THE
HEADS OF RELIGIOUS HOUSES
ENGLAND AND WALES
II
1216–1377

Edited by

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

I. *The purpose and scope*

This book aims at providing lists of all known superiors of the religious houses in England and Wales between 1216 and 1377. Like the previous volume, covering the years 940–1216,[1] we have restricted our interpretation of religious house to cover all establishments of monks, regular canons, and nuns, whether of abbatial or lower rank and whether autonomous or dependent. These lists are based on houses in existence between 1216 and 1377 as recorded in the relevant sections of *Medieval Religious Houses, England and Wales*. A few small houses have failed to reveal the names of any heads and we have intentionally omitted hospitals, colleges,[2] the military orders, and for this period the mendicant orders who arrived in England in the thirteenth century. The decision to omit the last-mentioned was taken partly because of the work that is presently being done on biographical registers of the mendicant friars by such scholars as Dr Michael Robson (Franciscans in England and Wales)[3] and Fr Richard Copsey (Carmelites in England, Scotland and Wales)[4] and the as yet unused research material left by the late Dr A. B. Emden (in the Modern Papers Department of the Bodleian Library, Oxford).

II. *The materials*

The one great advantage for compilers of the 1216–1377 volume over the earlier volume, which is at the same time daunting and overwhelming, is the development of record-keeping in the thirteenth century and the consequent great growth of surviving material – both the new series of records and the bulkier continuations of earlier extant series. Much of the material described in the 940–1216 volume has of course been used in this second volume – chronicles and annals; charters, cartularies, and registers; obituaries and calendars (and antiquarian copies of lost records) have all been consulted. To these are added the documentary results of further developments in record-keeping at

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[1] D. Knowles, C. N. L. Brooke and V. C. M. London, *Heads of Religious Houses: England and Wales I: 940–1216* (Cambridge, 1972; 2nd edn. 2001).

[2] The only exceptions being Gloucester abbey's cell at Oxford *c.* 1283–91, before it was reconstituted as Gloucester College to become the general house of studies under the abbots-president of the English Benedictine province; and Durham's affiliated house at Oxford, until it was endowed as Durham College in 1380–1 (*KH*, pp. 56, 72; W. A. Pantin, 'Gloucester College', *Oxoniensia*, XI–XII (1946–7), 65–74; M. R. Foster, 'Durham monks at Oxford *c.* 1286–1381: a house of studies and its inmates', *Oxoniensia*, LV (1990), 99–114).   [3] See *MRB*, 1 (1995), 19–22.   [4] See *MRB*, 2 (1996), 21–2.

governmental and ecclesiastical level. Of considerable importance for our research are the bishops' rolls or registers which seem to have developed from the early years of the thirteenth century onwards and provide an enormous source of information on religious houses in most dioceses.[5] They are supplemented by other and subsidiary diocesan and peculiar series – court books (instance, office, and visitation) and related case files, probate registers and original testamentary records. At a wider ecclesiastical level the series of papal registers provide another important research source. Amongst the English royal governmental archives, as well as the formidable series of enrolments begun in the late twelfth or early thirteenth centuries (patent, close, charter, and fine rolls), are the records of the royal courts, itinerant justices and assizes, and the overwhelming bulk of the records of Common Pleas and of the King's Bench; the archives of clergy taxation (clerical subsidies E179); the new series of ecclesiastical petitions (C84); significations of excommunication (C85); returns of aliens (E106); 'ancient' correspondence (SC1); and warrants for the Great Seal (C81). The vast series of feet of fines was systematically searched till the end of the thirteenth century when the religious seem not to make so much use of this form of transaction, an action presumably linked with recent mortmain legislation. In the case of the governmental court records with 236 Curia Regis Rolls up to the end of Henry III's reign, let alone the accumulation of assize records for the whole period, and 466 rolls each for Common Pleas and King's Bench from 1272 to 1377 – the roll for each term in the fourteenth century often extending to several hundred membranes – it is clear that sampling is the only feasible way to approach these records, even over a fifteen-year research period, and that is what has had to be done. The series of pipe rolls has also been only sporadically searched, partly again because of bulk, but also because this particular record, as Professor Brooke found in the twelfth century, can be misleading and provide traps for the historian. Just as Walter, abbot of Tavistock (c. 1154–1168) was a regular feature in later twelfth-century pipe rolls,[6] so you find mention of heads in later pipe rolls in respect to debts incurred much earlier, and still mentioned as though head rather than former head when a successor is known from other sources to be in office. Because of these problems and pitfalls this source needs to be used warily.

