

**THE MONKS OF WESTMINSTER: BEING A
REGISTER OF THE BRETHREN OF THE
CONVENT FROM THE TIME OF THE
CONFESSOR TO THE DISSOLUTION: WITH
LISTS OF THE OBEDIENTIARIES AND AN
INTRODUCTION**

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The monks of Westminster: being a register of the brethren of the convent from the time of the Confessor to the dissolution: with lists of the obedientiaries and an introduction by E. H. Pearce

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E. H. PEARCE

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NOTES AND DOCUMENTS
RELATING TO
WESTMINSTER ABBEY

No. 5

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AND AN INTRODUCTION

BY

E. H. PEARCE, M.A.

CANON AND ARCHDEACON OF WESTMINSTER

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H. E. R.
DOMINO ABBATI WESTMŌN
VIRO DEO DEVOTO ECCLESIE NOSTRE NECESSARIO¹

W. B. C.
DOMINO PRIORI
PRO SERMONIBVS IN CHORO MAGNIS RECREACIONIBVS DIGNO²

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CELERARIO ET GARDINARIO
CVIVS ARMATVRA NON POTEST ALICVI APTARI³

R. H. C.
THESAVRARIO
QVI PICTVRAS APOCALYPSIS IN
CLAVSTRO INFIRMITORII FIERI FACIT⁴

H. R. G.
QVI EST VLTIMVS NVNC IN CONGREGACIONE⁵
HASCE ANTECESSORVM NOSTRORVM CEDVLAS
D D
SVPPRIOR ET ARCHIDIACONVS

¹ p. 85.

² p. 153.

³ p. 107.

⁴ p. 112.

⁵ p. 126.

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PREFACE

AN effort has been made in this volume to re-people the Convent of St Peter, Westminster, by such an examination of the records as would enable me to cite the authorities for each name included and for each statement about the bearer of the name. The Abbots are in many cases already well known in their character and their work, though much more may yet be done to make the personalities of some of them a living reality to our generation by means of the documents which survive from their time and bear their seal. But the more we know of the Abbots, the more conscious we become that the daily round of conventual doings was from their life "a thing apart," while to the Prior and monks it was their "whole existence." The material that survives in the cases of Abbot Walter de Wenlok and Abbot William Colchester shows how small a portion of each year was spent by them at Westminster. The call of the King might send them to foreign parts; the affairs of the Order or the needs of the Convent might take them to Rome or Avignon; when they were in England, they flitted about from property to property,—Laleham, Pyrford, Cleygate, Denham, Islip and Pershore,—with a monk or two in their train to act as seneschal or chaplain; and even if they were at Westminster, they mostly resided outside the precincts at their manor-house of La Neyte. So the daily existence of the Abbey depended on the Prior and his Brethren. It was time, therefore, that these should be brought out of the shadow-land in which they have been allowed to remain.

It needed some courage to undertake such a task, especially as I had had no experience in deciphering mediæval documents when I came to live in the Abbey five years ago. But certain circumstances encouraged me. My colleagues, and more especially the Dean, were ready to give their favour to another instalment of the Westminster series. Dr Edward Scott, the Keeper of the Muniments, has never tired of allowing a beginner to draw upon his unique experience or to beg for his revision of transcripts made by a prentice hand. I had also before me the volumes already produced by the Dean of Wells, who has shown a constant interest in the continuance of his work. When I had practically completed my list of the later monks (from 1297-8