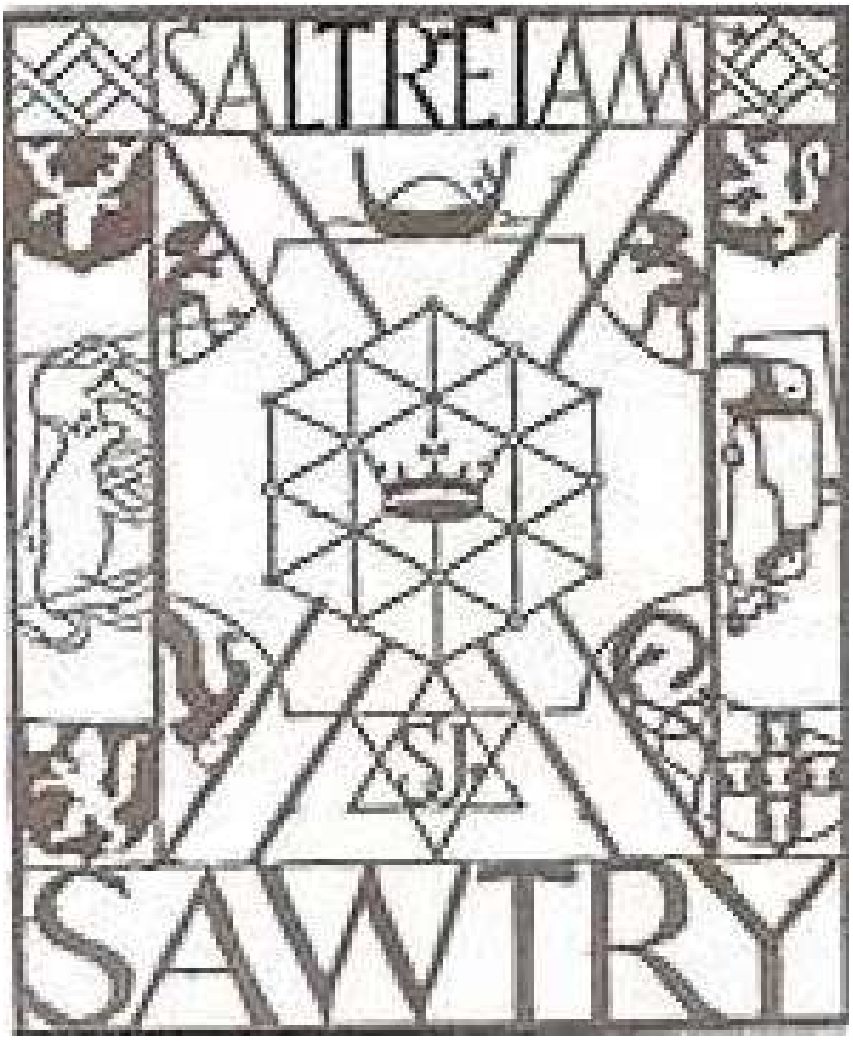
SAWTRY HISTORY SOCIETY



ARTICLES ON THE CISTERCIAN ORDER

Contents

Article 1 - Origin of the Cistercian Order

The seed from which the Cistercian Order emerged was planted some 180 years earlier with the Cluniac Reformation of AD 910, which saw the emergence at Cluny Abbey (in Burgundy) of the Cluniac Order. This reformation of Benedictine monasticism embodied a purer observance by the Cluniac Order of the authentic spirit of the Rule of St Benedict than that achieved by the Benedictine Order through their traditional observance.

In 1098, Robert of Molesme, with a group of 21 followers, left the Cluniac monastery of Molesme (in Burgundy) in order to follow a more strict and literal observance of the Rule of St Benedict than that achieved by the Cluniac Reformation. Robert and his party arrived, reportedly on the Feast Day of St Benedict, at the site (gifted by Odo I, Duke of Burgundy) on which the Abbey of Citeaux would be founded. Paradoxically, in 1099 the Abbot of Molesme, angered by Robert's departure, petitioned Pope Urban II to order Robert back to the Abbey. Robert, shortly after, became Abbot and implemented reforms similar to those he had instigated at Citeaux.

By the time of Robert's departure from Citeaux, the Cistercian *ordo* (a monastic way of life, liturgy and ethos) had been established. Despite Robert's departure, Citeaux continued to flourish; particularly under the abbacy of Stephen Harding (the third Abbot, 1108 to 1133). By 1119 the four primary daughter-houses of La Ferté (1113), Pontigny (1114), Clairvaux (1115) and Morimond (1115), the four filiations of Citeaux, had been founded, and the *Carta Caritatis* (Charter of Charity), the foundational document of the Order, had received a papal bull from Pope Calixtus II; enshrining it as a canon law of the Catholic Church. The Cistercian Order was established.

Locations

Stephen Harding is considered the Father of the Cistercian Order, with good reason. During his abbacy he guided the fledgling Abbey through the trials and destitution common to most abbeys in the early years of their founding, to the beginnings of the accomplishment that would elevate Citeaux as the Mother-house of the Cistercian Order. Stephen was also singularly instrumental, both as Prior to Alberic (second Abbot of Citeaux) and as Abbot himself, in the creation of the charters and usages that would govern all aspects of the Cistercian Order; of particular import being the aforementioned *Carta Caritatis* and the *Consuetudines* (customs and regulations of the Order). Stephen's abbacy also saw Cistercian monasticism spread rapidly throughout Europe and at the time of his death

upwards of ninety monasteries had been founded; twenty of which were daughters of Citeaux.

Citeaux Abbey

How did the Cistercians differ from the Benedictine, Cluniac and other contemporary Orders? Why were Cistercians benedictine and not Benedictine? The difference lay not in the strictness of their adherence to the Rule of St Benedict, although this was of significance, but in the charters and usages that governed that strict adherence.

In following the traditional Rule of St Benedict, each abbey of the Benedictine Order was autonomous and independent of other religious houses. The Abbot was not answerable to any authority, religious or secular, but that of God. Abbeys depended on patrons to provide support - in the form of donations of money and land, and protection; in return for which was a guarantee of prayers of salvation in perpetuity for the patron, his family and descendants. However, the autonomous independence of Benedictine abbeys exposed them to patrons who exercised privileges of material benefit, rights to hospitality and involvement in Abbey governance, as a condition of their continued patronage. The consequence of which was that Benedictine abbeys, to varying extent, displayed wealth and trappings of comfort, ate less frugally, and ceased to observe some of the night-time Divine Offices.

The Cistercian Order, however, was hierarchical under the central governance of a Mother-house and Father-abbot, which allowed statutes to be disseminated and discipline to be enforced. Firstly, by the Abbot of an abbey's respective mother-house in the filial affiliation, and secondly, directly by the Father-abbot from the Mother-house of Citeaux through the mechanism of the General Chapter (on general matters pertaining to the Order as a whole or when the filial method failed or was unable to do so). Filial affiliation also aided and set the passage of ideas in matters such as architecture, furnishings, agriculture, industry and technology. Filial affiliation also prevented patrons from exercising those privileges customarily enjoyed over Benedictine abbeys.

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Article 2 - *Carta Caritatis*: Charter of Charity (Foundational Document of the Cistercian Order)

The *Carta Caritatis* was the principal document of governance of the Cistercian Order that governed every aspect of monastic life. It became canon law of the Catholic Church when it was approved by a papal bull of Pope Calixtus II in 1119. The basis of the *Carta* is 'Uniformity of Observance and Unity in Charity' which states that all avowed in the Order, 'are all servants of one King and Lord. He has in His love dispersed the members of the Order in many different places, there to live under one *Rule*.' This equality under God meant that no abbot could impose material exactions on another house of the Order. However, the Abbot of Citeaux, as the Father Immediate of the Order, retained care for the souls of all members of the Order out of charity. The Abbot of Citeaux, with the abbots attending General Chapter, therefore, strove to prevent any monastery of the Order from wavering in its purpose or deviating from the rule.

Foremost of the provisions of the *Carta* are:

> The Abbot of Citeaux, as the Father Immediate of the whole Order, had the right to visit all monasteries of the Order. When so visited, the local Abbot of the visited monastery was to yield his place to the Father Immediate in affirmation of Citeaux as the Mother of all the houses of the Order. The Father Immediate would replace the local Abbot in all matters except two; he would eat in the refectory of the visited abbey with the brethren, rather than with visitors in the guest house and would not receive the profession from the brethren of the monastery.
>
> Similarly, the Abbot of a mother-house, as the Father Immediate of his filiation, was to visit all the daughter-houses of his filiation at least once each year. When so visiting he would take precedence over the local Abbot of that monastery and would eat in the refectory, not in the guest house, to show that he is the father of a family and not a visitor. However, the Father Immediate can do nothing against the will of the local Abbot except what is good for the soul, such as the correction of irregularities. The visitation of Father Immediate on Citeaux was to be done by the Abbots of the four primary daughter-houses of Citeaux, collectively, once each year.
>
> The General Chapter of the Order met once each year at Citeaux under the presidency of the Abbot of Citeaux for the purpose that all abbots of the Order could meet on another. The purpose of the Chapter was to: repair the *ordo* and to confirm the peace and charity; and correct errors, proclaim faults and help one another materially if need be. Irregular abbots were to be charitably proclaimed, by abbots only, and were obliged to do the penance imposed; the Abbots of the four primary daughter-houses of Citeaux were to, collectively, advise and correct the Abbot of Citeaux. The Chapter had the definitive right to decide all cases, and judge and punish all faults (of a regular nature) brought to its attention. An abbot could only absent himself from the General Chapter for two reasons - sickness and solemn profession; in which case, their prior was to attend as their vicar.
>
> All new monastery foundations were to be dedicated to St Mary in Her honour, and no monastery was to be founded in cities, towns or villages. A new foundation was to be made with twelve brothers (choir monks) and a superior (abbot), and a prescribed set of books that would enable the same interpretation of the Rule and the same observance of customs as all other monasteries of the Order. The following places were to be constructed in the first instance; oratory, refectory, dormitory, guest house and gate house, and no dwellings were to be placed outside of the precinct enclosure. Choir monks were to get their living from manual labour, farming and stock-raising, but were not to live away from the monastery. Monasteries were to have granges as necessary that were manned by lay-brethren; it was forbidden for choir monks to live in the granges.

Finally, the *Carta Caritatis* was revised in 1124 as the *Summa Cartae Caritatis* and again in 1152 as the *Carta Caritatis Posterior*. Neither of these revisions altered the fundamental basis or tenor of the *Carta*.

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Article 3 - Founding a New Abbey

When an abbey had grown in such size (approximately 60 choir monks) that it would not suffer the loss of a founding colony it was expected to colonize a new daughter-house as a filial *de novo* foundation. There was no prescribed location for a Cistercian abbey, although valleys were dominant in chosen locations, and the '...setting up their monasteries in deserted places far away from human habitation...' (Jamroziak, 2013) was more myth than fact; indeed, the only statute regarding the location of a new abbey was that, 'no abbey was to be founded in cities, towns or villages'. In reality, the location for a new abbey was governed by the wishes of the founding benefactor, availability of land, local conditions and ready access to a source of fresh water, and nearby settlements. Choir monks were to get their living from manual labour, farming and stock-raising, but were not to live away from the monastery. Abbeys were to have granges as necessary that were manned by lay-brethren, and it was forbidden for choir monks to live in the granges.

The process by which a new abbey was established took several years and is summarized by the following:

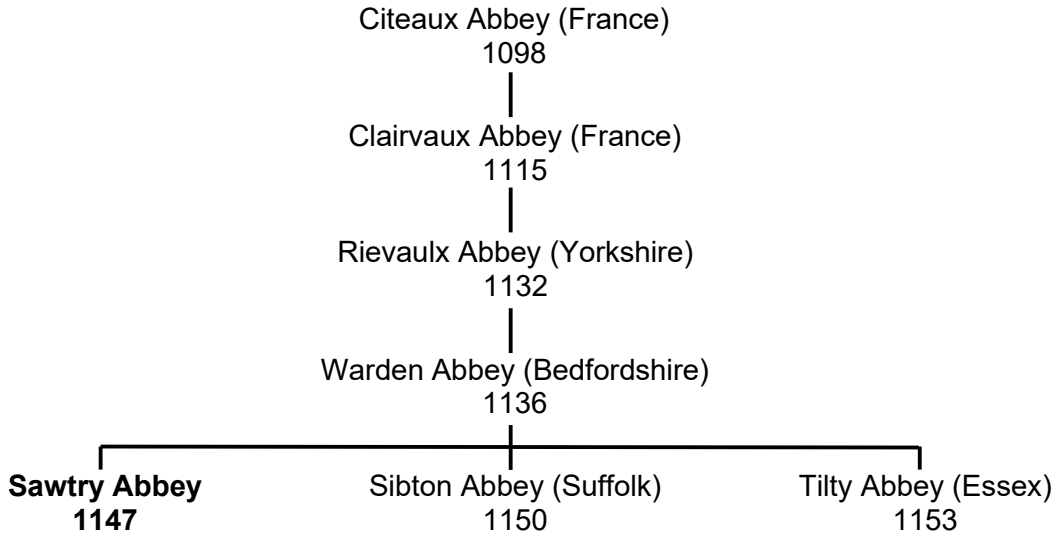
> The prospective founding benefactor would apply to the General Chapter for permission to found a new abbey. The General Chapter was held each September so, depending on when the application was made, it could be upwards of a year before the matter was addressed.
>
> The next General Chapter following submission of the application would consider the matter and appoint a commission, that included two or three abbots familiar with the prospective locality. The commission would visit the intended site for the new abbey and assess the suitability of the initial grant of land, its legal status and the distance between the proposed site and neighbouring abbeys of the Order; no Cistercian abbeys were to be closer than 10 Burgundian Leagues (40km or 25miles).
>
> The report from the commission was discussed at the next General Chapter and, if the findings were positive, foundation of the new abbey was initiated. Before a new foundation could proceed, and as provided by the *Carta Caritatis*, the Bishop in whose diocese the foundation would be established was to agree, 'to avoid every conflict between Bishop and monk.' The provision in the *Carta Caritatis* removed all Cistercian abbeys from episcopal control and jurisdiction.
>
> Lay brothers, with resources provided by the benefactor, would construct the first essential buildings; an oratory - where the monks could pray, a dormitory and refectory - for the monk's living accommodation, a guest house - so that visitors would not intrude on the claustral life of the abbey, and a gate house to control access to the monastic precinct. These first buildings were 'primitive' in nature until more substantial structures of stone could be constructed, and would likely have been built from readily obtainable materials such as wood, wattle and mud, and thatch. At the same time, the precinct boundary would be marked out and, in the first instance, ditched, whilst a fresh water supply would be channelled from the source provisioned for in the foundation endowment.
>
> Only then would the founding colony arrive at their new abbey. The founding colony consisted of twelve choir monks (representing the twelve Apostles of Christ) and a new abbot (as their Superior, as Christ was to the Apostles), who was appointed by the abbot of the mother-house. The colony was to be in possession of the prescribed books - a missal, the gospels, a gradual, an antiphonary, a hymnal, a psalterium, a copy of the rule and a religious calendar, that would enable the same interpretation of the Rule and the same observance of customs as all other abbeys of the Order. This set of books would have been meticulously copied by the monks of the mother-house as part of the founding process and in preparation for the departure of the founding colony.