Annals and chronicles can also be a source of confusion, not just because of the obvious errors, miscopyings, or misunderstandings.[7] Sir Charles Clay and

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[5] Listed in D. M. Smith, *Guide to Bishops' Registers of England and Wales: a survey from the Middle Ages to the abolition of Episcopacy in 1646* (Royal Historical Society guide and handbook 11, 1981).

[6] *Heads*, I, 12.

[7] For a good example of the problems of unreliable annals or chronicles see M. Brett, 'The annals of Bermondsey, Southwark, and Merton' in D. Abulafia, M. Franklin, and M. Rubin, eds., *Church and City 1000–1500: essays in honour of Christopher Brooke* (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 279–310.

others have noted in the case of a chronicle of Fountains abbey, for example, that in the calculations of length of abbatial rule no details of vacancy periods are given, some abbots are omitted from the numbering scheme adopted by the chronicler, and, most importantly, that the calculations of the abbot's rule are based on the lunar month of twenty-eight days not the calendar month. At Furness, the annals numbered abbots who had ruled for more than ten years and thereby merited an entry in the abbey *mortuarium*, omitting those who were abbots for a shorter period; evidence from other houses possibly points to an omission of abbots from the numbering sequence for more personal reasons, reflecting dissatisfaction with their rule and a desire to gloss over their malad-ministration.

Moving on from a cursory review of the primary sources which provide us with evidence, it will be useful to consider what sort of information typically survives for the appointment to and vacation of office of religious heads in the period, and how the particular religious order, patronage, exempt status, etc., could considerably affect the extent and survival of such records. The three main forms of election laid down by the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 were by scrutiny, compromise, or inspiration: *per viam scrutinii*, the formal ballot of members of the community; *per viam compromissi*, the appointment of a small group (committee) within the religious house delegated with the responsibil-ity for choosing the new superior; and *per viam inspirationis*, the spontaneous choice of a new head by general agreement within the community. On occasion the community voluntarily ceded its rights to the diocesan to choose a new head (and the bishop could also exercise his right of appointment if the office had been vacant for six months (*per lapsum temporis*) or if the form of election had been contrary to canon law and required to be quashed). Sometimes the elec-tion procedure in a particular instance was regulated by composition or settle-ment, usually after disputes had arisen. The Benedictine cathedral priory of Worcester was just such a case where a composition between Bishop William of Blois and the convent in 1224 regulated the choice of the prior, an arrange-ment which remained in force until the dissolution. By the terms of this com-position the convent chose seven candidates to be presented to the bishop of Worcester, who having examined them chose one to be prior and admitted him.[8]

Exemption of a house or order from diocesan control meant of course that in most cases the election of superiors does not feature at all in our main source for such evidence, the episcopal registers. The Carthusians, the Trinitarians, the Grandmontines only feature when they receive a commission or some other

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[8] *Acta Langton*, pp. 160–3; *EEA*, 13, app. II, no. 2; Greatrex, *Biog. Reg.*, p. 755; R. M. Haines, *The adminis-tration of the diocese of Worcester in the first half of the fourteenth century* (London, 1965), pp. 220–1.

