second Guildhall, although it was noted that the appearance of the exposed wall in terms of its curved shape, the mortar used in its construction and its flint contents was more suggestive of earlier medieval building techniques rather than those of the late medieval/early post-medieval periods. Subsequent documentary research revealed that the history of the site was complicated and somewhat confusing in terms of the buildings that occupied it, the modifications to which they were subject and the many and various uses to which the buildings were put (prison, guildhall, town hall, freemen's room, lodgings for the poor, storehouse, pound and school). However, the buried curved wall, which cut natural brickearth on its outer edge and extended vertically downwards for at least 1.3m on the opposite, inward-curving, flint-lined edge, was eventually identified with a high degree of confidence as part of a medieval dungeon, called 'Le Gayle' in a charter of 1546, where it is described as measuring 40 feet by 40 feet and said to have belonged to Faversham Abbey (Tann 2013).

The Structure and Form of the Remains

Overlaying natural brickearth (Context Recording Number 1, **Fig. 3**, section 1) was a 45mm-thick band of grey-brown silty clay (CRN 2) with occasional inclusions of charcoal and very small tile or brick fragments, effectively flecks. This was almost certainly an occupation deposit but contained no datable material. However, it can be assumed from the overlying deposits that it was of early medieval date or

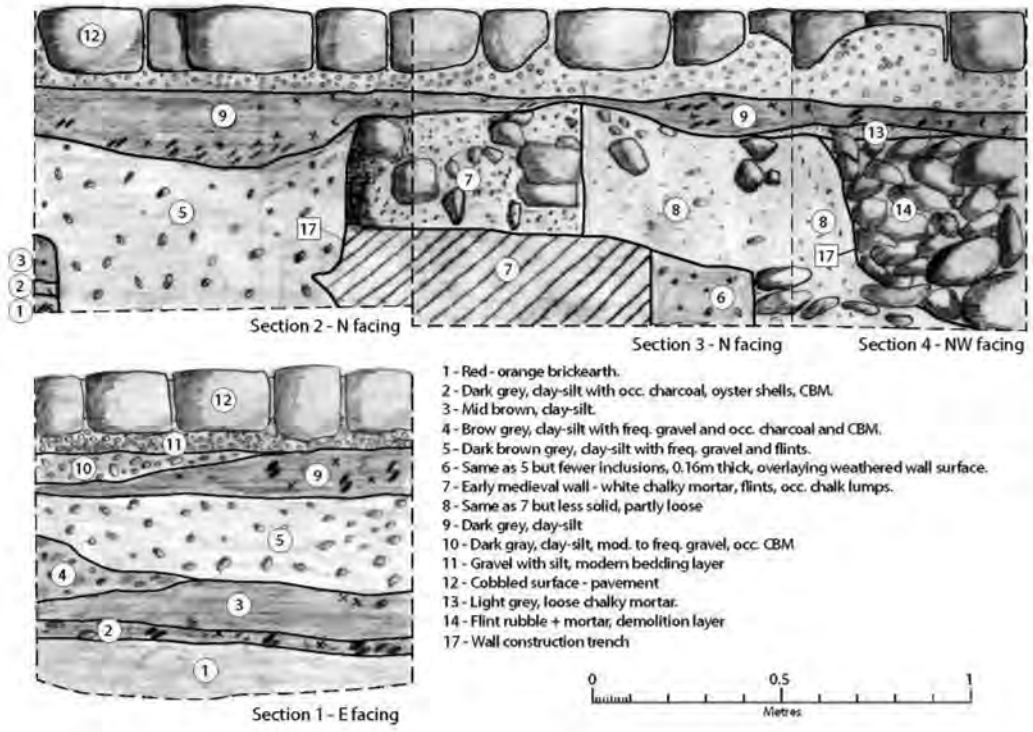

Fig. 3 Sections 1-4.