The founding benefactor would then issue the foundation charter that confirmed the initial grant of land and other endowments.

When the new abbey had the resources and finances to do so, construction of the abbey church would be commissioned. When the east end of the church (the presbytery, with high alter) was complete, the church was considered 'sufficiently ready' for its dedication (to St Mary in Her honour) by the diocesan bishop.

Sawtry Abbey was founded in 1147. This suggests the foundation of Sawtry Abbey was approved by the General Chapter that sat in September 1146 which, in turn, infers the General Chapter that instigated the commission to assess suitability sat in September 1145. The application by Simon II de Senlis, Earl of Northampton and Huntingdon, to found a Cistercian abbey in the manor of Sawtry Judith would, more than likely, have been made sometime between October 1144 and August 1145.

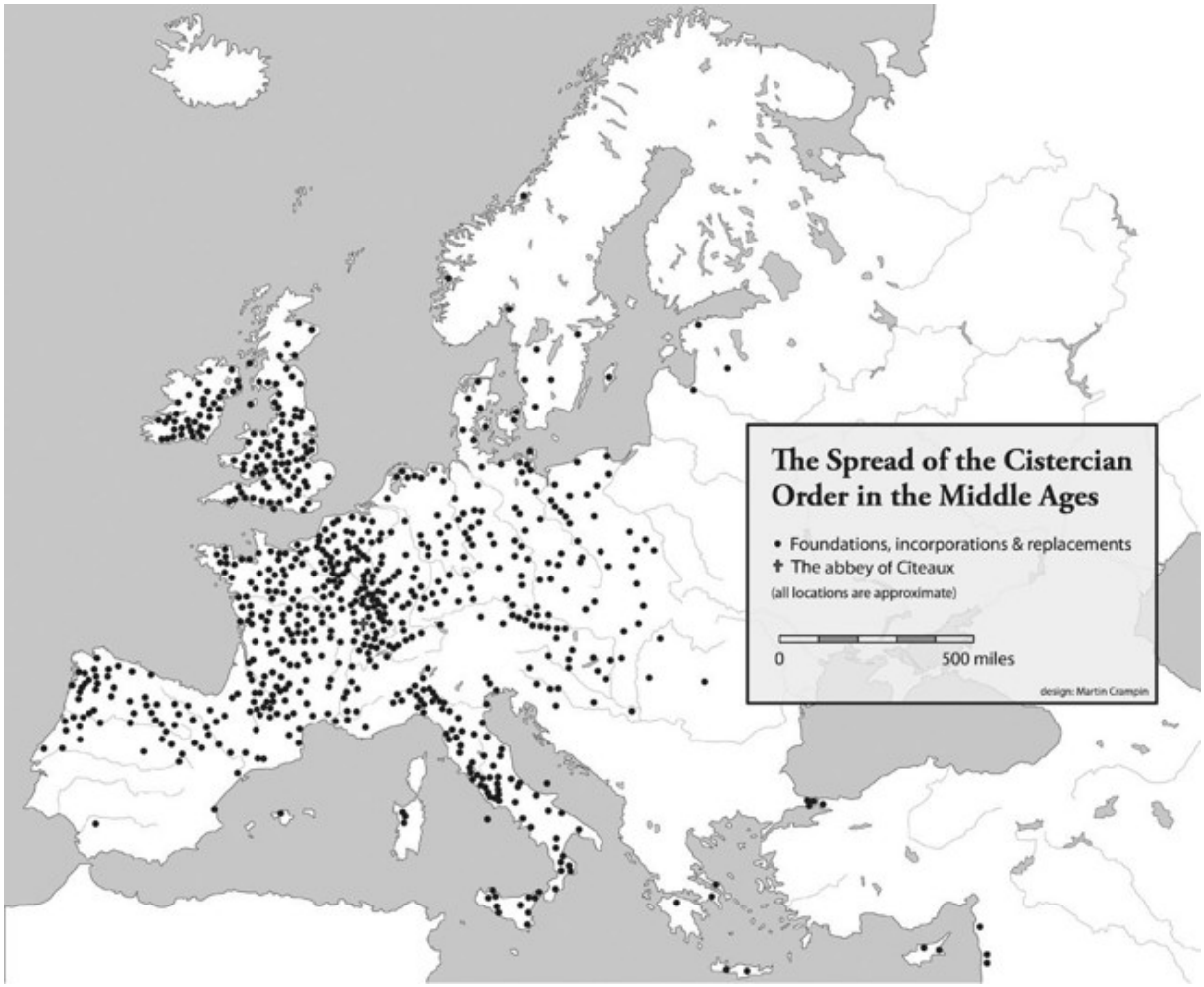
The recurring process of mother-houses despatching colonies of monks to establish daughter-houses created the filial relationships that were instrumental to the governance and efficiency of the Cistercian Order. With regard to the filial relationship of Sawtry Abbey; it was a fifth generation abbey in the Clairvaux filiation, its mother-house was Warden Abbey (Bedfordshire), and it had two siblings - Sibton (Yoxford, Suffolk) and Tilty (Essex).



Sawtry Abbey in the Rievaulx Lineage of the Clairvaux Filiation

In addition to filial *de novo* foundations, there were also incorporations where existing abbeys of other orders were affiliated into the Cistercian Order; examples of this are the thirty-two abbeys of the Savigniac Order and seven abbeys of the Obazine Order, both of which affiliated to Citeaux in 1147. Less common was incorporation by adoption where a community of monks of another order made application to the General Chapter; an example of this is Fountains Abbey. In October 1132, a dissatisfied group of monks from the Benedictine Abbey of St Mary in York left (or were expelled from) the Abbey. Under the protection of Archbishop Thurstan of York they were brought to Skelldale Valley and took shelter under an elm tree and nearby rocks. Thurstan granted the lands at that place, in Herleshowe wood on the bank of the River Skell, so that the monks could build for themselves a monastery. The following year the fledgling Fountains Abbey was adopted into the Cistercian Order by Abbott Bernard as a daughter-house of Clairvaux Abbey. Fountains would become one the largest and most prestigious of Cistercian abbeys, not just in Yorkshire - or even England, but within the whole of the Order.

Expansion of Cistercian monasticism throughout Europe in the 12th and 13th centuries was prolific, to the extent that the Order had approximately 340 abbeys by the mid-12th century and approximately 680 abbeys by the mid-13th century.



The spread of the Cistercian Order by 1152 (from Burton and Kerr, 2013)

The principle reason for founding an abbey was, in the main, devotional, as a demonstration of the benefactor's piety in which they sought everlasting salvation for themself and their family - living, dead and yet to be born. Through the endowment of lands and other gifts, the benefactor, and indeed other patrons of the abbey, expected to benefit for themselves and their families the rights to burial, commemoration and intercessory prayers in perpetuity. There were other, more earthly, underlying reasons for founding abbeys. However, the motives behind this reason were more secular: as a display of social status and wealth; as a political gesture to curry favour with factions of the nobility - or even royalty, who themselves had founded Cistercian abbeys; as an act of defiance during times of conflict in order to prevent a foe from gaining possession of the lands; and finally as an act of expiation for violence committed on the battlefield. Simon II de Senlis was a loyal supporter of King Stephen during the Anarchy (1135-1153), during which time he reputedly confiscated church lands and damaged Ramsey Abbey, and fought for King Stephen at the Battle of Lincoln (1141). Having committed offences to the church, and having delivered violence and blood-letting on the field of battle, Simon II probably had much to atone for when he founded Sawtry Abbey.

Notes:

Carta Caritatis - the Charter of Charity, rule of the Cistercian Order
Antiphonary - the book of chants; the most important being the Introit of the Mass, the Gradual, the Offertory and the Communion

Gradual - the book of Psalms; specifically Psalms 119-133
Missal - the book prayers and sacraments of the Mass
Psalterium - the book of Psalms

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Article 4 - The Abbey Precinct

Temporary Precinct

Once a suitable site had been identified on which the abbey was to be established, and approved by the General Chapter, certain buildings of necessity were to be constructed before the new abbot could take residence, in order that the new community could straightaway serve God and live there in keeping with the Rule. These buildings were the oratory - where the monks prayed, the monks' dormitory - where the monks slept, the monks' refectory - where the monks ate, the lay brothers' dormitory - where the lay brothers slept, the lay brothers' refectory - where the lay brothers ate, the guest house - for the abbey to accept visitors and the gate house - to control access to the precinct. The early buildings would have been of sophisticated wood, wattle and daub, and thatch construction, as they would have needed to endure for many years, often decades, until they could be replaced with stone constructions. Evidence at Fountains Abbey in Yorkshire shows principal wall posts 0.4m square, walls of straight alignment, sill beams for stability, with indication that some buildings had two storeys. Temporary buildings were not cloistered as they were only intended for use until such time as the monastery was stable, and in a position to construct permanent buildings in stone.

Immediately after the founding community arrived, the water management system would be cut. This consisted of water channels bringing freshwater in to, and taking wastewater from, the abbey, water channels that would serve the buildings, settling tanks to filter the water and balancing reservoirs to control the flow pressure throughout the system in order that water-powered machinery would turn, and waste could be carried away. Indeed, the Cistercian expertise in hydraulic engineering was such that other religious orders often sought their advice. Other immediate constructions would be the precinct boundary (in the form of a ditch, a fence or both) in order to separate the community from the outside world, and the necessary workplaces such as bakehouse, brewhouse, smithy and washhouse.

Permanent Precinct

General

The abbey precinct, also referred to as the inner court, contained the cloistral complex, infirmaries, guest houses, the necessary workplaces (bakehouse, brewhouse, smithy, etc), the areas for husbandry and produce, and, later, the abbot's lodgings, the *misericord* and tied housing (when provided). Before construction of the cloistral complex and other buildings of the precinct in stone began, the water management system that would serve those buildings was first laid out and incorporated into the existing water management system. The permanent water channels were stone lined in order to ensure the reliable water source that was essential to service the kitchens, latrines, *lavabo*, and liturgical practices.

The cloistral complex was the heart of the abbey and the hub of abbey life. The absolute heart of the cloister was the garth which, as a contemplative area, was considered to be a haven of tranquillity, a heavenly paradise. Cloisters in northwest Europe were typically south-facing; with the Church forming the north face with the east range abutted to, and extending from, the south edge of the transept, and the west range abutted to, and extending from, the west end of the nave, and both ranges enclosed by the south range. This was particularly so in England and Wales with sixty of the seventy-nine abbeys having south-facing cloisters; of the remaining nineteen, fourteen were north-facing and five were unknown due to the lack of physical or documentary evidence. Those that were north-facing were generally so due to geographical and water source influences.

The average time to complete a stone church was twenty years and to complete the remainder of the cloistral complex forty years. However, this could vary considerably depending on the generosity and interest of patrons, availability of resources and workforce,

and the scale of construction. Stone buildings were vaulted on the ground floor and, although generally vaulted on the upper floor, some upper floors were timber framed. Monastic buildings were ritually purified on a weekly basis by the sprinkling of holy water in order to eliminate the 'bad air' that caused illness; particularly the church, chapter house, *calefactory*, dormitory, latrines, refectory, kitchen and storerooms.

One activity commonly associated with any monastic establishment was the copying of records. The space in which this occurred was the *scriptorium*, however, unlike other monastic orders, the *scriptorium* did not occupy a fixed space in Cistercian abbeys; rather, a *scriptorium* would be set up when it was required in a place in the abbey that afforded the best conditions for such work - principally, good natural light and easy access to the necessary equipment.

When circulating around the abbey, monks, novices and lay brothers would keep close to the walls leaving the middle of the passages and corridors free for the abbot. Items that savoured pride and excess, or that corrupted poverty, were forbidden within the abbey precinct.

Boundary

The precinct was enclosed by a boundary, often a stone wall, that served as both a physical and symbolic barrier between the secular world outside and the spiritual world of the community within. At Fountains Abbey in Yorkshire, the wall was of stone and, on average, 11 feet (3.4 metres) in hight, enclosing an area of 70 acres (28.3 hectares). As a comparison, the precinct at Rievaulx Abbey, in Yorkshire, was an enclosed area of 92 acres (37.2 hectares), whilst the average enclosed area for an English or Welsh precinct measured just 25 acres (10.1 hectares). The Sawtry Abbey precinct reportedly consisted of an enclosed area measuring only 15 acres (6 hectares).

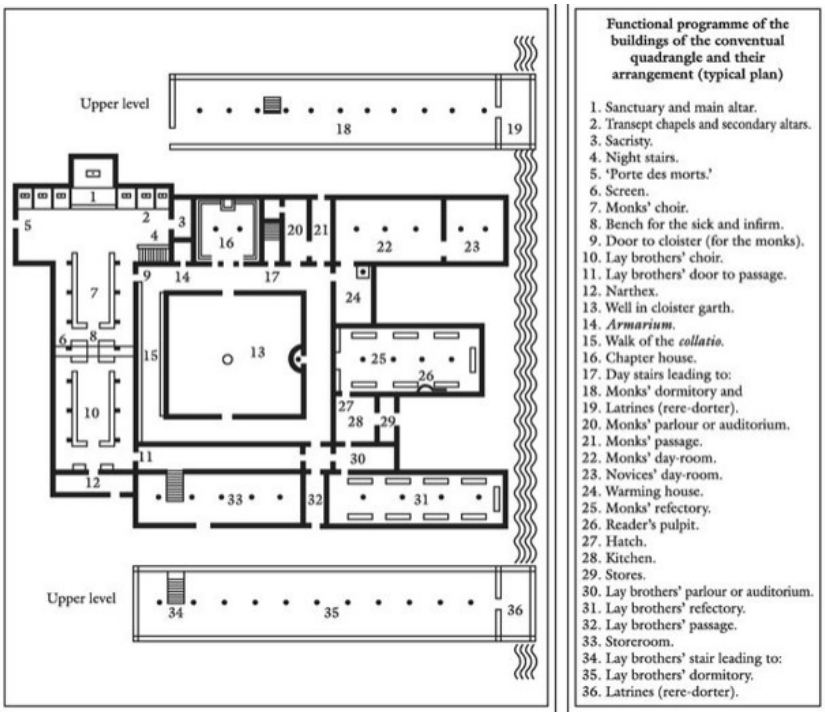
Gatehouse

The principal means of entry to and exit from the abbey was by the gatehouse located in the west wall of the precinct. The gatehouse was the domain of the porter who controlled entrance to the abbey. The porter slept in the gatehouse but took his meals in the refectory. He was also the almoner, giving out alms and remains of the abbey's meals to the poor who regularly gathered there. The gatehouse was typically of two-stories, with accommodation for the porter, and vaulted entrances for pedestrians, carts and mounted travellers.

