

**CALENDAR OF CHARTERS AND  
DOCUMENTS RELATING TO SELBORNE  
AND ITS PRIORY, PRESERVED IN THE  
MUNIMENT ROOM OF MAGDALEN  
COLLEGE, OXFORD**

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Calendar of charters and documents relating to Selborne and its priory, preserved in the muniment room of Magdalen college, Oxford by W. Dunn Macray

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**W. DUNN MACRAY**

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CALENDAR  
OF  
CHARTERS AND DOCUMENTS  
RELATING TO  
SELBORNE AND ITS PRIORY

*Preserved in the Muniment Room of*  
MAGDALEN COLLEGE, OXFORD.

EDITED BY  
W. DUNN MACRAY, M.A., F.S.A.

*Fellow of Magdalen College, and Rector of Ducklington, Oxon.*

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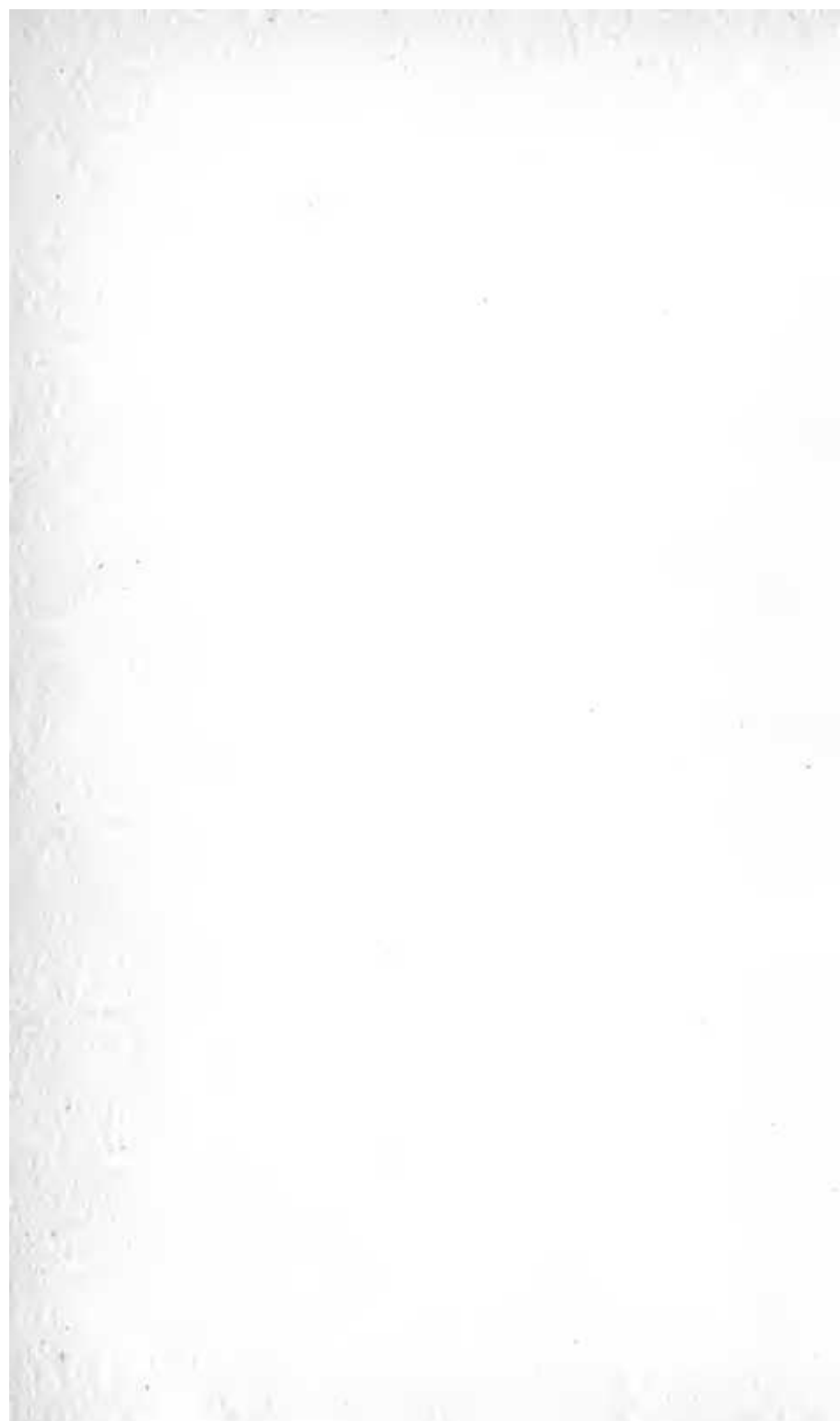
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ERRATA.

- p. 46, l. 26, for "capellenum," read "capellanum."
- p. 52, l. 5.—The date should probably be "c. 1305." Compare the third article at p. 81, of which the date must be "c. 1305."
- p. 64, l. 10, *dele* 1270 in the date. Compare the third article on p. 68, which should be dated "c. 1270-80."
- p. 68, l. 3 from bottom, for "c. 1280," read "after 1291."
- p. 70, l. 19, for "Urbemvetenem," read "Urbemveterem."
- p. 74, the two charters dated "[c. 1290]" and "[c. 1290-1300]" should be dated "[c. 1270-80]."
- p. 79, l. 16, for "for," read "from."
- p. 111, l. 32, for "quyshonyra," read "quyshonys."
- p. 119, l. 26, for "Sept. 6-10," read "Sept. 6-11."





