

Archival Exercise Draft

The Priory of Fineshade or Castle Hymel

Introduction

Six miles south west of Stamford in Lincolnshire lies the site of Fineshade. During the medieval period there was a castle and later a priory of Austin canons. The priory of St. Mary was founded near the castle; the castle was demolished by Richard Engayne who died in 1208. The aim of this exercise was to establish some of the key medieval archival sources associated with this site, thereby establishing the scope for further research into the history of the Priory of Fineshade.

Methodology

Having established that a monastic site once existed at Fineshade by referencing *John Leland's Itinerary*, which is an account of his travels through England at the end of the medieval period, I then consulted British History Online and followed up some of the references in the entry for Fineshade relating to government and ecclesiastical records. A search of the British Library and National Archives catalogues revealed the existence of a fourteenth-century chronicle for the priory and a monastic seal.

Source 1: Grant to the prior and canons of Himel

Calendar of the Charter Rolls preserved in the Public Record Office Vol. I. Henry III. A.D. 1226-1257, (London: His Majesty's Stationary Office, 1903).

A digitised version of this source is now available on the internet.

<https://archive.org/details/calendarofcharte01grea> [Accessed 16th October 2020]

There is a reference of a Grant to the prior and canons of Himel, 22nd November 1227.

Calendar of the Charter Rolls, 12 Henry III, 22 November 1227, (London: His Majesty's Stationary Office, 1903), p. 65.

<https://archive.org/details/calendarcharter00stamgoog/page/n85/mode/2up?q=fineshade> [Accessed 16th October 2020]

Source 2: Cast of a monastic seal

Reference: PRO 23/62
Type of seal: England and Wales: Monastic.

Seal owner: Fineshade Priory, Northamptonshire.

Description: Date of original seal: 1534.

Colour of original seal: Brown.

Physical format: Plaster mould cast from original seal.

Date: [1880-1995]

Related material: For parent document please see [E 25/51/1](#)

Held by: [The National Archives, Kew](#)

Martin Hargreaves (2302668)

Legal status: Public Record
Dimensions: Fragment
Closure status: Open Document, Open Description

There is a photograph of a plaster mould cast from original seal of Fineshade Priory available online.

Source 3: Documents relating to Fineshade Priory

There are several documents relating to Fineshade Priory, including a chronicle, stored at the British Library as detailed below:

- **Title:** Documents relating to (?)Fineshade Priory
- **Collection Area:** Western Manuscripts
- **Reference:** Cotton MS Cleopatra D IX, ff 84–90
- **Creation Date:** 14th century
- **Extent and Access:**
 - Extent:**
1 item
 - Conditions of Use:** Letter of introduction required to view this manuscript
- **Language:** Latin
Anglo Norman
- **History:**
 - Origin:**
Origin: (?) Fineshade Priory
 - Custodial History:**
Previously owned by: Sir Robert Cotton (d. 1631)
- **Publications:** Ker, N. R. (ed.), *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain: A List of Surviving Books* (London, 2nd edn., 1964), p. 87

Source 4: Papal Registers Relating To Great Britain and Ireland

Calendar of Papal Registers Relating To Great Britain and Ireland: Volume 1, 1198-1304, (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1893).

Calendar of Papal Registers Relating To Great Britain and Ireland: Volume 1, 1198-1304. Ed. W H Bliss. (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1893). *British History Online*.
<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-papal-registers/brit-ie/vol1>. [Accessed 16 October 2020]

Two entries are relevant to Fineshade, which can be found in the section:

Regesta, Vol. XII. 7 Honorius III.

6 Non. May. Grant of protection and confirmation of their possessions to the prior and canons of St. Mary's, Castle Lateran. Hymel (Fineshead), and their brethren, present and future; namely, their possessions in the town of (f. 40d.) Blararic, rents in Northlufeam, lands in the towns of Laxton, Henewic, and Dudington, with various privileges and immunities.

1223. Confirmation to the prior and canons of Castle Hymel of an ordinance made by Richard Engain, their 11 Kal. June. patron and founder, that the election of prior should be made without the consent of himself or his

Lateran. successors.
(f. 48d.)

Source 5: John Leyland's Itinerary

Chandler, J. (1993) *John Leyland's Itinerary: Travels in Tudor England*. Stroud: Sutton.

There is a reference on page 329 to the Fineshade site.

Future directions for archival research

During my research I discovered that Hannah Kilpatrick produced an MA Thesis for the Department of English, University of Ottawa, entitled 'The Untouchable Past and the Incomprehensible Present: Temporal Detachment and the Shaping of History in the Fineshade Manuscript'. This provides a valuable resource for further research as it contains many useful references.