ad hoc occurrence, but are never found at the time of appointment or vacation of office, an internal matter for the order.[9] There are isolated exceptions. In the Gilbertine order, for example, the prior of an individual house was appointed by the master of the order, who also possessed the power to remove him. The choice of prioresses was rather more unusual in that the order devised an arrangement whereby three prioresses were chosen, elected by the nuns, and exercised authority in turn, each ruling for a week.[10] The names of the three prioresses of Sempringham in 1366 have come down to us by chance, but usually the male and female superiors do not feature in the extant records, except as one-off occurrences. The master of the order was a different matter. He was elected by the general chapter of the order and his election was regularly presented to the bishop of Lincoln for confirmation as part of the procedural sequence surrounding the appointment. A similar situation arises in respect of the exempt Cistercians and Premonstratensians. The formal election process was conducted internally within the order without diocesan involvement – the system of filiation meant the supervision of the election process by the father-abbot of the house from whom it had been established and colonised.[11] Only after the formal election procedure was complete did the diocesan bishop become involved when the new abbot was required to be blessed. Quite often the episcopal benediction and profession of obedience of the newly elected abbot are recorded in the bishop's registers – the frequency and occurrence of such entries, I suspect, being more a matter of changing registrational practice, diocese by diocese, than of fluctuating episcopal involvement. The highly centralised Order of Fontevraud controlled the appointments to its three English houses (Amesbury, Nuneaton, and Westwood): the abbess of Fontevraud chose the prioress and the prior of each house. Of course there was occasional resistance. In the 1290s at Amesbury there was contention between the convent and a French nun sent as prioress by the abbess of Fontevraud, and in a dispute at Nuneaton in the 1320s an interloper supported by the earl of Lancaster and the bishop of Coventry and Lichfield succeeded in holding out for some time against successive nominees of the abbess.[12]

What documentary evidence survives for the election process varies of course according to the record-keeping practices of individual diocesan

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[9] See E. M. Thompson, *The Carthusian Order in England* (London, 1930); C. Rowntree, 'Studies in Carthusian history in later medieval England with special reference to the Order's relations with secular society', unpublished D. Phil. thesis, University of York, 1981; M. Gray, *The Trinitarian Order in England* (BAR, 1993); and C. A. Hutchison, *The Hermit Monks of Grandmont* (Kalamazoo, 1989).

[10] B. Golding, *Gilbert of Sempringham and the Gilbertine Order c. 1130 –c. 1300* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 106–7.

[11] Canivez, I, xxvi–xxxi; *EHD*, 687–91; Colvin, pp. 236, 239–55.

[12] Kerr, *Religious life for Women*, pp. 132–4, 138–9.

chanceries, and the other bodies involved. Some are very full; others confine the election and confirmation to a brief summary entry in the episcopal register. Very occasionally a cache of documents survives by chance which gives considerable detail of the stages of the choice and confirmation of a new superior, and very rarely the actual number of votes cast in an election is recorded.[13] As a general rule, not too much survives from the monastic archives, and only occasional references in the archives of non-royal patrons (the initial notification of the vacancy and the seeking of permission to elect). Whenever the Crown is involved, the series of ecclesiastical petitions (C84) and the patent and close rolls shed considerable light on the process and are usefully supplemented by the relevant diocesan archives. If we take the Yorkshire Benedictine abbey of Selby as an example, the reader will discover the sort of range of information on the stages of the process that the royal and archiepiscopal archives of York contain. The first document is an ecclesiastical petition of 27 December 1321 in the Public Record Office notifying the king of the death of Simon of Scarborough the late abbot of Selby and requesting licence to elect (on occasion these petitions give the exact date of death of the predecessor). Royal licence to elect was granted on 3 January 1322. The election took place soon afterwards (though no precise details have survived in this instance) and the election of John of Wistow, monk of Selby, was presented to the king for royal assent in a further petition of 15 January. Royal assent to the election was granted on 20 January, and notification of this royal assent was sent by the king to the archbishop of York on the same day. On 28 January Archbishop Melton issued a proclamation *si quis* relating to the election (asking anyone who wished to oppose John's election to appear on 9 February) and subsequently confirmed the election on 9 February, at which time the archbishop sent a mandate to the convent ordering them to obey the new abbot. Notification of the confirmation was sent to the king on the same day, asking for the release of temporalities, and these were duly restored to the new abbot on 23 February. The abbot made his profession of obedience to the archbishop and received benediction from him on 15 March, and next day the archbishop issued a mandate to the Official of York to install the new abbot. Among the royal records, two other documents issued at the time of the restitution of the temporalities are also found. The writ of restitution is normally addressed to the local escheator(s) or sheriff(s) and is often accompanied on the patent rolls by the record of the issue of a writ *de intendendo* to the tenants of the house ordering them to be obedient to the new