## P R E F A C E.

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THERE are not many instances of the existence of original monastic muniments preserved together in their entirety from the foundation of the house to which they relate up to the time of its extinction. But such an instance occurs in the case of the Priory of Selborne. And the preservation of its records is due to the one cause which in every such instance has alone been the means of preserving them from dispersion and destruction, namely, the transfer of the monastic property, *en bloc*, to some collegiate foundation, which then laid up safely in its muniment room the documents which came with that property. But even in these instances the term "muniments" has to be taken in its strictly limited sense of "title-deeds." It was as title-deeds to property, not as historical documents of value in themselves, that the charters were preserved; and consequently such rich sources of information for later ages as sacrist-rolls, rent-rolls, farm-accounts, obit-rolls, and the like, and even, sometimes, for all that appears to the contrary, the contents of libraries,<sup>1</sup> were disregarded.

In the Founder's Tower at Magdalen College, Oxford, the whole series of deeds relating to the foundation, enrichment, and dissolution of the Augustinian Priory at Selborne is preserved. They were calendared for the College by the Editor of this volume many years ago, together with the rest of the vast collection of charters preserved in the same place. And here, by the ready permission of the College, the members of the Hants Record Society are presented with that portion of the calendar which describes the deeds directly relating to the Priory

<sup>1</sup> None of the few books mentioned at p. 145 appear to be now in the library of Magdalen College.

itself, the place in which it was situated, and the immediate neighbourhood; a portion which for the purpose of this publication has been carefully compared with the original documents. The number of documents here described, or (as in the case of those of special importance) printed at full length, is 388; others, chiefly relating to property at Alton and Bramdean, number about 125, at Petersfield 167, and for Basing and Basingstoke 72. The calendar of many in the latter portion is printed at pp. 651—659 of the exhaustive *History of Basingstoke*, by F. J. Baigent and J. E. Millard, D.D., published in 1889.

Besides these, there are upwards of 1200 deeds in the same muniment-room relating to Enham, King's Somborne, Otterbourne, and other places in Hampshire (see *Eighth Report of the Historical MSS. Commission*, pp. 263-4); and of what value the calendars of these must be for the history of the county and of families connected with it, the readers of the present volume will be able to judge.

It is hardly necessary to dwell in this place upon the history of a Priory which has been narrated, largely from the documents here described and with general accuracy, in so universally known a book as Gilbert White's *Natural History of Selborne*. But those who examine its history will not wonder that its existence was comprised within the narrow limits of two centuries and a half. There seemed to be no actual reason for its existence in the district where it was placed. It was founded in an age when such founding was a fashion, and when already the number of like houses was becoming excessive; and founded where it was not needed, like the early homes of piety and progress, for the spread of religion, or for the relief of the sick and needy,<sup>1</sup> or for the promotion of agriculture and reclamation of

<sup>1</sup> It is noteworthy that the only instance of a distinctly charitable benefaction (although the house was said to be partly founded for "pauperum susceptionem,") occurs in the year 1235, at the very outset of the Priory's life, in the gift of land charged with an annual dole of six pairs of shoes to poor parishioners of Selborne; while the strict injunction in 1387 by William of Wykeham that in future the old clothes of the Canons should be given to the poor shows that the rule of the Order in this respect had been disregarded.

waste lands, or for the advancement amidst a growing population of arts and learning. And its founder, although an able statesman and ruler, over whose death the historian Matthew Paris mourned as an irreparable loss to the nation, was not a man of God to inspire holy work and workers. His gifts to "religion" in the technical sense of the time were great, but were not necessarily therefore in a later sense "religious." By grant of a manor from King John he founded the Abbey of Hales Owen in Shropshire; by a similar grant from Henry III the Abbey of Titchfield in Hampshire; a Dominican Friary at Winchester, and, best of all, a Hospital at Portsmouth, while he largely aided the Church of St. Thomas the Martyr at Acre; and so he seems to have given ungrudgingly of his wealth for objects which promised to perpetuate his name and keep it in remembrance to his personal honour. But Selborne evidently had no sufficient *raison d'être*; no special good work to do to keep it alive. And so we need not wonder at its early corruption and its sure decay. The injunctions given by William of Wykeham after a personal visitation, in the course of which he declares he found not merely disregard of rules and of the vow of profession but also of due and decent behaviour, show how great the laxity had become; the Prior and Canons, without being guilty of any gross and crying scandal (although there is even some small intimation of this), had become a society of worldly gentlemen living carelessly and very much at their ease. And upon careless spendthrift living followed indebtedness, dilapidation of buildings, and inability to maintain the statutable number of members; evils which Bishop Waynflete subsequently endeavoured in vain to remedy by the appointment and removal of several Priors in rapid succession. In 1478 we find that a visitation under the authority of the General Chapter of the Augustinian Order was held at Selborne, which very probably may have been in consequence of representations from the Bishop; and it is to be wished that the report of the official examination then made