earlier. It underlay a 0.16m-thick band of homogenous mid brown clay-silt (CRN 3), probably a natural alluvial deposit associated with the flooding of the area from Faversham Creek, which was probably un-revetted at the time of deposition. An overlying 0.18m-thick layer of grey-brown clay-silt (CRN 4) with gravel inclusions and occasional charcoal flecks and small orange-red fragments of brick or tile again attested to human settlement activity in or next to a water-dominated area. This was in turn covered by a substantial layer of dark grey-brown clay-silt (CRN 5) containing much gravel and frequent flints, along with two salt-glazed potsherds of early-to-mid thirteenth-century type (Fig. 3, sections 1 and 2). The clay-silt was interpreted provisionally as part of an artificial levelling-up layer laid down following the eventual revetting of the nearby tidal creek (Faversham Creek), which now runs as a canalised channel some 200m to the north-west. The clay-silt was almost certainly abutted by the outer face of the curved wall (CRN 7/8), as was certainly the case with the adjacent natural brickearth (CRN 1), but this could not be proved beyond doubt within the narrow confines of the excavated area.

The fabric of the curved wall (Fig. 2 and Fig. 3, sections 2-4) consisted of light grey-white chalky mortar (CRN 7) containing well-bonded small, medium-sized and large flint nodules and fragments, occasional tile fragments, including a large piece of Roman-period tile, and a small number of thin green glass sherds, which were of either of Romano-British or medieval manufacture. The wall's inner face

was irregularly faced with flint nodules and extended downwards for at least 1.3m, while its outer edge was trench-built against natural brickearth and (probably) the thick layer of clay-silt (CRN 5) and the underlying layers as discussed above. The wall's overall shape and method of construction suggested that it was part of a circular or partly curved enclosing wall for a large subterranean chamber, identified during documentary research as part of a medieval dungeon (see below). The upper part of the structure's fabric (CRN 8) was of very similar, if not identical build, but was not as securely bonded, presumably having been weakened by the cutting through it of a modern service trench.

The upper part of the wall (Fig. 2 and Fig. 3, section 3) contained a 0.32m-wide slot-like rectangular indentation, which had clearly formed part of the original structure and was interpreted as the remains of a light hole or ventilation vent serving the subterranean chamber. It was filled with a 0.21m-thick deposit of dark grey-brown clay-silt (CRN 6) containing gravel and small flint fragments, along with a pig's tooth, some small bone fragments, a piece of clay-pipe stem and a single sherd of late seventeenth- or early eighteenth-century pottery. This deposit was almost certainly street detritus that had accumulated in the slot.

The surviving less firmly bonded upper part of the wall described above was covered by a 0.65m-thick layer (CRN 14) of chalky white mortar, small, medium-sized and large flint nodules and fragments, thick roof tile fragments and ragstone blocks, some of very large size. This deposit, along with loose overlying deposit of chalky mortar (CRN 13), was interpreted with confidence as rubble from the final demolition of the upper part of the dungeon wall and associated building, which research revealed was levelled in 1791 (Wilson 1963, 8). The loose chalky mortar was sealed by a band of compact dark grey clay-silt (CRN 9) that was almost certainly a levelling layer laid down after demolition, as was a similar overlying layer (CRN 10).

The cutting of a relatively modern water pipe trench had broken out some of the wall fabric and overlying layers, which had then been re-deposited in the trench (CRN 15) and re-sealed by the modern cobble stones and their bedding (CRNs 11 and 12).

The structural history and background

The initially tentative identification of the partly exposed curved wall as medieval in date was supported, albeit anecdotally, by references to a gaol predating the town's second Guildhall cited by Crow in the *Faversham Institute Monthly Journal*, Vol. 13 (1899), and in the account of Queen Elizabeth I's visit to Faversham in 1572 provided by Smith (1974, 236). These sources state variously that:

> ... hard by stood the grim old Gaol with its rough-hewn planks and club-headed nails, seared brown by time, with a Town Hall over it; in the yard was a dungeon several feet in depth, covered with strong grating.
> The exterior of the building was of rude oaken planks; the court at the back contained a dungeon or deep hole covered with strong wooden bars.
> In 1545-6 two rooms were erected over the Whitehouse Goal and Cage [see below] to create a new guildhall and a Freemen's room, with large east end window and clerestories.