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[13] For details about elections at Tewkesbury and Baysdale, see R. M. Haines, 'The appointment of a prelate: A. The election of an abbot of Tewkesbury in 1347' in his *Ecclesia Anglicana: studies in the English Church of the later middle ages* (Toronto, 1989), pp. 15–25; J. E. Burton, 'The election of Joan Fletcher as prioress of Baysdale, 1524' in *BIB*, 1 (1975–8), 145–53. For details of votes cast, see, for example, the entries relating to the nunneries of Goring 1301 and Legbourne 1309.

superior, while the close roll occasionally includes a related mandate to give seisin.[14] At all stages of the diocesan's involvement he could of course depute some or all of his functions, hence the regular occurrence of commissions to subordinates to examine and confirm elections, and even commissions to other diocesans to give benediction. Certain major Benedictine houses, immediately subject to the papal see (such as Bury St Edmunds, St Augustine's Canterbury, Evesham, St Albans, and Westminster), obtained papal confirmation of their elections.[15]

There was often a problem with the dependent cells of English abbeys and those alien priories and cells subservient to foreign religious houses, mostly in the former Norman and Angevin domains. To take the English dependencies first, in 1219, for instance, a dispute between Hugh of Wells, bishop of Lincoln, and the abbot of St Albans was finally settled by papal judges delegate. Priors of the dependent St Albans' cells within the diocese – Beadlow, Belvoir, and Hertford – were to be presented to the diocesan bishop by the abbot and convent of St Albans to receive administration of the spiritualities and be admitted. The abbot was to have cure of the souls of monks dwelling at the cells within the Lincoln diocese, and the power of placing monks in them and correcting them. The abbot was also permitted to recall priors of cells who had been admitted by the bishop.[16] The abbot thus retained great control over the affairs of his dependent priories: soon after this composition Roger of Wendover, the famous chronicler and prior of Belvoir, having effectively shown that his literary talents far outweighed his administrative abilities, was recalled to St Albans in disgrace in 1226. Needless to say, both diocesan and abbey were anxious to abide by the composition without jeopardising any of the rights which they possessed by virtue of its provisions. It made for recurrent prickly situations and a degree of wariness that comes out even in what it might be assumed were relatively formal documents. The letters of presentation to these Lincoln diocesan dependencies are regularly copied in full in the episcopal enrolments. They are couched in near-identical terms. Having given the reason for the vacancy, the abbot proceeds to nominate a successor to the former prior, taking care to mention the 1219 award: '. . . providimus in priorem eiusdem domus eidem Willelmo substituendum. Ipsum igitur sanctitati vestre presentamus humiliter et devote supplicantes quatinus secundum formam compositionis inter ecclesiam vestram et nostram facte et firmate, ipsum sine mora,

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[14] For the Latin form of some of these documents (petition for licence to elect, royal licence to elect, presentation of election for royal assent, the royal assent, certificate of episcopal confirmation of the election, restitution of temporalities), see H. Hall, *A formula book of English official historical documents, part I: Diplomatic documents* (Cambridge, 1908), nos. 88–93.