It was common for gatehouses to have a gatehouse chapel (*capella ad portas*) either incorporated in the outer face or as an annexed building. At other abbeys, including Sawtry, the gatehouse chapel was a nearby pre-existing parish church. The *capella ad portas* of Sawtry Abbey was the Sawtry Judith parish church of St Mary, located some 400m west of the gatehouse. Gatehouse chapels were used by those who were unable to gain access to the precinct to hear sermons, and at some abbeys they were used for lay burials, whilst at others they were destinations of pilgrimage.

Cloister

The cloister was the heart of the abbey that gave the monks access to the buildings that were central to their lives; the church, the sacristy, the library, the chapterhouse, the parlour, the dormitory, the refectory and the kitchen. As a typical cloister in northwest Europe,



A typical Cistercian south-facing cloister, shown in the medieval manner with east at the top of the page (Jean-Francois Leroux-Dhuys, Cistercian Abbeys: History and Architecture, Cologne: Könemannd, 1998, p.52 in Jamroziak, 2013)

particularly in England and Wales, was south-facing (as at Sawtry Abbey), it is this orientation that is the basis of reference throughout this article. The cloister was formed by the church on the north side, the east and south ranges, and a west wall that separated the west range from the garth. Along the internal faces of the Church, the two ranges and the west wall were covered arcades (or walkways) approximately 3-4 metres in width which bounded a central garden (the garth). The width of the arcades allowed them to serve a multitude of purposes other than as ambulatories. They provided space for manual work and domestic activities (such as the washing and mending of clothes, shaving and haircutting), whilst specific areas were reserved for reading, studying and personal meditation. In the northeast corner by the monks' door leading into the church was a *tabula* (a wooden board covered in wax) on which notices and announcements were written relating to matters of the day.

The cloistral garth was a garden that was maintained 'pleasing to the eye'. It was originally square, but, following the demise of the lay-brothers, was often elongated by removing the west wall and repositioning the west arcade along the internal face of the west range; the north and south arcades being extended to connect with the newly positioned west arcade, creating a rectangular garth. The garth was also a functional space in which manuscripts were dried, and where monks could also be shaved, and mend their clothing (at Rievaulx Abbey in Yorkshire a thimble and cotton buttons were recovered during archaeological excavation of the cloistral garth). It also contained a well or fountain (*lavabo*) positioned off the south arcade opposite the refectory. Water was delivered and removed by pipes running under the garth and could either be a continuous flow or managed on demand. The *lavabo* was both symbolic and practical, as the washing of hands was a liturgical requirement and essential before eating meals, and could be open or enclosed. Through time the *lavabo* was often replaced by a long basin or series of smaller basins attached to the refectory wall by the refectory door in the south arcade. There is geophysical evidence that supports Inskip Ladds drawing which depicts a *lavabo* in the southwest of the garth at Sawtry Abbey.

Church

The church was the highest and most prestigious building of the abbey and was central to monastic life and the choir monks' service to God. They were typically cruciform in plan (as seen in Leroux-Dhuys' drawing) with unstressed crossings, a short square-ended presbytery to house the alter, and small rectangular transept chapels. All Cistercian abbey churches were dedicated to St. Mary and their liturgical significance was graduated in importance from east to west; the presbytery, the transept with crossing, the nave with north and south aisles and the west doors covered by the narthex (or galilee porch).

At the east end of the church, the presbytery was the most important space. Located within was the high alter which sat on a raised platform several steps higher than the floor of the nave and transepts. A single crucifix of painted wood stood on the high alter, suspended over it was a pix containing the Holy Sacrament in linen cloths, with a lamp burning both day and night before it.

The transept separated the presbytery and nave. The north and south transepts formed the 'arms' of the crucifix plan, and in the centre, between the presbytery and nave, was the crossing. The east wall of each transept arm contained chapels; of which Sawtry Abbey had two in each transept arm. Transept chapels contained alters of wood that were set in the mortar floor. In the southwest corner of the south transept were night stairs that lead to the monks' dormitory and in the north wall of the north transept was the *port des morts* (door of the dead) that lead to the cemetery; this door was used for no other purpose than to convey a dead monk for burial.

The nave was divided into three choirs. The east choir adjoining, and often extending into, the crossing was for the choir monks, in which their stalls (seats) were located; each monk had his own stall positioned by seniority within the community. Stalls were inward facing with the abbot's stall at the presbytery end of the south stalls and the prior's stall at the presbytery end of the north stalls. Stalls were wooden and decorated with intricate carvings according to monastic style of the times, with the abbot's being more prominent than those of the other choir monks. In front of the stalls was space for the novices who knelt on the ground or sat on low seats. The monks' choir also contained a portable lectern that held a large copy of the antiphonary of chants. The central, or retro, choir was for the elderly monks and those infirm monks who were able enough to leave the infirmary. The central choir also contained a lectern, on which was a copy of the Psalter. During services, novices would move to the central choir in order to chant from the Psalter. Between the retro choir and choir was the *pulpitum* and two chapels; the one in the north aisle was dedicated to St. Mary, the one in the south aisle being dedicated to St. Bernard. The west choir was the lay brothers' choir, which was firmly divided from the monks' choirs by a fixed timber (occasionally stone) rood screen that contained an interconnecting central opening. The rood screen prevented the lay-brothers from being seen by the choir monks, and from seeing the celebration of mass; but permitted them to hear and participate as prescribed by Cistercian statutes. Lay brothers entered their choir through a door in the southwest corner of the nave. At the west end of the nave was the narthex or galilee porch where permitted lay people were allowed to listen to, and participate (as permitted), in mass.

In the mid- to late-fourteenth century there was a decline of lay brother numbers which led to an opening up of naves. In most cases, as the north and south aisles were no longer required as through-passages, chapels were installed in them, whilst in some instances organ lofts were installed.

At first, only small timber bell towers were permitted, however, due to the impracticality of these structures under certain prevalent weather and geographical conditions, modest stone bell towers were eventually permitted. Crossing towers were lanterns to light the choir at the heart of the church; natural light had great significance as it was considered to be a manifestation of the Holy Spirit. The late fifteenth century saw an introduction of bell towers over the west end of the nave and over the narthex at a number of northern abbeys. Uncommonly, at Fountains Abbey in Yorkshire an immense bell tower was constructed at the north end of the north transept.

In 1147, the General Chapter stipulated that plain green glass set in grisailles windows only were permitted, however, by the late fifteenth century principal windows began to be replaced with coloured, pictorial, glass. The early churches had earthen floors except in the important areas of the presbytery, transept chapels and monks' choir, which had mortared floors. As time progressed, church floors were fully mortared, with important areas in slab paving which, subsequently, were later replaced by tiled flooring.

No crucifixes or crosses of gold or silver were allowed in Cistercian churches. One candlestick of plain iron only was to be used to light up the church; censers were to be of brass; chasubles of plain material; albs and amices of linen; copes, tunicles and dalmatics were expressly forbidden; chalices and the pipe through which the blessed Blood of the Lord in the Holy Eucharist was received were to be of silver gilt only; no pictures or sculptures were permitted. Only on special occasions were guests permitted in the church; a rule that was to be relaxed in the later centuries.

East Range

The east range was immediately south of and adjacent to the transept. It consisted of, on the ground floor from north to south, the sacristy (accessed from within the church) and the *armarium* (accessed from the east arcade), the chapterhouse, day stairs to the monks' dormitory, monks' parlour (*auditorium*), monks' passage to the east precinct, monks' day-room and novices' day-room. The first floor consisted primarily of the monks' dormitory and the monks' *rere-dorter* (latrines) at the south end or as an adjoined annex of the south end. There were a set of day stairs that exited into the cloister and night stairs that exited in the south transept.

The sacristy was on the ground floor between the church and the chapter house, on the east side of the range, and was the responsibility of the sacristan. It was accessed from the south transept and functioned as secure storage for the liturgical vessels, vestments, and books used during mass and canonical offices.

The *armarium* (library) was on the ground floor between the church and the chapterhouse, on the west side of the range. In large abbeys with extensive collections of books the *armarium* was the responsibility of a dedicated librarian, otherwise it was the responsibility of the cantor. The *armarium* contained the books of the abbey, including the mandatory collection of liturgical books - the Missal, the Bible, the Epistolary, the Collectarium, the Gradual, the Antiphonary, the Rule of Benedict, the Hymnary, the Psalter, the Lectionary and the Calendar. The normal manner by which collections were added to was through borrowing a book, manuscript or chronicle from the mother or a sister-house in order that it could be copied in the *scriptorium*, after which it was returned to the donor abbey. The a*rmarium* consisted predominantly of works on theology although it was not uncommon for them to also contain a small number of works on topics such as grammar, logic, philosophy, law, classics, science, medicine and history. Manuscripts of value were often chained to prevent theft and their use was only permitted under the strictest of supervision. Works were in Latin only until the late thirteenth century when, in a limited quantity at first, they began to be translated into the local vernacular; a process that gained momentum in later centuries.

The chapterhouse was on the ground floor of the east range, immediately south of the sacristy and *armarium*. It was the second most important space in the abbey, and its centrality in the life of the monastic community was highlighted by it being the common burial place of abbots whose tomb slabs formed the floor surface. The chapterhouse was also where confession was heard by the abbot. Immediately south of the chapterhouse were the day stairs that led to the monks' dormitory.

The *auditorium* (parlour) was on the ground floor of the east range, immediately south of the chapterhouse. *Auditorium* was a very precise term as this was a space for listening, rather than conversing. If a monk wished to speak with the abbot or prior, he made this known

when they were in the auditorium. Similarly, if the abbot or prior wished to speak with a monk, he was called to the *auditorium*. The monk would say only what was necessary and listened to the guidance of the abbot or prior.

Immediately south of the *auditorium* on the ground floor was the monks' passage that led to the east precinct, and immediately south of that on the ground floor was the monks' day-room, with the novices' day-room at the extreme end of the east range ground floor.

The choir monks' dormitory occupied much of the first floor of the east range which was accessed by both night and day stairs. This was the large communal sleeping area for the monks, in which a lamp burned throughout the night. Although abbots at first slept in the dormitory with the monks, a cell was later installed at the top of the night stairs for the abbot, that had a window overlooking the cloister; in later centuries abbots ceased sleeping in the dormitory when separate lodges were introduced for their sole use. Also at the north end of the dormitory was a strong-room for valuables, archives, and other important documents not kept in the sacristy. The sacristan also slept at the north end of the dormitory, adjacent to the bell pull. Other than the abbot's cell and the strong-room, there were no other cells or bedspace divisions. Each monk had a cot and a stool. Monks were not permitted to shake out their clothes in the dormitory, and they were expected to change their clothes without showing any nakedness. The early thirteenth century saw a marked loss of Cistercian characteristics and softening of ideals. From the fourteenth century, with a decline in numbers of choir monks, the dormitory in some abbeys was divided into smaller personal cells.

At the south end, or annexed to the south end, of the dormitory was the *rere-dorter* (latrines), under which ran a flowing water channel. *Rere-dorter* were not closed-off or otherwise screened from the dormitory and monks were expected to remain covered whilst 'using the facility'. *Rere-dorter* were regularly flushed with water to minimize the risk of disease.

South Range

The south range originally consisted of, from east to west, the *calefactorium* (warming room) and the monks' refectory. The refectory was aligned parallel with the range but from around 1170 the rectory was re-aligned perpendicular to the range which allowed for a larger refectory with a greater abundance of natural light. Re-alignment of the monks' refectory allowed the kitchen to be incorporated into the south range from the west range. Above the *calefactorium* was the muniment room

The *calefactorium* was located at the east end of the south range on the ground floor. It was the only space in the cloister, other than the kitchen, where heating was permitted. Typically heating was by open hearth fires, however, over time open hearths were replaced by more efficient fireplaces; and in some abbeys heating was further improved by *hypocaustum* (under-floor heating). When taking warmth monks were not to stay more than fifteen minutes, they were to remain standing, they were not to turn their back to the fire, and they were not to remove their shoes. Those who could enter, other than when permitted to take warmth, were the sacristan and the thurifer to get fire, and monks when instructed to carry out certain work within. The *calefactorium* was often multi-purposed as a *scriptorium*, a work-room for greasing shoes and for blood-letting (this could include lay brothers at the abbot's discretion); however, access was not permitted during reading time. In later years, as heating was introduced in other functional spaces of the abbey, the need for a bespoke warming-room declined, and the *calefactorium* became another communal space. To the south of the *calefactorium* was a yard that contained a wood store for the fires. Above the *calefactorium* was a muniment room (dry and fire-proof) that was used for safe housing the abbey's deeds and estate papers.

The monks' refectory was located immediately west of the *calefactorium* on the ground floor of the south range. It was originally on an east/west alignment, parallel with the south arcade, but from 1170 it was common for existing refectories to be rebuilt on a north/south

alignment, and for new refectories to be similarly built, to allow for expansion and to make greater use of natural light. The monks' refectory stood third most in importance of spiritual significance to the abbey. The tables were arranged around the walls with the monks seated facing inwards. The west wall contained a protruding raised reader's pulpit with access via stairs built within the thickness of the wall, where a monk, selected on a weekly basis, read from the Bible; other than the reading, meals were taken in silence. Those who could enter the monks' refectory outside of mealtimes were the cooks, the refectorian and those he called in to help, the infirmarian and the sacristan (to fetch the salt).

The kitchen, following realignment of the monks' refectory, was located on the ground floor at the west end of the south range, which served both the monks' and lay brothers' refectories. There were two types of kitchen, one with an open fire against a wall and the other an open fire in the middle of the kitchen. The kitchen had a vaulted roof to protect the timber roof above. Those who could enter were the two monks selected to work as cooks on a weekly basis, paid servants whose sole task was to assist the cooks, those who the cooks called in for help, the infirmarian, the cantor and copyists to smooth out parchment and melt ink, the sacristan and thurifer to get light (but not if there was a fire in the *calefactorium*) or salt to be blessed, the circators and (when abbot's lodgings existed) the abbot's cook. To the south of the kitchen was a yard containing a wood store for the kitchen fire.