Crow states that in 1663 the Guildhall's staircase was pulled down, that a new staircase was installed, three gable heads were added and the Cage was removed. The reported removal of the Cage in 1663 suggests that the building referred to was not the 'dungeon or deep hole' and 'dungeon several feet in depth' as mentioned above but 'the gaol in the market-street, built in 1571, and employed as such upon quitting the oldest guildhall' (Jacob 1774, 60). Jacob also states, quoting from the town chamberlain's accounts, that the 'present gaol' was erected in 1571, and that 'the rooms over the market have been used, ever since the beginning of the reign of King James II [ruled 1685-88] as a guildhall, *being much more convenient than their late one over the gaol in the market-street, built in 1571*' (author's italics). This gaol, which was also referred in the Town Records as a cage (*Ibid.* 104), was built by or for Richard Dilnot at a cost of 10*s*. 10*d*. as part of the construction of the new (second) Guildhall, which was commissioned by Richard Dryland, who claimed £23 19*s*. 10*d*. for his outlay (Harrington and Hyde 2008).

Crow reports that, during the use of the two rooms built over the Whitehouse Gaol and Gage as a Guildhall, an outside staircase approached the rooms and that, in 1572, prior to the visit by Elizabeth I, the building was painted and decorated, and that five loads of sand were laid around it. It was used as the Guildhall up to 1603, when the Market House built in 1574 began to be used as a Guildhall. Wilson (1963, 8), also quoting from Crow, states that:

> Following the transfer of the guildhall to the Market Hall, the building was used to store corn for the poor ... poor people were occasionally allowed to lodge in the Freemen's room and ... from 1665, the Freemen's room was used as a private school on condition that four poor boys nominated by the Mayor and Overseers of the Poor were taught gratis. In 1724 the two rooms were let for £3 a year. In 1791 the building, which by then incorporated a pound, was demolished as part of a street improvement scheme.

Dane (1968, 10), discussing the three successive guildhalls of Faversham, states that 'the first one was in Tanner's Street, an area which was the town centre in early days. From Tanner's Street the Administration moved to the 'White House' at the north end of Middle Row in Court Street and it continued there until it transferred to the Market Hall'. This statement implies that the 'White House', which eventually gave its name to the Whitehouse Goal, was already in existence when the Administration moved into it and that it may have been modified or partly re-built in 1571 to be used as a guildhall. However, the archaeological evidence discussed above indicates that a medieval dungeon already underlay the White House.

The social and political background

A long-lasting conflict between Faversham Abbey and the townsfolk of Faversham is an important part of the popular history of the town, and the presence of a large, deep and undoubtedly foreboding dungeon built by the Abbey in the centre of the town is of clear significance in that regard.

King Stephen founded Faversham Abbey as a Cluniac monastic institution (actually called St Saviour's) in 1148. During its early jurisdiction the Abbey

imposed various punitive and oppressive measures on the townsfolk of Faversham, principally because the abbots received and exercised rights as Lords of the Manor and also held tenure of barony (Jacob 1774, 9). Examples of such impositions were taxes levied on taking swine to pannage (grazing in woodland), taxes on brewing (*gavelcestre*) and taxes on displaying goods for sale. In a town in which many townsfolk depended for their livelihoods on swine keeping, brewing and the holding of two yearly fairs (on St. Valentine's Day and Lammastide) and on weekly markets, these measures created great resentment, leading to many legal challenges, petitions to the king and a constant conflict between the town's 'free barons' (see below), the mayor, the corporation and the chamberlains of the town on one side and bailiffs and stewards acting on behalf of the Lord Abbot on the other.