[15] For the question of papal provisions to monasteries, see R. L. Storey, 'Papal provisions to English monasteries', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, XXXV (1991), 77–91.   [16] *Reg. Ant. Lincoln*, III, no. 653.

dispendio et difficultate velitis admittere'.[17] The bishop admits and institutes the presentee *per librum* and exacts an oath of canonical obedience. An indication of the care that was taken by the diocesan occurs in the 1233 admission of Prior John of Hertford. John's letters of presentation only bore the seal of the abbot of St Albans, William of Trumpington, and not that of the convent. The bishop was uncertain whether the convent had assented to John's nomination and the new prior had to swear that the letters were issued by both the abbot and the convent. After his admission '*salvo tamen iure conventus sancti Albani*', he was enjoined to obtain additional letters from the convent assenting to the presentation.[18]

Not all the monastic cells or priories or bailiwicks dependent upon foreign monasteries resembled the cells of English mother-houses as regards the appointment of superiors or in respect of their actual status. Professor Matthew and others have ably surveyed the conditions that gave rise to the establishment of these various types of 'priory', ranging from the small monastic community to the solitary monk-bailiff administering the English possessions of the French mother-house.[19] The distinction between the dative and the conventual types of alien priory hinges primarily upon the difference in relationship between the priory and the parent-abbey. The dative priories were in a greater degree of subjection to their mother-houses. Their priors were appointed by the abbot and were removable at will; the houses had no real corporate existence and the priors were content to act as general proctors of the French abbeys in England. Indeed one of the major problems in providing lists of alien priors in this period is the elasticity over the use of titles to describe them. AB, described as the prior of X in one source, can equally well be described in another contemporary document as AB, general proctor in England of the abbey of Y. The conventual alien priories on the other hand enjoyed legal rights as owners of property and patrons of churches, and shared a fully corporate life. Their degree of dependence upon the foreign mother-house varied considerably. Most houses were in the position of St Neots which had its priors sent by the abbots of Bec, and the English convent had no say in the choice of a new superior. A few priories possessed the right of electing their own prior, but whatever the method of selection or nomination employed, a most important distinction between the position of conventual and dative priors is discernible in the fact that the former had security of tenure, until they died or resigned or were canonically removed for maladministration or other offences – they were 'perpetual priors' and could not be recalled at the whim

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[17] *Reg. Wells*, III, 44.   [18] ibid., III, 44–5.
[19] See D. Matthew, *The Norman Monasteries and their English possessions* (Oxford, 1962).

of an abbot living the other side of the English Channel. The procedure for the institution of priors presented by these French abbeys did not differ from that adopted for admission of heads of dependent cells of English houses – the candidate was presented to the diocesan bishop for admission and institution, and after this ceremony had taken place, professed canonical obedience to him. Subsequently he was inducted into corporal possession by the local archdeacon or his deputy. It has to be said that the evidence from English episcopal registers suggests that more attention was paid by bishops to the technicalities of the admission of new priors to these alien cells than is ever usually found in entries relating to English establishments. There was sometimes a relatively high turnover rate of alien priors in dative priories – (between 1250 and 1300 there were twelve priors of Wilsford and at least eleven priors of Weedon Lois) – and extra care seems to have been taken over the language of the documents and the examination of the candidates and causes of vacancy. It was by no means unknown for dative priors to be recalled or return to their French mother-house without informing the English diocesan or without formally resigning. This blatant disregard of episcopal jurisdiction normally did not go unheeded and great care was taken to determine whether the priors had in fact canonically resigned. The bishop of Coutances was prompted on one such occasion to inform his counterpart at Lincoln that the former prior of Haugham had resigned his office into the hands of the abbot of St Sever in the episcopal presence.[20] Richard de Capella, prior of Hinckley, then at Lire abbey in Normandy, submitted his resignation by letter to the bishop '*et impotentia sua revertendi ad partes istas ob id tam per litteras ipsas quam per testes idoneos sufficienter probata*'. For added measure the prior procured the seals of the bishop of Evreux and the abbot of Bec to be appended to his resignation deed.[21] Such care with respect to alien priors was not just taken by diocesan bishops. In 1376 at Stoke by Clare the patron, the earl of March, was the recipient of successive letters of presentation from the abbot of Bec and his proctor, with apologies for certain faults found in the initial document, before he would accept the presentation and write to the bishop of Norwich asking for the presentee's admission.[22]