West Range

The west range consisted of, on the ground floor from north to south, the *cellarium* (cellarage), the lay brothers' passage (also known as the cellarer's parlour) and the lay brothers refectory. It was one of the many buildings collectively known as the 'cellarer's domain'. Before the kitchen was relocated to the south range it would have been located between the lay brothers' passage and the lay brothers' refectory. The first floor consisted primarily of the lay brothers' dormitory and the lay brothers' *rere-dorter* (latrines) at the south end or as an adjoined annex of the south end. There were a set of day stairs that exited through the cellarage on to the *ruelle des convers* (lay brothers lane) which separated the west range from the west arcade wall of the cloistral garth. The west range was connected to the south range and, ordinarily, the west end of the church (although at some abbeys the church nave did not extend the full length of the north arcade).

The *cellarium* took up the entire ground floor of the west range, north of the lay brothers' passage and was used for storing the abbey's provisions.

The lay brothers' passage, as mentioned above, was also known as the cellarer's parlour and was where the cellarer conducted business transactions with merchants and other visitors. It was here also that the cellarer spoke with the lay brothers and assigned their tasks. The passage was located more-or-less centrally on the ground floor of the west range, between the *cellarium* and the lay brothers' refectory, and (generally) had opposing doors in both the west and east walls that were aligned with the cloistral south arcade; the west door serving as the main entrance for visitors and the east door giving access to the cloister.

The remainder of the ground floor of the west range south of the lay brothers' passage consisted of the lay brothers' refectory. Similar to the monks' refectory, the tables were arranged around the walls with the lay brothers seated facing inwards and meals taken in silence. However, there was no pulpit and there was no reading during meals. The lay brothers' refectory was also used for their own weekly chapter on Sunday (except certain feast days when lay brothers attended chapter in the monks' chapterhouse) and commonly presided over by the master of lay brothers, and for the blood-letting of lay brothers if not carried out in the *calefactorium*. Those who could enter the lay brothers' refectory outside of mealtimes and blood-letting were the cooks, and the master of lay brothers and those he called in to help. Relocation of the kitchen allowed for enlargement of the lay brother's refectory.

The lay brothers' dormitory occupied much of the first floor of the west range which was accessed by day stairs that emerged through the *cellarium* into the *ruelle des convers*; some abbeys reportedly also had night stairs leading from the lay brothers' dormitory directly into the nave. This was the large communal sleeping area for the lay brothers'. The longest recorded lay brothers' dormitory in England and Wales is at Fountains Abbey in Yorkshire, which could accommodate up to four hundred lay brothers.

At the south end, or annexed to the south end, of the dormitory was the *rere-dorter* (latrines), under which ran a flowing water channel. The *rere-dorter* were regularly flushed with water to minimize the risk of disease.

Between the west range and the west arcade wall was the *ruelle des convers* (lay brothers' alley) that gave the lay brothers' their access to the west end of the church nave. The south end of the *ruelle des convers*, between the kitchen and the lay brothers' refectory was enclosed and served as the lay brothers' parlour.

Following the disappearance of lay-brothers from Cistercian monastic communities, their dormitory and refectory were often converted to meet a variety of other uses, such as abbatial suites, libraries and winter refectories. The dividing wall between the west arcade and the *ruelle des convers* was also removed, and the west range directly incorporated into the cloistral garth by repositioning the west arcade adjacent to the west range and extending the north and south arcades to connect with the newly positioned west arcade; resulting in a rectangular east/west garth.

Monks' Infirmary

The choir monks' infirmary was, typically, a separate cloistered complex located east of the east range and close to the cemetery in the east precinct. The walkway that led to the infirmary entrance was accessed from the east arcade through the monks' passage. The monks' infirmary was more comfortable (by Cistercian standards) than the dormitory as it was more spacious, had heating, more comfortable beds, had a ready supply of fresh water, baths for therapeutic treatments and was, generally, a more relaxed regime (again by Cistercian standards). The infirmary complex included its own chapel, kitchen, *rere-dorter* block and an aisled hall that were ranged around a central garth in likeness of the main cloister. The infirmary housed those monks who were too ill or weak to participate in the routine of daily liturgy, in order that they could recover and return to their spiritual obligations. Although the infirm and those who cared for them followed the monastic routine as much as possible, the rule of silence was less strict. However, no one could be admitted to the infirmary without permission of the infirmarian.

A chapel at the east end of the monks' infirmary hall allowed those too sick to attend church to participate in, or at least hear, mass. It was believed that recovery was a result of liturgical intervention as much as medical treatment. Being able to see the elevation of the host was also considered to be helpful to recovery, as well as easing the passing to paradise for a dying monk.

As the numbers of choir monks continued to decline in the later centuries, the focus of monastic life shifted from the main cloister to the smaller cloistered monks' infirmary.

Lay Brothers' Infirmary

The lay brothers' infirmary was generally located west of the west range in the west precinct. However, at some abbeys it was south of (as at Roche Abbey in Yorkshire) or south-west of (as at Fountains Abbey in Yorkshire and Waverley Abbey in Surrey) the west range. It was typically an aisled hall, rather than a cloistered complex and, like the choir monks' infirmary, had its own kitchen. The infirmary housed those lay brothers who were too ill or weak to work, in order that they could recover and return to their manual labours. The lay brothers'

infirmary was the responsibility of the *magister infirmarius* who generally had one assistant and, again, none were admitted without his permission.

Guest House(s)

The guest house, or guest houses - depending on the size of the abbey, were located west of the west range in the west precinct, near to the gatehouse in order to reduce disruption to the monastic community. They were generally two storeys, with the upper floor suites to a high standard than those on the ground floor, and included a kitchen, refectory, dormitory and infirmary. They were the responsibility of the guest master who was assisted by a lay brother; in some instances, as at Ford Abbey in Dorset and Melrose Abbey in Roxburghshire, the guest master himself was a lay brother. The guest master was permitted to speak with all guests (the lay brother assistant was not) and to his assistant. All guests were received as though they were Christ, although the hospitality given was accorded by their status; those who arrived on horseback were kept separate from those who arrived on foot. Guests were expected to pray separately from the monastic community, either in the gatehouse chapel or in the galilee porch at the west door of the church.

Workplaces

Workplaces within the precinct, such as barns, stables, workshops, kiln, mill, forge, tannery, piggery, brewhouse, bakehouse, and washhouse, were commonly located in the west precinct west of the west range.

Husbandry and Produce

Spaces dedicated to husbandry and produce such as dovecots, fish stews, bee-hives, the cartilage (kitchen garden), orchards, and vineyards were established at suitable and practical locations elsewhere in the precinct. It is recorded that there was a rabbit warren at Sawtry Abbey.

Abbot's Lodges

From the mid-twelfth century, abbots had increasing status and responsibility beyond that of the head of a monastic community, as owners of estates and holding of associated feudal title. As a reflection of this increased status and responsibility, and to accommodate the staff of the abbots' household and secretariat that had become a necessity, abbots' lodges were established; at first within the infirmary complex, then latterly as separate complexes in their own right - although remaining in the east precinct east of the east range. From the fourteenth century, abbots' lodges were increased substantially in size and comfort to match a further elevation in status. Following the demise of the lay brothers some abbeys converted their lay brothers' dormitory as abbots' lodges.

Abbots' lodges were of an appropriate ambience for the accommodation and entertainment of particularly important guests and, therefore, had its own kitchen which served richer food than the abbey kitchen or guest house; although fasting principles on prescribed days were adhered to. Consequently, the abbot no longer ate with the choir monks in their refectory, but ate in his lodge with his guests. If there were no guests, two choir monks were invited to eat with the abbot. The abbot's lodge incorporated greater architectural and stylistic detail than the other monastic buildings, with larger windows, fireplaces and more modern fittings.

Misericord

In 1439 a special regulation was introduced by the General Chapter that permitted the eating of meat. As meat was not to be eaten in the refectory (under any circumstance) a special room, the *misericord*, was reserved for the eating of meat. These were often established near, adjacent or within the infirmary, as meat had always been provided for the inmates of the infirmary.

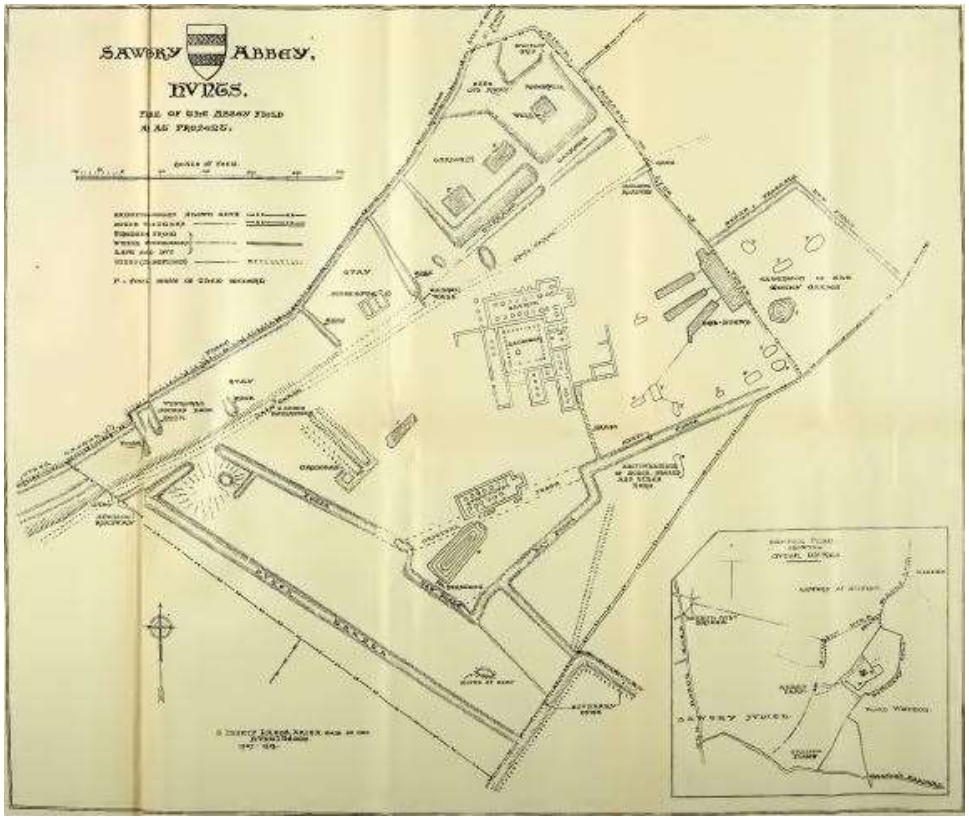
Tied Housing

In larger abbeys, when not provided in the outer court or on a home grange, tied housing was established within the precinct for the accommodation of hired help, retired tenants and senior servants.

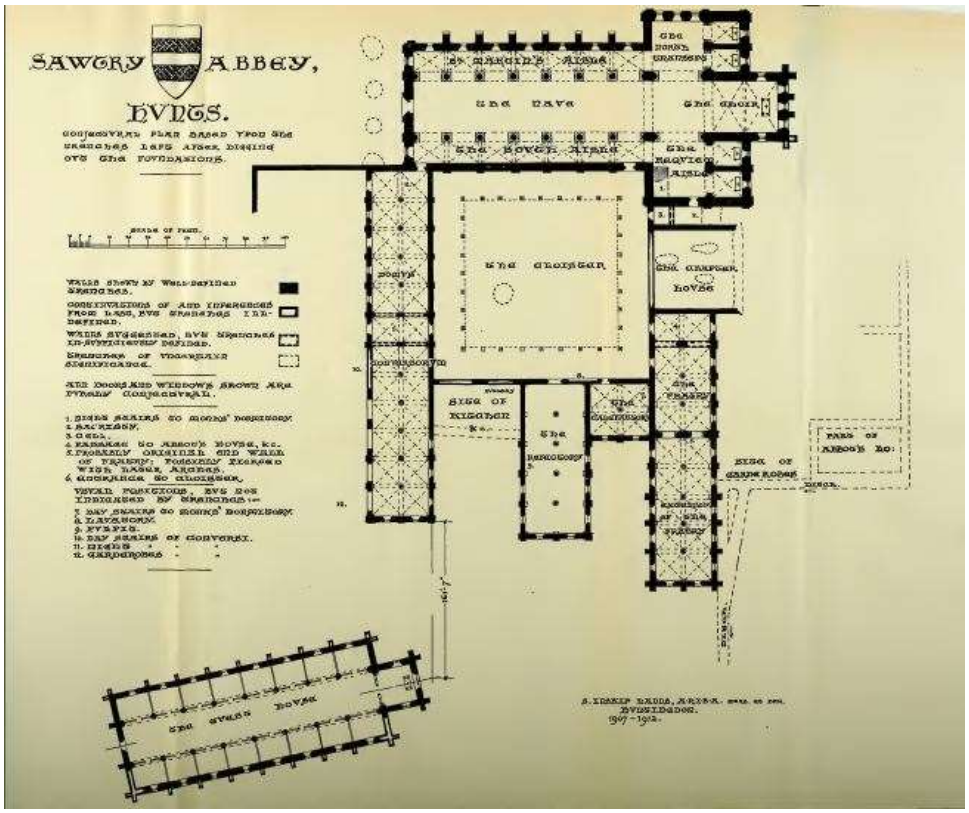
Architecture

Early rules prohibited the adornment of colour and fabrics in abbey buildings, there were no stained glass, carpets, wall-hangings or paintings. Ashlar walls were lime-washed white with mock masonry lines picked out in light grey paint, whilst non-ashlar walls were plastered over the rubble-stone finish, then white-limed (buff-limed from mid thirteenth century) and lined with light grey paint to represent an ashlar finish. Window glazing was clear with a greenish hue, the preference being for natural light rather than artificial light - partly for financial reasons and partly for the spiritual significance that evoked Christ who was the Light of the World. In later centuries regulations were relaxed, coloured glass was gradually introduced, and vessels, ornaments, paintings and sculptures were slowly permitted.

Architectural styles differed greatly from abbey to abbey, even within the same filiation, in a reflection of neighbouring and local influences - but in a manner that remained uniquely Cistercian, in keeping with the principals of the Order. Cistercian architecture changed with the times, it embraced new ideas, adopted local practices and traditional methods, and utilized local materials. Architectural individuality was further enhanced by the incorporation of the heraldic devices of patrons, benefactors and abbots as motifs on walls or floor tiles.