If Henry VIII's charter of 1546 is correct in claiming that the dungeon ('Le Gayle') belonged to the Abbey, the presence of such a large and strongly built structure placed in the middle of the 'Old Town' (as opposed to 'The New Town' which grew up later around the Abbey some 500m to the north) indicates that the Abbey bailiffs had a ready means of punishing any infractions of the Abbey's rule. The dungeon may also have represented a powerful statement of the Abbey's power, probably during the period of its dominance, up to about 1270, beyond which time the Abbey had fallen into 'an abject state of poverty' and was 'greatly indebted' (Hasted 1798, 326). However, it is important to note that, from about 1250, the town of Faversham lay 'within the limits and liberties of the Cinque ports, and a member of the town of Dover' (Hasted 1798, 318). From then onward it did not fall under the jurisdiction of the Abbey, which applied only to the Hundred of Faversham (see below). The Abbey would therefore have had no right to build a dungeon there after that approximate date, despite the claim that it belonged to the Abbey made in the Henrician charter of 1546.

In this regard, and given that the Cinque Ports only received Royal Charters 'giving them wide and valuable privileges' some 100 years after the abbey's foundation (Wilson 1963, 4), it seems probable that the dungeon was built sometime between 1150 and 1250, when the Abbey held sway over the town and before the town was 'made *a separate jurisdiction* from this hundred' (Hasted 1798, 318).

The poverty of the Abbey during the mid thirteenth century appears only to have increased the avidity with which it sought to profit from the town, which was neither poor nor compliant. The Abbey successfully sued Faversham Corporation for five hundred marks, a huge sum at the time, 'for contemptuously exercising certain regal liberties' (Jacob 1774, 9) during the reign of Edward I (1272-1307); the sum valued as about £1,000 in 1774, with one mark equalling 13*s*. 4*d*. (Dane 1968, 5). It was stated that this sum 'affords ... a considerable evidence of the wealth of the place at the time' (Jacob 1774, 9). Jacob goes on to say:

> In the succeeding reigns, the same imperious and litigious disposition of these religious men seized every opportunity of depressing the town, as by obliging them to compound [pay tax] for exposing their wares at market and for gavelcestre [a fine paid for every brewing] and such like: these claims were spiritedly opposed by the townsmen, but never with impunity.

In fact, as previously discussed, the wealthier townsfolk of Faversham were in a

relatively strong position to withstand the impositions of the Abbey, as they were 'free barons' of the Cinque Ports:

> the town and part of the parish of Faversham has long since been made *a separate jurisdiction* from this hundred [the Hundred of Faversham being in the Lordship of the Abbey] ... and having its own constables and officers, under the jurisdiction of its own justices (Hasted 1798, 318).

As Wilson (1963, 7) writes:

> In about 100 years from the founding of the Abbey the [Cinque] Ports had received Royal Charters and valuable privileges. Faversham, which had at least from the time of Edward the Confessor, made contribution to coastal defence, made haste to ... get a weapon for use in their conflict with the Abbot, whose jurisdiction in secular matters the free Barons resented ...

A similar factor in encouraging defiance of the Abbey's authority may well have been the Company or Fraternity of Free Fishermen, the members of which were tenants of the Abbey but who worked the oyster fishery from about 1205 as freemen, not as feudal vassals (Wilson 1963, 7).

It should be noted here that many royal and Parliamentary statutes and ordinances were framed against beggars, vagrants, peasants out of bond and other outlaws (those without the protection of the law) during the thirteenth and fourteenth century, when 'feiters (idlers) and vagrants' overran the country 'more abundantly than they were formally accustomed' (Jusserand 1912, 265, quoting from Statute 7, Richard II, cap. 5). It is therefore entirely possible that the dungeon at Faversham was built by the Abbey but with the agreement of the townsfolk and/or Corporation as a means of dealing with the threat by runaway serfs, vagabonds and 'sturdy beggars' to medieval law and order.