Mention has already been made, in respect of non-exempt houses, of the diocesan bishop's careful scrutiny to check if the election procedures had been carried out in accordance with canon law. If he or his deputed commissaries found any such irregularities, regardless of the calibre or suitability of the candidate, they would quash the election and assume the right to appoint by episcopal authority. A scrutiny of episcopal registers suggests that while this

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[20] *Reg. Wells*, III, 158.   [21] ibid., II, 315–16.   [22] BL, Add. ms. 6041, f. 63r–v.

practice was universal, some bishops were more assiduous than others. The late Professor Rosalind Hill called attention long ago to the activities of Bishop Oliver Sutton of Lincoln (1280–99) in this regard.[23] Of 105 elections to abbeys and priories in his diocese during his episcopate, Sutton confirmed 52 but quashed 53 on account of canonical and procedural irregularity. In almost all of these 53 cases he deprived the electors of their power to choose for this particular occasion and then having examined the candidates previously chosen, appointed them to office himself.

Internal disputes, quarrels between rival candidates for election, problems with patrons or superior religious authorities (father-abbots, general chapters of certain orders, diocesan bishops and provincial archbishops, the pope, etc.) all contributed to the occasional disturbances which have gained notoriety because of the plentiful documentary sources extant for these disputes – often a welter of accusations, excommunications, physical attacks, imprisonments, exile. The famous problems of Tavistock abbey in the fourteenth century, starting with a disputed double election, the involvement of the bishop of Exeter, king, and pope, and the papal intrusion of Abbot Bonus who was subsequently deposed by the bishop, are a well-known example – as is the Exeter episcopal register's marginal comment on this abbot: '*Iste abbas qui dicebatur bonus erat pessimus quasi hereticus.*'[24] The long-running dispute at Bardney between 1303 and 1318 after Bishop Dalderby's attempts to remove Abbot Robert of Wainfleet,[25] and the Durham cathedral priory dispute involving Bishop Anthony Bek and Prior Richard de Hoton, are equally *causes célèbres*.[26]

III. *The arrangement of the lists*

We can only reiterate what the editors of the first volume were at pains to point out: complete consistency in the layout of entries in each list has proved neither desirable nor possible. Within each list the heads are in chronological order, wherever this is known; within each entry the occurrences are, usually, in chronological order. Some selection had to be made with regard to the entries on account of the often voluminous record of occurrences of heads of the larger or more well-documented houses. Where precise dates of appointment and of vacation are known, then this is normally the only information noted. Where evidence comprises a series of occurrences then some pruning has often been done, with the earliest and latest occurrence being noted and, where possible,

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[23] R. M. T. Hill, 'Bishop Sutton and the institutions of heads of religious houses in the diocese of Lincoln', *EHR*, LVIII (1943), 201–9. See also *Reg. Sutton*, I, xxiii–xxvii. [24] *Reg. Grandisson*, I, 395.
[25] See *AASRP*, XXXII (1914), 362–71.
[26] See C. M. Fraser, *A history of Antony Bek, bishop of Durham 1283–1311* (Oxford, 1957), pp. 123–75.

a few select references inserted in between. Where possible, each list has the following items.

1. *Name, county and dedication*. The names of pre-1974 English and Welsh counties are used. The dedications are based mainly on documentary evidence and the work of Alison Binns, *Dedications of Monastic Houses in England and Wales 1066–1216* (Studies in the History of Medieval Religion 1, Woodbridge, 1989). For Cistercians and dependencies we give also the name of the mother-house. Variant names for the house are also noted.