Interpretive drawing of Sawtry Abbey precinct and surrounding environs (Inskip Ladds, S. 1914. 'Sawtry Abbey, Huntingdonshire', *Transactions of the Cambridgeshire & Huntingdonshire Archaeological Society*, 3(9), pp. 339-374)



Interpretive drawing of Sawtry Abbey cloister and guest house (Inskip Ladds, S. 1913. 'Sawtry Abbey, Huntingdonshire', *Transactions of the Cambridgeshire & Huntingdonshire Archaeological Society*, 3(8), pp. 295-322)

Notes

Abbot - head of the abbey and father of the monastic community
Prior - eye and hand of the abbot; deputized for the abbot in his absence
Cantor - responsible for the choir books and copying of manuscripts
Cellarer - managed the economy of the abbey; supervised the lay brothers, hire labour and home grange(s)
Circator - a deputy of the prior, he made rounds of the abbey and reporting to the prior anything amiss
Copyists - worked in the *scriptorium*, copied books, records and manuscripts
Guest Master - looked after visitors, ensuring they were properly received
Infirmarian - cared for the sick and elderly choir monks of the abbey
Librarian - in larger abbeys only, looked after extensive collections of books
Magister Infirmarius - cared for the sick and elderly lay brothers of the abbey
Master of Lay Brothers - assisted the cellarer in training novice lay brothers and in the visiting of granges
Refectorian - responsible for the choir monks refectory
Sacristan - time-keeper for the abbey and, in smaller abbeys with no librarian, looked after the library
Thurifer - carries the thurible, or censer, during church services

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Article 5 - *Obedientiaries*: Offices of the Abbey

Obedientiaries, or offices of the abbey, were contemporary to those specified by the Rule of Benedict; however, the loose structure of rotating offices, as prescribed by St Benedict, was not suitable to the structured *ordo* of the Cistercians. Officials of offices (*obedientarii*) were often exempt parts of the daily liturgical observances in order that they could execute their duties.

Abbot (*abbas* or *pater monasterii*)

The abbot was father of the community. He was as Christ within the Abbey and held absolute authority over all its inhabitants and hired labour. He maintained discipline, ensuring those who faulted atoned for their wrong.

He was elected by the whole community under supervision of the father-superior - the abbot of the motherhouse. The abbot-elect made his oath of office to the monastic community in the chapterhouse, and was then invested with the symbols of his office (a crozier and ring worn on the middle finger of the right hand) by the father-superior. He would then receive 'obedience' from his community, and was then consecrated by the diocesan bishop.

An abbot was both the spiritual and material leader of the community, and was to be possessed of moral and practical skills. He would deliver sermons in chapter and on feast days of the liturgical calendar - namely; the first Sunday of Advent, Christmas Eve, Epiphany, Palm Sunday, Easter Ascension and Pentecost, the Birth of St John the Baptist, Solemnity of St Peter and St Paul, Solemnity of St Benedict, All Saints' Day, the four Marian days (Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary - or Candlemas, The Annunciation of the Lord, The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary and The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary - or Marymas, and the Birth of the Virgin Mary), and the anniversary of the dedication of the abbey church

The abbot was also involved in worldly matters beyond the precinct in order for the abbey to prosper. He was the public image of both his abbey and of the Order, and was influential in the success (or lack of) in obtaining benefactors and patrons. He would often be absent from the abbey to undertake obligations of the Order (visitations as father-superior, attending General Chapter or as otherwise delegated), or on ecclesiastical or royal business. Some abbots spent more time away from the abbey as mediators or councillors to secular leaders, and travelling on diplomatic missions at royal or ducal courts, than they spent inside. Although frequent and prolonged absences could be damaging, this was greatly compensated for by the many opportunities of additional patronage and endowments accrued from the resultant relationships.

Abbots were often required to host and entertain guests of status. Infirmaries were often used (until bespoke abbatial accommodation was built within the precinct) for which the General Chapter often expressed displeasure.

The abbot was a very demanding role, and it was not uncommon for abbots to retire (or even resign). A retired abbot received a pension for life, a chamber within the monastery with the right to have private servants, and a generous supply of food.

A list of abbots of Sawtry Abbey, and the periods of their respective abbacy, can be found at the end of this article.

Prior (*prior*)

The prior was the 'eye and hand' of the abbot, and as such was second only to the abbot in importance. He gave the signal for labour and chapter, ensured monastic observances, and took the place of the abbot in the routine of the abbey when the abbot was otherwise engaged. He presided in the refectory, when the abbot was with guests to the abbey, signalling when to begin and leave off eating.

In larger abbeys he was assisted by the sub-prior.

Cellarer (*cellerarius*)

The cellarer was one of the principal offices of the abbey with regard to both importance and responsibility, and had all the cooks and lay brothers under his jurisdiction. The Rule of Benedict gave the qualities of a good cellarer as being, 'prudent, of mature character, temperate, not a great eater, not proud, not headstrong, not rough-spoken, not lazy, not wasteful, but a God-fearing man who may be like a father to the whole community'.

The cellarer was responsible for all the victualling of the abbey, which required him to speak to all the lay brothers (however, only two lay brothers were permitted to speak to the cellarer at any one time), to guests and travellers, but not to the monks or novices. He provided all the food and drink to the kitchens, ensuring the proper quantity of food for each monk was properly weighed out, and provisioned the proper quantity of beer, wine or cider. After the meals were concluded, he would send the remains to the abbey gates for relief of the poor. The cellarer also ensured relief for the sick and, with the permission of the prior, relief for all others who were in need, and ensured guests were well looked after.

He led novice lay brothers to the chapterhouse when they asked to be received, and again at the end of their novitiate to make their profession. He also assisted lay brother novices when making their profession.

The cellarer managed the economic affairs of the abbey, the maintenance of buildings and services, supervised the abbey workforce (lay brothers, hired help, paid servants), oversaw all the granges and other properties (including visitations), oversaw land management of all the abbey estates, oversaw payments of money or in kind, planned the planting and harvesting of crops, and the marketing and selling of produce.

In larger abbeys he was assisted in all this by the sub-cellarer.

Sacristan (*vestarius*)

The sacristan was another of the principal offices of the abbey, who was responsible for the general care of the church. His office, the sacristy, was in the north end of the east range and adjoined the south transept of the church. The main duties of the sacristan included opening and closing the doors to the church, preparing the abbot’s crozier and stole when needed, assisting the abbot in blessing the monastic crown, making the alter bread, making candles and keeping the holy oils - and ensuring a sufficiency of both, providing ashes and palms when needed, cleaning the chalices weekly and sweeping the church. Whenever a novice made his profession as a monk and ceremoniously received the tonsure, the sacristan burned the hair clippings in a special basin - the *piscina*.

After church services the sacristan rinsed the corporals, veils, towels and altar cloths in separate bowls and then passed the altar cloth to the cellarer to be washed with the rest of the linens. He then washed the others in warm lye-water and dried them; the sacristan then wore albs and smoothed the corporals with a smoothing stone, folded them in three and carefully put them away until next time.

The sacristan was also the time-keeper for the abbey, and it was his responsibility to set the clock. At the time of rising, he trimmed the church and dormitory lamps and rang the Great Bell to wake the abbey. He also sounded the bell for all the hours, services in the church and for meals.

The sacristan was responsible for the lights in the dormitory and cloister. In smaller abbeys with no librarian the sacristan also looked after the library.

The sacristan was assisted by a deputy, and possibly other helpers, depending on the size of the community.

Porter (*portarius*)

The porter was another office of importance as it was he who, due to his daily interaction with the outside world, presented the image of the abbey to the secular world beyond the precinct. The importance of this office was reflected throughout the Order by the number of monks who held this post being promoted to the abbacy.

The porter manned the abbey gate from Lauds until Compline each day, when he returned to the cloister. He welcomed visitors to the abbey and announced their arrival to the abbot, distributed alms to the poor and needy, and ensured that the community was not disturbed by the comings and goings of outsiders. The porter wore an apron-like work garment known as the scapular while working. As the porter manned the gate all day, he was not able to attend all the services in the church and was excused from attending the daily Offices, but was expected to pull up his hood and stand at the gate in silence when the monks were celebrating an Office in the church.

The porter distributed the remains of the abbey's meals, that were sent by the cellarer, at the abbey gates for relief of the poor.

Guest-Master

The guest-master, or hosteller as he was also known, was the monastic official in charge of the guest complex, and was helped by at least one lay brother; several monks were also appointed on a weekly basis to help him.

After visitors had been formally received by the porter, they were introduced to the guest-master who tended to them until their departure and, if necessary, mediated on their behalf. For instance, if a visitor became ill or was about to die, the guest-master notified the prior or the monastic official responsible. One of the guest-master’s duties was to prepare the ceremonial washing of visitors’ feet, known as the Maundy of the guests. The guest-master was also involved with the proceedings on Maundy Thursday, when a number of poor folk were led into the cloister for the symbolic washing of their feet, and thereafter refreshed in the hospice. The guest-master was permitted to speak with everyone who ate or slept in the guesthouse, and if he was busy with guests he was excused from claustral activities.

Master of Novices

The master of novices was another principal office in both importance and responsibility, that required a good theological grounding and the ability to demonstrate the virtues of a monk by example. It was he who prepared the next generation of monks.

He taught novices (namely, those men who wished to enter the monastic life but had first to undergo a one-year trial period to test their suitability, and to learn about Cistercian life) the ways of monastic life and observance of the Rule. The master of novices oversaw their studies, provided them with their needs, and offered care and support during difficult emotional periods. He was to talk often with the novices about spiritual matters, enquire regularly of their sincerity for a monastic vocation, and deter them from despondency and

melancholy. He corrected the negligence of novices by word or sign and only spoke to them within the novitiate. The master of novices took them to chapter on the feasts of sermons to hear the sermon, and gave them penances when they faulted in public.

He noted their day of entry as a novice and when they would make their petitions, and ensured each read the Rule before making their petition. The master of novices prepared them for the profession one year after their entry, and assisted them during their profession ceremony; especially with donning the habit. He also assisted the newly professed monks with taking their things to the refectory, and showed them their allotted bed in the dormitory. The master of novices retained permission to speak with new monks in the auditorium for two months after the profession ceremony.

Cantor (*precentor*)

The cantor was the chant- and choir-master who, along with the sub-cantor, was responsible for making sure all the monks sang when in the choir; each responsible for one side of the choir. He made solo intonations during mass, helped monks practice their chants, and was responsible for the choir books.

He was the record keeper for the abbey, responsible for the copying of manuscripts and for the schedule of professions.

If the abbey had no office of *armarius*, the cantor acted as the librarian and, as such, was responsible for the armarium, and the common books within, which he provided for reading within the refectory and cloister. He locked the armarium after compline, during work time and mealtimes.

In the absence of the abbot, the cantor anointed the dying and buried the dead.

Infirmarian

The infirmarian was another of the principal offices in both importance and prestige, who was in charge of the monks' infirmary. He was not academically trained in medicine (Cistercian monks were prohibited from studying at university) but had practical knowledge in medicinal care.

The infirmarian was responsible directly to the abbot for the infirmary and the care of the infirm, sick and elderly choir monks of the abbey. He was permitted to speak with his patients to determine their illness and their treatment, but was to do so quietly and in designated areas; this was not to be an excuse for gossip. The infirmarian also oversaw those recuperating after blood-letting; which was periodically undergone by every member of the community to keep him in good health. Elderly monks who were unable to observe the full rigours of the monastic life might also stay in the infirmary and be cared for by the infirmarian.

The infirmarian's duties within the infirmary included making sure that the fire was lit, lighting the candles for Matins, cleaning the bowls that had been used at blood-letting and disposing of the blood. On Saturdays he washed the feet of anyone staying in the infirmary, if they wished, and shook their clothing.

Refectorian

The refectorian was responsible for the choir monks refectory. It was his duty to lay the table for the monks' meals and drinks, and was helped by several monks appointed on a weekly basis. The refectorian, therefore, set out the spoons, napkins, bread and ale, and gathered their napkins and leftovers once they had finished.

Circator

The circator was a deputy of the prior who made rounds of the abbey, reporting to the prior anything that was amiss.

Thurifer

The thurifer carried the thurible, or censer, during church services.

Master of Scriptorium

The master of scriptorium oversaw the copying of books, records and other manuscripts.

Copyist

The copyist(s) worked in the *scriptorium*, copying books, records and manuscripts.

Blood-Letter (*minuator*)

The blood-letter was a competent practitioner for blood-letting.

Master of Lay Brothers (*magister conversorum*)

The master of lay brothers assisted the cellarer in training novice lay brothers and visiting granges.

Lay Brothers' Infirmarian (*magister infirmarius*)

The lay brothers' infirmarian cared for the sick and elderly lay brothers of the abbey. His duties and responsibilities were generally as those of the monks' infirmarian.

Grange Master or Granger (*magister grangiae*)

Each grange master oversaw a particular grange. He was normally a lay brother, but could be a monk in respect of a home grange. Each grange master was answerable to the cellarer.

The grange master assigned lay brothers to their work, oversaw the employment of hired labour, submitted accounts and undertook all necessary purchases and sales.

Librarian (*armarius*)

In those abbeys with extensive book collections, the office of librarian was established with sole responsibility for the care of books in the *armarius*. In such circumstances, the sacristan was dissolved of that responsibility.

Bursar (*bursarius*)

From the fourteenth century onwards, the office of bursar evolved from the cellarer as a separate official who managed all financial matters and supervised the cash incomes (such as rents) of the abbey.

Procurator

The procurator was another office that evolved from the cellarer in the fourteenth century, as a separate official who represented the abbot on all legal and business matters. This office was not established in all abbeys.

Sub-Offices

Sub-offices were established when it was warranted by the size of the community, in order to prevent the official of the prime office from being overwhelmed by the demands of his office.

Sub-prior, helped the prior to maintain discipline and the organization of monastic life; for example, he checked that no monk snoozed in the choir or misbehaved in the cloister. If the prior was sick, busy or, for some reason, unable to fulfil his duties, the sub-prior acted as his deputy.

Sub-cellarer, assisted and deputized for the cellarer in larger abbeys. He undertook these duties when the cellarer was involved in more important matters.

Sub-sacristan, assisted the sacristan in larger abbeys.

Sub-cantor *(succentor*), assisted the cantor in making sure all the monks sang when in the choir; he was responsible for one side of the choir.

Weekly rotations

Cooks and **abbot's cook**, these were weekly rotations of all the brethren. They received a blessing and started their work immediately after the night office. On the occasion when a feast had two masses, one cook heard the first Mass and the other cook the other Mass. When one of the cooks had to sing the gospel or epistle, he attended the Mass appointed for this. The cooks provided hot water for shaving and put warm water in the cloister when the *lavabo* froze. They also cut the wood for the kitchen fire.