Conclusions

The discovery of part of a substantial, deep and possibly circular subterranean structure in the centre of Faversham is an important and fascinating addition to the already rich history of the town, especially as it can be identified with a high degree of confidence with 'Le Gayle' mentioned in Henry VIII's charter of 1546, and the 'dungeon several feet in depth' and the 'dungeon or deep hole covered with strong wooden bars' mentioned in the Town Books of Faversham (see Harrington and Hyde 2008).

The fabric of the structure investigated during the groundworks, along with its curved shape in plan, strongly suggest a medieval date of construction for the dungeon, with the results of the documentary research presented above suggesting it was built some time between 1147 and about 1250. However, it is proposed here that the identity of the building(s) on the site has been somewhat confused by the indiscriminate use of the terms 'gaol' and 'cage' in the *Town Books of Faversham* and Jacob's *History of the Town and Port of Faversham* (1774). Early statements in the Town Books refer to two rooms erected in 1545-6 'over the Whitehouse Gaol and Cage, to create a new Guildhall and Freeman's rooms', indicating that two structures, a gaol and a cage, already occupied the site, with both being used

for incarceration and one presumably being the dungeon. It should be noted that the term 'cage' was probably more suggestive of a subterranean prison in medieval English parlance, being derived via Italian and French from the Latin for a dungeon, cell or similar: 'F[rench]. cage (= It. Gaggia) :- late L. *cavja:- L. cavea hollow, cavity, dungeon, cell, cage ...' (reference from the Oxford English Dictionary supplied by Duncan Harrington via the late Dr Arthur Percival). The use of the word with this meaning may have been clearer during the Middle Ages given the common use of Latin in powerful medieval religious institutions such as Faversham Abbey.

Crow's description (1855) of the second Faversham Town Hall contains the following: 'hard by stood the grim old Gaol with its rough-hewn planks and club-headed nails with a Town Hall over it; in the yard was a dungeon several feet in depth, covered with strong grating' and 'the exterior of the building was of rude oaken planks; the court at the back contained a dungeon or deep hole covered with strong wooden bars'. Again, the presence of two buildings, one a dungeon, the other an adjacent above-ground gaol, is indicated, with the dungeon referred to almost certainly being represented by the section of curved wall discovered during the present archaeological work. The *Faversham Institute Monthly Journal* (January 1899, Vol. 13, 132), quoting from a Town Book, states that 'the Cage' was removed in 1663, suggesting that the dungeon's roof and/or superstructure may have been destroyed and the dungeon backfilled at that time. The adjacent above-ground building, originally used as a gaol but subsequently put to many other uses, is reliably reported to have been demolished in 1791 (Wilson 1963, 8).

It is tempting to interpret the presence of a substantial medieval dungeon built by the Abbey in the centre of Faversham 'Old Town' as part of an attempt to intimidate the townsfolk, given the history of animosity that characterised the relationship of the Abbey with the town. Indeed, on becoming members of the Cinque port of Dover, and therefore no longer subject to the rule of the Abbey, the wealthier townsfolk received rights and liberties as 'free barons' and were quick to designate one of their number (Robert Dod) as mayor, much to the anger of the Abbot, who, in 1256, petitioned the king, complaining that 'All the town except five persons, conspiring against their Abbot, their Lord, had made them an alderman, whom they now call Mayor' (Dane 1968, 4). However, as discussed above, the town only fell within the jurisdiction of the Abbey before about 1250 and, assuming that the Henrician charter is correct in attributing the dungeon to the Abbey, it was probably built some time between 1148 (the founding date of the Abbey) and 1250, its function being either to intimidate and punish unruly townsfolk or to incarcerate beggars, vagabonds and peasants out of bond or, most likely, both. The documentary evidence also clearly indicates the continued use of a building on the site by the town's secular authorities as a gaol until 1663, when 'the Cage' was removed.

Acknowledgements

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