2. *Date of foundation*. This is generally taken from *KH*, but supplemented where possible by more recent work on particular houses or orders, e.g. appendix A on foundation dates in Sally Thompson's *Women Religious: the Founding of English Nunneries after the Norman Conquest* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 217–31. If a house was dissolved in this period or shortly afterwards this is also noted, as is the issue of letters of denization to alien houses.

3. *A note of former lists*. We include a *VCH* list where one exists, and, in general, more recent lists backed by archival references. As in the case of the 940–1216 volume, we have normally omitted antiquarian lists when they are not based on given references or are uncritical in their treatment of the information. References to medieval manuscript lists (e.g. in annals, chronicles, cartularies, etc.) and obits are noted.

4. *An entry for each known head*. An entry for each head known, in chronological order wherever possible (chance survivals of references in undated thirteenth-century material often make the precise sequence of heads uncertain at this date). Each list ends, in principle, with the first vacation of office, or the first occurrence of a successor where such precise information is unknown, after 1377. No systematic attempt has been made to note all 'ghost' heads (that is, names in old lists that are unsourced and for which no evidence has since been found). Where errors are likely (e.g. Roger de Berton, said to be Cluniac prior of Thetford in the *VCH* list, is likely to have been prior of the Dominican friary there) or when cited documentary evidence can no longer be found, they are noted in a footnote. If a head resigned, details of pension provision, if recorded, and later occurrences, where found, are noted. Each entry may consist of the following: name and outside dates, and surnames when known (variant spellings are included in brackets). Dates of election, confirmation, and blessing (in the case of royal involvement a note of the royal assent, restitution of temporalities, or issue of writ *de intendendo* and related matters), where known, are recorded; as are also length of tenure if specified in the sources, and reason for the vacation of office (death, resignation, deprivation). On the other hand, where further details of reason for vacation survive (e.g. Abbot Philip of Jervaulx being murdered by one of his monks; Abbot Richard

of Abingdon drowning while trying to cross the Thames in flood; Prior Guy de Marchant of Montacute removed and sent to the Tower for clipping coin; the Premonstratensian Abbot of Barlings, Richard of Hanworth, resigning to become a Franciscan; Prior Robert of Hornby being killed when his horse collided at speed with a stone cross), these are noted. If known, monumental inscriptions and grave-slabs of heads are also noted, and if a description of a personal (as opposed to institutional) seal survives, this is recorded. Where the record of the appointment of a new head does not note the reason for the vacancy this is stated. Occurrences are only very selectively noted if the full tenure of office of a head can be established from the sources – e.g. to help establish that a long tenure was indeed continuous. In other cases where precise dates of appointment and vacation are unknown a selection of occurrences (pruned in the case of well-documented heads) is provided. Grouping of dates by source has often been done. If it is known that a head became incapacitated or a coadjutor was appointed this is noted. The use of an initial before a date indicates that the head is identified by an initial only in that specific instance; in all others the full Christian name is given. The dating of undated documents remains of course a major problem, often based on the tenure of other ecclesiastics and secular officers or nobles, and in such cases notes have been appended to indicate either the reason for the approximate dating or the modern printed source where the arguments for the dating have been rehearsed. Much use has been made of the *Handbook of British Chronology*, the *Complete Peerage*, and the Le Neve *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae* revised for 1066–1300 and 1300–1541.

'+' attached to a date means in or after; '−' means in or before; 'x' links the limiting dates of an undated charter or the like.

References in nearly all cases are given to all essential primary sources; those to secondary literature are much more selective. Little Marlow appears under L; West Ravendale under W; but cross-references are given in such cases to reduce any inconvenience. The order of the lists follows the earlier volume, which itself was based on *KH*. The Benedictines are divided into three sections: the independent houses; their dependencies; the alien priories. The nuns, except for the Gilbertines, have been gathered together into a single alphabetical sequence.