Reader, received blessing after the major Mass on Sunday. He sang the reading (as in church) in the refectory during meals once prayers had been said. Readings were homilies or scripture.

Guest-Master's Assistants, several monks were appointed on a weekly basis to help the guest-master.

Refectorian's Assistants, several monks were appointed on a weekly basis to help the refectorian in the refectory.

Abbots of Sawtry Abbey

Hugh	1157 to 1164
Payn	1164 to 1176
Alexander	1195 to c.1228
Ralf	c.1228 to c.1278
Adam	c.1278 to c.1289
William	c.1289 to c.1299
Laurence	c.1299 to c.1303
John	c.1303 to c.1314
John	c.1314 to 1320
Roger of Hertford	1320 to 1338
Ralf Beville	1340 to 1348
William	1351 to c.1391
Thomas de Spalding	c.1391 to 1409
Robert de Spalding	1409 to 1413
John Fulborne	1444 to c.1452
John Alconbury	c.1452 to unknown
Henry	1524 to 1527
Richard	1529 to 1531
Robert	1531 to 1533
William Angell	1534 to unknown (possibly dissolution)

Notes:

abbatial crozier - symbolized a pastoral staff that embodied the leadership and pastoral authority of the abbot and often featured on abbatial tombs.

abbatial ring - signified the spiritual marriage between the abbot, his community and the church.

homily - a commentary that follows a reading of scripture, usually given during Mass at the end of the Liturgy of the Word.

lye-water - used as a laundry 'detergent'; lye was obtained by leaching fire ashes and collecting the resultant concentrated lye, which was then diluted in water as needed.

stole - a liturgical vestment worn in the fashion of a scarf.

tonsure - shaving the crown of the head and leaving a 'crown' of hair.

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Article 6 - *Horarium*: Hours of the Day

Opus Dei (the Work of God)

Opus Dei was performed through a daily routine organized around work and liturgy. The monastic day was divided into twelve *horarium* (hours of the day); the length of which varied, depending on the ecclesiastical division of the year. The Summer schedule occurred from Easter to 12 Sep and the Winter schedule from 13 Sep to Holy Thursday.

Summer	Winter	Activity
	1:20 am	Rising
	1:30 am	***Matins* (or *Vigils*) (night office), canonical hour**
1:45 am		Rising
2:00 am		***Matins* (or *Vigils*) (night office), canonical hour**
	2:30 am	*lectio divina* (religious reading)
3:00 am		Private prayer and reflection
3:10 am		***Lauds* (at first light), canonical hour**
4:00 am		***Prime* (at sunrise), canonical hour**
4:15 am		Chapter (meeting of the community)
4:40 am		Manual labour
	7:05 am	Private prayer and reflection
	7:15 am	***Lauds* (at first light, canonical hour**
7:45 am		***Terce*, canonical hour**
8:00 am		Mass (whole convent)
	8:00 am	***Prime* (at sunrise), canonical hour**
	8:20 am	Mass (whole convent)
8:50 am		Reading
	9:10 am	Chapter (meeting of the community)
	9:20 am	***Terce*, canonical hour**
	9:35 am	Private prayer and reflection
	9:55 am	Manual Labour
10:40 am		***Sext* (midday prayers), canonical hour**
10:50 am		Midday meal
	11:10 am	Private prayer and reflection
	11:20 am	***Sext* (midday prayers), canonical hour**
	11:30 am	Rest
11:35 am		Manual labour
12:50 pm		Rest
	1:20 pm	***Nones*, canonical hour**
	1:35 pm	Midday meal
1:45 pm		Private prayer and reflection
2:00 pm		***Nones*, canonical hour**
2:30 pm		Manual labour
	2:30 pm	*lectio divina* (religious reading)
	2:50 pm	***Vespers*, canonical hour**
	3:30 pm	Private prayer and reflection
	3:45 pm	Collation (monks gather in the gallery to listen to reading)
	3:55 pm	***Compline*, canonical hour**
	4:05 pm	Sleep
5:30 pm		Private prayer and reflection
6:00 pm		***Vespers*, canonical hour**
6:45 pm		Evening meal
7:30 pm		Collation (monks gather in the gallery to listen to reading)
7:50 pm		***Compline*, canonical hour**
8:00 pm		Sleep

The canonical hours (or offices) that formed the core of *opus Dei* were performed eight times a day; consisting of psalms, hymns and readings. One-hundred and fifty psalms, which all monks knew by heart, were chanted over the course of a week. On weekdays, liturgy was supplemented by the Office of the Dead. On two of the great feast days and during Lent, liturgy was supplemented by a daily mass - monks who were also ordained could perform mass privately on these occasions.

The time of rising was the eighth hour of the night (second hour after midnight) when monks would cross themselves and recite a prayer before leaving their dormitory. They then entered the church, pushed back their cowl, and bowed to each alter they passed and the High Alter. When they reached their allotted stall they knelt (except on Sundays and certain feast days) and recited the Lord's Prayer and the Creed. They remained kneeling until the psalm '*deus in adjutorium meum intende*' had been said, then stood for the remainder of the Service - unless especially marked otherwise.

The Canonical Hours

Matins. This office involved the chanting of psalms interspersed with anthems. Monks remained standing throughout with arms on the chest in the form of a cross, during the office stalls were unlit as the monks recited from memory.

Lauds. This office was always held at dawn.

Prime. This office was sung.

Terce. Those in the field returned to the Abbey on the first stroke of the bell.

Sext. During Lent the monks said *sext* at the place of their manual labour, otherwise the monks said *sext* in Church.

Nones. During Lent the monks said *nones* at the place of their manual labour, otherwise the monks said *nones* in Church.

Vespers. Always held at sunset/twilight, this office was sung.

Compline. This office was sung. After *compline* the abbot stood and sprinkled holy water over each brother as he departed for the dormitory to sleep.

Between the Offices

Several periods were set aside during the day for monks to carry out private prayer, reflection and reading. This could be done in the church or sat in the cloister. Those in the cloister would sit in the prescribed area for reading from the Holy Scriptures. These were also opportunities for the cantor to lead lessons for those monks who required it, who would repeat in a low voice. During these moments novices would learn to recite the Psalter by heart.

lectio divina - spiritual reading and meditation, was reserved for the early morning hours of the Winter schedule.

Morning mass, attended by the whole community, was held daily in the church.

Chapter was the time devoted to internal matters of the community that all monks (and novices on the first Sunday of Lent) attended. It was signalled by ringing of the bell by the sacristan; who continued to ring the bell until the blessing, which was given by the abbot.

After the blessing was the reading of the martyrology for that day. Prayers were then said, followed by the reading of the *tabula* (list of daily tasks). Any letters received from the Pope or bishops were then read to the community. The abbot would read a rule from the Book of Rules and explain its purpose to the monks; on Sundays, there would also be readings from the statutes of the General Chapter and other Cistercian regulations. There would then follow absolution of the dead when the abbot appointed which prayers were to be said for that soul. Next, those with fault prostrated themselves at the feet of the abbot and confessed their sin, after-which, those known by others to have fault, and who did not confess themselves, were then proclaimed by one who knew, and the proclaimed were obliged to prostrate themselves. The mistakes and faults of those who confessed, or who were proclaimed, were then corrected and punishments metered out. If there was a need, on the first Sunday of Lent a new abbot was elected following the death or resignation of the previous abbot. Chapter concluded with commemoration of the dead of the abbey and recitation of the *De Profundis* (the common name for the 129th psalm - in the traditional numbering system of psalms). All then left to their allotted tasks, save those who wished to first give their confession.

opus manuum - manual labour, when the monks went to their allotted tasks.

Meals were eaten in the Refectory, except on fast days (Wednesdays and Fridays). During the Summer schedule there were two meals (midday and evening), during the Winter schedule there was only the one meal (midday). The midday meal consisted of one pound of coarse bread (two thirds if there were to be an evening meal, when the remaining third would be taken), two dishes of different vegetables boiled without grease, and a drink that consisted of either sour wine of the country - well diluted, thin beer, or a *sapa* - a decoction of herbs the consistency of a vegetable soup. When there was an evening meal, this consisted of the remainder (one third of a pound) of their coarse bread, a few raw fruits or vegetables (such as radish, lettuce or apples) as was furnished from their gardens. Meals were eaten in silence with a reading from the Scripture by a nominated monk.

Collation, the reading of collations of Cassian - a collection of the lives of early monks and the early saints. This was read aloud in the cloister. After the reading the monks all turned their faces to the east and the abbot said, "Our help is in the name of the Lord", to which the monks responded, "Who hath made heaven and earth".

The Lay Brothers' Day

Lay brothers followed a structured day similar to that of the choir monks, dependent on the schedule; Summer (Easter to 12 Sep) or Winter (13 Sep to Holy Thursday).

Summer		**Winter**		
Work Day	**Non-Work Day and Sunday**	**Work Day**	**Non-Work Day and Sunday**	**Activity**
			1:20 am	Rising
			1:30 am	***Vigils***
	1:45 am	1:45 am		Rising
	2:00 am	2:00 am		***Vigils***
		2:30 am		Labour
3:00 am				Rising
3:10 am				***Lauds*** (first light)
4:00 am				Labour
		3:55 pm	3:55 pm	***Compline***
		4:05 pm	4:05 pm	Sleep
7:50 pm	7:50 pm			***Compline***
8:00 pm	8:00 pm			Sleep

Whether in the abbey or at the granges, the lay brothers said their prayers at *vigils* and at the Day Hours. On the days when they worked in winter, their time for rising was the ringing of the bell that signalled the final psalm of the first *nocturn* of *vigils*. On all days, lay brothers in the abbey would join the choir monks in church for the remainder of *vigils*, for *lauds* and *compline*, whilst lay brothers in the granges said their prayers for *vigils*, *lauds* and *compline* in the Oratory for the appointed duration. For the remainder of the day lay brothers said their prayers at the Day Hours wherever they were working.

Lay brothers did not work on the following solemnities:

> The Day of the Lord's Birth and the following three days, on the Circumcision of the Lord and on the Epiphany of the Lord.
>
> On Good Friday, on Easter and on Easter Monday, and on the Ascension of the Lord.
>
> On Pentecost and Pentecost Monday.
>
> On the days of Saint Mary the Blessed Virgin.
>
> On the days of Saint Michael the Archangel, of the Birth of John the Baptist, of Saint Lawrence, of All Saints, of Saint Martin the Bishop of Tours, and (for those staying at the abbey) of the Dedication of the abbey church.
>
> On days of the apostles Saints Peter and Paul, Saint Andrew, Saint James the Greater, Saints Philip and James the Less, Saint Bartholomew, Saint Thomas, Saint Matthew, and Saints Simon the Zealot and Jude.

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Article 7 - The Monastic Community

The two main constituents of a Cistercian monastic community are the choir monks (brethren) and lay brothers (*conversi*), and their respective novices. There were, however, a number of other less populace groups, all of whom contributed to the overall upkeep of the abbey and community in return for varying forms of succour or remuneration.

Choir Monks (brethren)

Choir monks, from the moment of entering their novitiate, devoted their entire life to *opus die* (the work of God); up to, and including, the moment of their death - if they were physically and coherently able to do so. From inception of the Cistercian *ordo* and establishment of the Cistercian order until 1188, any adult male over the age of fifteen years, no matter their social status, could be accepted as a novice monk into the order and, if successful in their novitiate, make their profession into the Cistercian order as a choir monk. However, the General Chapter of 1188 decreed that noblemen only could, from that moment onwards, be accepted into the order as monks.

Although no colour for the monks' habit was originally prescribed, by 1120 undyed wool (which varied in natural colour from off-white to grey, pale brown to reddish dark brown) was adopted by the order due to its relative low cost. Choir monks wore an undyed tunic and scapula; the cut of the tunic was said to be symbolic, the six panels represented the wings of the seraphim, whilst the wider sleaves represented an upward movement toward God. A cincture (rope) was worn around the waist over the tunic and a deep hood (cowl) was also worn which, when placed over the head, fully covered the face and draped over the shoulders. They wore no breeches, or any article made of lambskins. Choir monks were tonsured (the crown of the head was shaven creating a narrow crown of hair) as an act of humility and were clean shaven.

Although lay brothers undertook the majority of manual labour in the abbeys and granges, it was a key tenet of the Cistercian reform that choir monks performed manual labour on a daily basis, and specific times in the *horarium* were set aside for this. Labours performed by choir monks within the monastic precinct included; scribes, book repairers, book binders, Mass host bakers, glass blowers, locksmiths, wood turners, and domestic work within the cloister - such as cleaning and laundry. Distinction between tasks performed was not one of varied occupation, but the location of the work undertaken relative to the abbey.

Lay Brothers (*conversi*)

The institution of lay brothers arose in the late eleventh century and were a presence in the monastic communities of other orders before the founding of Citeaux, the establishment of the Cistercian *ordo* and the creation of the Cistercian order. Indeed, lay brothers were not introduced into the Cistercian order until 1115-1119, when the first daughter-houses of Citeaux were founded. What was significant, and uniquely Cistercian, was the manner in which lay brothers were integrated into the Cistercian order, that led to them becoming an integral component of the order and their proficiency as a work-force, which underpinned the evolution and success of Cistercian economies.

Novice lay brothers served a novitiate of 12 months in a like manner as novice choir monks and, similarly, were to be 15 years of age or above when admitted into the lay brother novitiate. Lay brothers took the same vows as choir monks and were, therefore, considered religious and to be treated as equals by monks in both life and death; with the same rights both material and spiritual. Lay brothers were provided clothing in accordance with the *usages* of the order; a cloak or mantle made of coarse common cloth or coarse skins (simple or lined with cloth), four tunics, footwear (shoes, clogs or sandals), and a detachable hood

that covered shoulders and chest. Additional clothing was made available for herdsmen, waggoners and shepherds. Lay brothers were not tonsured and wore beards which they were obliged to keep trim.

Their liturgical observances were less rigid than those of the choir monks and they often said their prayers at their place of work rather than returning to the church. Lay brothers did not rise until after Vigils and only followed the same times of the day as the choir monks on Sundays and twenty of the feast days. They learned by heart the required prayers of *Paternoster*, the *Credo in Deum* and *Miserere mei, Deus*.

Lay brothers enjoyed a security and continuity of employment, and experienced the benefits of belonging and a place in society that they would not have otherwise had. Although lay brothers typically came from the rural poor, often victims of village depopulation or smallholders whose lands were absorbed into the granges, there are significant instances of men of high status becoming lay brothers, such as: Alexander, a prince of Scotland, who became a lay brother in Foigny Abbey in France; Salamon, a prince of Austria, who entered into Heiligenkreuz Abbey in Austria; Wulfric of Haselbury who joined Forde Abbey in England and Count Herman III von Vireneburg who became a lay brother at Himmerod Abbey in Germany. The General Chapter of 1188 decreed that noblemen were no longer to be accepted into the Order as lay brothers. Whilst it was commonly regarded that lay brothers were, in the main, illiterate, a belief reinforced by them not being allowed to possess any books, there were many who were literate, well-educated and worldly; such as Alain of Lille, a respected academic and theologian from Montpellier who became a lay brother at Citeaux in 1192. Many were employed in skilled and managerial roles, whilst some were involved in complex political missions to the papal curia on behalf of the General Chapter or in negotiations with secular powers.

Although manual labour held significant importance to the choir monks, devotion of the time necessary for them to undertake the necessary labours of an abbey would leave the monks with insufficient time to devote to their liturgical observances. It was the lay brothers, therefore, who performed all the daily labours in the abbey and on the granges that allowed the choir monks their full observance of the Divine Office. Lay brothers were answerable to the cellarer. They carried out the monastery's business in the towns and markets, selling surplus produce and purchasing the wide range of needs of the abbey that were not met by self-sufficiency. Lay brothers were allocated to granges and lodges where they lived and worked, and only returned to the abbey on important feast days, or when they were otherwise summonsed. At the granges, lay brothers followed the calendar of the neighbouring parish churches so that their workdays coincided with those of hired labourers. Distinction between tasks performed by lay brothers was not one of varied occupation but the location of the work undertaken relative to the abbey. From the mid-twelfth century many lay brothers became more involved in monastic affairs, holding prestigious roles as abbot's representative in legal matters, as negotiators with merchants, and as managers of various other enterprises.

Throughout the thirteenth century there was a sharp decline in numbers of lay brothers that was partially the result of a greater reliance on a tenant workforce on the granges, which resulted in rebellions against a number of abbots. Another contributing factor to the dissatisfaction and subsequent decline of lay brothers was the order's refusal of the demands of those lay brothers with enhanced status for better conditions, food and clothing; which is believed to have been another causative for lay brother rebellion. A series of General Chapter prohibitions on lay brothers drinking alcohol from 1180 onwards may well have been yet another factor towards lay brother rebellions. Between 1190 and 1308 there were approximately 103 incidents of revolt throughout the order - but predominantly in France, Italy and England, 27 of which involved both monks and lay brothers. The continuing decline in lay brother numbers was significantly exacerbated by the Great Famine

of 1315-1317 and the Black Death of 1347-1351; both of which devastated European populations.

Familiars (*familiares*)

Familiars performed manual labour alongside the lay brothers, in return for which they received food, drink, clothing and accommodation. They were not professed into the order but were required to make an oath of obedience to the abbot and renounce private possessions. Although they became an increasingly important labour force as lay brother numbers declined, in 1293 the General Chapter abolished the practice of *familiares*.

Hired Labour (*mercanerii*)

Hired labour worked alongside both choir monks and lay brothers in all manual works, particularly on the granges. The distinction between tasks performed was not one of varied occupation but the location of the work undertaken relative to the abbey. As lay brother numbers diminished, hired labour supplemented, and in many instances replaced, lay brothers as the monastic labour force.

Servants

In 1287, the General Chapter permitted abbeys with less than eight lay brothers to hire servants to work in the kitchens. As lay brother numbers diminished, paid servants supplemented the monastic labour force alongside hire labourers.

Corriodians and Fugitives

Corriodians were secular individuals who retired to a monastery to live-out the remainder of their lives. Their retirement (or corrody) consisted of food, board, clothing, physical care and spiritual privileges that were either purchased (by money or land donations) or sponsored as a reward to servants and staff of royal, aristocratic and other wealthy households.

Fugitives were also secular individuals who had sought and been granted sanctuary from legal pursuit or other persecution.

Notes

scapula - a large length of cloth suspended both front and back from the shoulders of the wearer, often reaching to the knees, that originated as aprons.

seraphim - the 'burning ones', heavenly or celestial beings originating in ancient Judaism; in Christianity, they are the highest of the angelic hierarchy.

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Article 8 - Granges, Lodges and Urban Property

Granges and Lodges

The Cistercian economy was wholly dependent on grange estates, the focal point of which was the grange itself. The grange was a complex of various buildings, laid out in a cloistral plan, that included a chapel, refectory, lay brothers' dormitory, guest house, farm outhouses, mills and workshops. It was common for granges to be enclosed by a wall with a gatehouse as the single point of access, and for some to include a piped water system similar to that found in abbeys. The first buildings were of substantial timber construction with cobbled footings, that were often replaced by equally substantial stone buildings when the mother abbey had acquired sufficient wealth; in some instances, the wealth of the mother abbey was such that substantial stone buildings were constructed from the start. From the fourteenth century onwards, grange complexes were replaced by smaller domestic (manorial) buildings as a result of the decline in lay brothers, which also saw a shift to a tenanted or paid workforce.

The first grange(s) established were those closest to the mother abbey. In addition to providing focal points for the wider network of granges they functioned as the home farm(s) of the abbey providing its immediate food needs. Whilst granges were, in the main, within a relatively short distance from the mother abbey, it was not uncommon for granges to be located at a great distance from the abbey. Early statutes stated that granges were to be no more than one day's journey (approximately twenty miles) from the mother abbey. This allowed for more effective management of the grange by the cellarer and allowed the *conversi* working the grange to attend Mass in the abbey church on Sundays and major feast days. The nearest grange to the abbey was often known as the 'home grange' or 'home farm' which supplied the community with its food; larger abbeys may have had more than one home grange. The home grange often had oversized granaries or barns to provide additional storage to the abbey's cellarage. Granges were overseen by a grange master who was typically a lay brother (although the grange master of a home grange could be a choir monk) who was answerable to the cellarer.

Granges were generally populated by *conversi*. With the demise of the *conversi* from the fourteenth century onwards, however, it became common practice for granges to be tenanted for rent income; although a less common practice, which kept the grange under the direct control of the abbey, was the use of a hired workforce under the management of a directly appointed bailiff. Tenant farmers had no freedom to farm as they wished; they wore the abbots livery and owed feudal service, whilst stock remained the property of the abbey - if an animal died it would only be replaced on delivery of the hide to the abbey. Stock was to be delivered to the abbey annually for slaughter to prevent it from being sold at a local market. Although granges were managed and worked by the lay brothers, and latterly by tenants or hired labourers, choir monks worked with regularity on the home farm and those home granges that were close enough to allow the monks to return to the abbey when the *horarium* dictated. During the harvest period, it was not uncommon for choir monks to work on more distant granges.

Grange estates were self-contained, and capable of mixed or specialized farming practices and industries. Estates were created from various land endowments from benefactors. It was not uncommon for endowed lands to be disparate areas that, whilst fruitful in their own right, were not profitable in isolation. The more viable and productive of these holdings would be consolidated, where possible, through the acquisition of neighbouring lands; achieved by the exchange of lands considered too distant to be profitably managed, or by purchase. From this consolidation grew the comprehensive arable and pastoral granges of well-connected field systems typical of the Cistercian grange estates. Endowed lands that could not be incorporated into an estate, or utilized as a lodge serving a mother grange,

would be rented for income, or sold or exchanged in order to obtain land adjacent to an existing grange or adjacent to other lands that could then be consolidated into a new grange. The benefit of an interconnected network of granges and lodges facilitated the movement of livestock and produce across lands belonging to the mother abbey; to enable such movement of goods from granges and lodges isolated from abbey lands wayleaves were negotiated with the respective land holders. Grange estates were also where industries considered too noisy or unpleasant for the confines of the precinct (when no outer court was established) were carried out, such as; pottery kilns, forges, vaccaries and tanneries. The average size of an arable grange was 150 to 200 hectares (375 to 500 acres).

In addition to lands, other endowments that were often incorporated within a grange, included: woodlands and forests with full entitlement to rights of timber, fire-wood, pannage and hunting; water courses or bodies with full entitlement to the setting-up of mills, fishing and any water-fowl thereon; mills for grinding, fulling, paper, bark and industrial power, or a share of income thereof. Although climate, landscape and soil often dictated the nature of grange husbandry, granges in the main practiced mixed husbandry. Good communication between the granges of an abbey was essential and Cistercian abbeys invested significantly in selected land corridors between their granges; some donations to abbeys were specifically for that purpose. Where these crossed other lands the landowners often benefitted from the improved roads, in return for which they regularly exempted the Cistercians from tax on the passage of goods through their lands and granted freedom from toll and customs payment at market.

It was not uncommon for villages or other settlements that came into the possession of a Cistercian abbey to be depopulated and the lands transformed into a grange or incorporated into an existing grange. Despite such instances of depopulating villages that were considered too close to an abbey site or grange complex and relocating the population, Cistercian abbeys preferred to acquire tenanted lands where possible, as they inherited seigniorial rights over the dependent population who became intrinsic to grange economies; both as a ready workforce and through the taxes they paid in kind. Examples of such depopulation are the villages of Greenbury and Thorpe Underwood which were depopulated by Fountains Abbey, and the villages of Barnoldswick and Accrington which were depopulated by Kirkstall Abbey.

The success of Cistercian land management and the grange system led to instances of competition for land which often brought a Cistercian abbey into conflict with neighbouring religious houses, including other Cistercian abbeys. The agricultural success of Cistercian granges was not so much the result of techniques and practices that surpassed their contemporaries, but rather their land management methods and the ability to create expansive estates.

Urban and Other Properties

Many abbeys obtained urban properties (despite a General Chapter ruling of 1134 that no monk shall live in towns) in order to gain access to markets at which they could sell or barter their surpluses, and obtain products they would not otherwise be able to; invariably at sea and river ports, in the case of abbeys whose prime industry was sheep farming and wool exports. Following a General Chapter statute in 1189, urban properties were solely occupied by lay brothers and hired help. In the main, urban properties were either warehouses for the storage of goods, or houses in which their agents lived; these houses also provided accommodation for monks and lay brothers travelling on essential abbey business. In instances where an endowed urban property was unsuitable for the conducting of trade, it was common for them to be rented for income. In addition to houses, two Yorkshire abbeys are reported to have each owned a ship licensed to carry wool.

The Lands, Properties and other Temporalities of Sawtry Abbey

At its founding, Sawtry Abbey was endowed with the manor of Sawtry Judith in its entirety; which included Ewingeswood, afterwards known as Monks' Wood and the lesser Athenryswood (also referred to as Little Wood, or today as Archers Wood), the manor house and the manorial church of St Mary. This manor was a ready-made domain of well-connected fields from which two granges were established by 1285. Ivo Le Moyne and other local land-owners added to this endowment with lands and other rights in Bedforshire (Barford, Everton), Cambridgeshire (Babraham, Hungry Hatley, Westhorpe, Gamlingay, Bourn, Soham, Stow and Cambridge), Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire (Fotheringhay) and Norfolk (Narford, Stowe and Lynn). Although the full extent and location of these additional lands is not known, the following endowments are recorded; eight virgates of land in Conington, the parish churches Honingham (Norfolk) and Fulbourn (Cambridgeshire), and fisheries, at various times, in Blakemere in the fen of Walton and Whittlesea Mere with one boat. The abbey also had miscellaneous possessions in Sawtry Moyne, Conington, Grafham, Huntingdon, Great Stukeley, Wood Walton, Winwick, Tetworth, Waresley, Eynesbury, Great Paxton, Little Paxton, Offard D'Arcy, Yelling and Bread Street in London

There are two potential locations for the Old grange. One, which is suggested by the results of a 1967 excavation, is the area of earthworks (now ploughed out) at the north edge of Archer's Wood; however, dating evidence of the excavation assemblage puts this location to question. The other is the original manor house of Sawtry Judith. The manor house would have been immediately available to the Cistercian monks of Sawtry Abbey, and may well have served as the home farm from the earliest days of the abbey; and it would have been a natural evolution for this to later become a grange.

New grange is believed to have been located on the site of the present day Grange Farm. It was established as a vaccary during the period 1281-1285, making Sawtry abbey one of only twenty-one Cistercian abbeys in England and Wales to practice cattle husbandry rather than that of sheep - the nearby fenlands being better suited to the grazing of cattle. It is quite apt, therefore, that a small herd of cattle are farmed on the abbey site today.

Notes

Seigniorial - a man of rank; a feudal lord; lord of the manor
Seigniorial rights - the rights of a feudal lord or lord of the manor to the labour of his tenants

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Article 9 - Discipline, Transgression and Punishment

Discipline

Discipline over the whole Cistercian order was maintained by the General Chapter when it convened at Citeaux Abbey (France) around Holy Day (14 Sep). General Chapter lasted five days and all abbots were expected to attend, unless too ill to travel; all other monastic matters were to be put aside. For abbots of distant abbeys, this could involve a round trip lasting several months which, for those who were also required to undertake annual filial visitations, could become extremely burdensome. The General Chapter acknowledged this burden, where they felt it existed, and from 1180 it was decreed that abbots of abbeys in Scotland need only attend General Chapter once every four years. In 1190 this concession was subsequently extended to abbots of abbeys in Ireland, and in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the concession was extended to abbots of abbeys in Sicily (to attend once in four years), Norway and Greece (to attend once in five years) and Syria and Cyprus (to attend once in seven years); interestingly, war or schism and the resultant impedance to, or prevention of, travel were not considered reasons for an abbot not to attend General Chapter.

General Chapter followed the same format as the daily Chapter meeting of all abbeys in the order; reading of the Martyrology, reading of the Rules or Statutes of the Order, then daily business. On the first day of General Chapter, legislation issued at the previous General Chapter and letters received since that meeting were read out. On the second day, punishments were given to those abbots who had failed to attend without valid excuse, visitations that had not been carried out in the preceding year were discussed, and definitors (executive committee) who were responsible for drawing up new legislation were appointed. The third day included prayers for those of the Order who had died during the preceding year, whilst the fourth day incorporated the General Chapter of lay brothers. The fifth day included prayers for 'rulers' and 'protectors', and a promulgation of the statutes - which each abbot read out to the community of his own Abbey on his return. From 1235, abbeys were expected to contribute to the costs incurred by Citeaux Abbey in holding the General Chapter, at first by a voluntary payment but very shortly after by taxation. There were four levels of taxation, dependent on how much money was required by the General Chapter; *moderata* (9,000 *livres tournois* (l.t.)), *mediocris* (12,000 l.t.), *duplex* (double the *moderata*) and *excessiva* (double the *mediocris*). Abbots were expected to bring their contribution with them to Citeaux Abbey or to an agreed collection point in a Cistercian house.

The abbot of a motherhouse (Father Immediate) maintained discipline over all its daughter-houses through annual visitations, which ensured uniformity of practice, guidance and support. The General Chapter could instruct additional visitations be carried out on a particular monastery in order to investigate allegations of abuse or disorderly behaviour, or to implement reforms. Visitations were to be a constructive process in order to strengthen the community of the daughter-house and as such, the Father Immediate was to be just and reasonable, and act with paternal charity. His visitation was to determine proper celebration of the liturgy and monastic observances, that silence was preserved, the customary diet maintained, there were copies of the Order's statutes, there were no underage novices, hospitality and charity were provided in an appropriate manner, the obedientiaries were responsible in their offices, the financial affairs of the Abbey were in good order and they met their financial obligations to Citeaux Abbey, there were no instances of sodomy, sorcery or other 'superstitious arts', that women were kept from the cloister, and that there were no hawks or falcons within the precinct. The community being visited were to welcome the Father Immediate and embrace his corrections. When it was too dangerous for a Father Immediate to travel, due to war or political unrest, he would often appoint an abbot near to the daughter-house(s) to be visited to undertake the annual visitation on his behalf.

Although abbeys were subject to the annual visitation of the Father Immediate of its mother house, the abbot was ultimately responsible for the maintenance of discipline over all the monks, lay-brothers, novices, guests and hired help of his Abbey, its granges and other houses. He ensured those who faulted atoned for their wrong-doing in order that they could be without sin and receive their heavenly reward of salvation; for, at the Day of Judgement, the abbot himself would be held accountable for all the sins of his monastic flock as well as his own sins. The basis of discipline within the Abbey was primarily that of self-discipline of the monks, lay-brothers and novices; each was to judge himself by his own conscience in order to resist sin but, more importantly, to willingly confess his faults.

Transgression

Transgressions were commonly by the individual, although there were instances when the transgression was committed by groups of even entire communities.

Abbatial transgressions included; failure of an abbot to attend the General Chapter without good cause (this was penanced at the General Chapter in the following year and would receive heavy penalties imposed by the abbot of Citeaux Abbey with the consent of all other abbots attending the Chapter), failure to provide hospitality to other abbots travelling to General Chapter or to conduct visitations on daughter-houses was punished by the General Chapter (such hospitality could be costly and disruptive to the host abbey), receiving an underage postulant into the Abbey, mismanagement, financial abuses, coming into conflict with neighbouring abbeys, hosting and entertaining guests of status in the infirmary, talking without good reason after compline, partying, permitting women to work at granges, other offences (as determined by the General Chapter), founding a daughter-house without permission of the General Chapter (from 1190).

Common (actual or suspected) transgressions committed by any member of the monastic community included; conspiracies against the abbot, fracture of the community into cliques, failure to meet the demands and responsibilities of office, failure in the duties of their office, lateness, laziness, breaches of silence and gluttony, improper behaviour, singing psalms at the wrong tempo, not bowing to the alter in the prescribed manner, favouritism, other lapses in Cistercian customs (of liturgy, living arrangements, food and relations with the outside world), taking of abbey property when leaving the Abbey, cleaning shoes without permission, dozing off during service, possessing private property or money and attachment to small items of private property.

Common (actual or suspected) transgressions committed specifically by lay brothers included; wearing of cloaks of new cloth or new skins, washing the head of another lay brother, lateness, laziness, breaches of silence and gluttony, improper behaviour, taking of abbey property when leaving the Abbey, possessing private property or money and attachment to small items of private property. In Wales, and to a lesser extent England, alcohol was a common attribution to the violent and unruly behaviour of lay brothers. In the thirteenth century there was an increase in lay brother transgressions.

More serious offences committed by any member of the monastic community included; murder, apostasy and disregard of the basic monastic vows (poverty, charity and obedience), rebellious monks or lay brothers and arrogance.

Hostility to Fathers Immediate when conducting their visitations was not uncommon and, on occasion, resulted in open rebellion. In 1228, Stephen of Lexington visited the abbeys of Ireland where he met strong resistance throughout and was physically attacked at Mellifont, Mauge (Monasteranenagh) and Suir (Inislounaght) Abbeys. At Mellifont Abbey, the monks and lay brothers armed themselves, fortified the Abbey, built a tower above the high alter and grazed cattle in the cloister.

In Wales, and to a lesser extent England, alcohol was a common attribution to the violent and unruly behaviour of lay brothers. Consequently, wine and beer was banned at granges; a prohibition that, out of necessity, was repeated in 1180, 1184, 1186 and 1192. These prohibitions appear to have been regularly broken as, in the fourteenth century, a monk of Fountains Abbey (Yorkshire) was suspected of attempting to poison his abbot, and the lay-brothers of Meaux Abbey (Yorkshire) attacked and pursued their abbot and cellarer after they were deprived of ale.

Punishment

If an entire community were found to be scandalous, or to have conspired against its abbot, it could be dissolved and dispersed to other distant abbeys, and replaced by monks (and lay brothers) from a neighbouring abbey.

> In 1285, the community of Sulejów Abbey (Poland), a daughter-house of Morimond Abbey (Ireland), were found to be scandalous, they were dispersed to the Abbeys of Byszew (Poland) and Szpetal (Poland), and replaced by a colony of monks from the neighbouring Abbey of Wąchock (Poland); this punishment was endorsed by Abbot Hugh of Morimond Abbey (France) as the Father Immediate of Sulejów Abbey.

Punishments against abbots were imposed at General Chapter by the abbot of Citeaux Abbey with the consent of all attending abbots. Punishments against members of the monastic community were imposed by the abbot. Great importance was attached to correcting minor breaches of discipline in the belief that failure to do so would lead to more serious transgressions. A Bishop could only be involved in punishment if the transgressor was an ordained monk.

Abbots could be investigated by the General Chapter, and deposed if warranted, for mismanagement, financial abuses and other offences. Investigation was carried out by an appointed delegation of abbots from neighbouring abbeys who would judge the allegations against each abbey involved in the conflict, inspect documents presented by the involved parties, pass judgement, enforce sentences and the payment of expenses and damages, and witness a charter of settlement signed by the involved conflicted parties. If, after admonition, an abbot continued to violate the Rule, he could be deposed by the abbot of the principal abbey of the affiliation on the advice of other abbots of that affiliation; the abbots of the four principal abbeys could depose the abbot of Citeaux Abbey but not without a General Chapter.

Examples of transgressions committed by abbots and the subsequent punishments include:

> For failing to attend General Chapter, the abbots of Quarr (Isle of White), Stoneleigh (Warwickshire) and Forde (Dorset) Abbeys were penanced to six days *in levi culpa* (of light punishment) - one day of which on bread and water, to eat late and not to intone *antiphones* in choir.
>
> The abbots of Jouy (France) and Bonnefont (France) Abbeys were also penanced to six days *in levi culpa* (of light punishment) - one day of which on bread and water, to eat late and not to intone *antiphones* in choir for failing to carry out their filial visitations.
>
> The abbot of Berdoues Abbey (France) was also penanced to six days *in levi culpa* - one day of which on bread and water, to eat late and not to intone *antiphones* in choir for the six days, for not attending the General Chapter. However, for giving a frivolous excuse for his non-attendance his punishment was extended to forty days of

the above, and was additionally instructed to pay an outstanding debt to the abbot of Le Thoronet Abbey (France) before the Christmas.

In 1275, the lay brothers of Piscaria Abbey (Italy) laid violence on abbots travelling to General Chapter and took their belongings. The abbot of Piscaria Abbey was ordered to restrain the lay brothers involved and to compensate the abbots who had been assaulted. In 1276, the abbot was accused of not having reported to the General Chapter, reminded to recompense the harmed abbots and punished with remaining outside of his abbatial stall for three days - one on bread and water. By 1277, he still had not carried out the ruling and was instructed to carry out the punishment of the lay brothers by that Easter, and to satisfy the harmed abbots; he was also to remain outside of his stall and was not to ride a horse until the ruling was fulfilled.

The abbots of Rosières (France) and Balerne (France) Abbeys were punished with one day of bread and water only for talking to monks and lay-brothers after compline.

The abbot of Tintern Abbey (Monmouthshire) committed several transgressions; talking to the Bishop after compline, having a party with the Bishop and some monks after compline, and having women working at the granges (his punishment is unknown, but was probably more than bread and water for one day).

The abbot of Longpont Abbey (France), who did not build the *dormitorium* according to the Rule, received punishment of being forty days outside of his stall, and six days *in levi culpa* - one day of which on bread and water. He was also given three years to alter the *dormitorium* to accord with the Rule; if, after the three years, he did not, no one would be permitted to sleep in it.

An abbot who received an underage postulant into his Abbey would typically be punished with three days *in levi culpa* - one on bread and water.

In 1215, Abbot Hugh of Beaulieu Abbey (Hampshire) was found to have eaten and drank with noble lay visitors in a manner unbefitting the monastic setting by eating from silver plates. He was also found to have kept a dog on a silver chain to guard his bed.

Abbots were often punished for hosting and entertaining guests of status in the infirmary. In 1205, the abbots of Pontigny (France) and Reigny (France) Abbeys were punished for hosting and accommodating the Queen of France and a local bishop in their infirmaries.

In 1217, two Portuguese abbots travelling to General Chapter, with a small party of lay brothers in company, broke their journey at the Benedictine monastery of Marmoutier (France) and complained loudly about the poor quality of food served them. They were denounced to the General Chapter who punished the abbots too fast for a day on bread and water at Marmoutier, and punished the lay brothers to walk the fifty miles to Mamoutier where they were to be whipped in the Chapter House of that monastery; these punishments were intended as both a deterrent and as a demonstration of Cistercian standards of behaviour.

Punishment for common (actual or suspected) transgressions included dismissal from office, fasting, flogging or the withdrawal of privileges and humiliation - such as eating meals on the floor of the refectory rather than with the community at table (to symbolise temporary exclusion from the community). Examples of such transgressions and subsequent punishments include:

If the sacrist rang the bell too early or too late he had to make satisfaction for this at the chapter meeting. If he rang the bell so late on a feast day that the monks had to speed up the chant or cut the reading, then he had to stand bowed over the presbytery step in the church from when the *kyrie* was sung until after the *deo gratias.*

Monks and lay brothers who left their abbeys taking abbey property with them, were permitted by a General Chapter statute of 1195 to return to their abbey, and were to wear the clothing of monastic servants rather than the attire of a monk or lay brother; if they reoffended, a lay brother was to be expelled from the Order, and a monk was to be sent into permanent exile at another abbey.

Punishment for more serious offences included imprisonment, removal to another house, expulsion; from the thirteenth century it was common for abbeys to have a prison or cell used to hold violent monks, and those who had committed apostasy but had been detained and returned to their abbey. Imprisonment was the punishment of last resort after the failure of all other punishments such as admonishment, exclusion from communal meals and prayers, and flogging in chapter. Prisons were usually located in the east precinct near, or within, the infirmary. If the gatehouse included a cellar, this cellar could also be utilized as a prison or cell. Imprisonment within the abbey cell (or other room of isolation) could be for life, although the abbot would endeavour by any means necessary to elicit remorse and repentance from the offender for his sins. Removal to another house was in the hope that this would bring about a change of heart, but more importantly, prevented the spread of ill-feeling within the offender's abbey. Punishment for the rebellious and arrogant who refused to repent and change was expulsion, not just from the abbey, but from the order itself.

Lay brother transgressions, which saw an increase during the course of the thirteenth century, were typically punished with; expulsion from the Order (the most severest of punishments), being put into perpetual prison - restrained by chains and sustained on the 'bread of tribulation and water of distress' for the remainder of their life, being held in the abbey prison by authority of the General Chapter, being sent to a remote abbey and not permitted to return to his own abbey without permission of the General Chapter, being on bread and water until Easter, having to eat outside of the refectory, not receiving communion, not permitted to enter the oratory and occupying the lowest place for a year. Examples of such transgressions and subsequent punishments include:

A lay brother of Heilsbronn Abbey (Germany), who wounded is abbot with a cudgel and struck him in the head and arms with a knife was put into perpetual prison, restrained by chains, and sustained on the 'bread of tribulation and water of distress' for the remainder of his life.

In 1195, a group of lay brothers of Szentgotthárd Abbey (Hungary) who had subjected a monk of the Abbey to 'an unheard-of cruelty' were banished not just from the Abbey and the Order, but from Hungary also and ordered never to return.

Lay brothers who were found guilty of possessing private property or money were no longer permitted to be buried in the monks' cemetery. This punishment could be applied retrospectively, as in the case of a lay brother from Theuley Abbey (France) and a lay brother from Zwettl Abbey (Austria). Both were found, after death, to have possessed private property (the former money and the latter a coat) and were subsequently exhumed from the Abbey cemetery and re-interred outside of their respective Abbey precincts. The significance of such an offense is highlighted by the fact that in 1191 it was later determined that the lay brother from Theuley Abbey had been given the money by his abbot to be used on Abbey business; the lay brother's remains were again exhumed and re-buried in the Abbey cemetery.

In 1228, the General Chapter denied the burial of a lay brother in the Abbey cemetery who, at the time of his death, was found to be in possession of money that he had not confessed and having received communion at Christmas.

A granger who failed to meet the demands of his responsibilities could be dismissed.

A lay brother who washed the head of another lay brother was to be flogged in the lay brothers' chapter.

A lay-brother in a grange who broke silence was to have bread and water only the next day and could not receive communion until they had accused themself in chapter.

Lay brothers were not permitted to wear cloaks of new cloth or new skins. If they continued to wear such items they were barred from Communion, and if they persisted, they were expelled from the Order.

In Wales, and to a lesser extent England, alcohol was a common attribution to the violent and unruly behaviour of lay brothers. Consequently, wine and beer was banned at granges; a prohibition that was regularly broken, for which punishments imposed by the General Chapter included excommunication of inebriates and a suspension on the receiving of lay brother novitiates into the abbey concerned.

In 1190, the General Chapter noted that the abbot and lay brothers of Margam Abbey (West Glamorgan) had not done their penance for allowing beer into the granges, and until they made their penance the abbot was to have his faculties withdrawn. In 1191, their penance not done, the abbot was ordered to vacate his abbatial stall for forty days and to receive the penance of *levis culpa* for six days - one on bread and water, and the lay brother leaders of this disorder were to report the motherhouse of Clairvaux Abbey (France) to be advised of the General Chapter's penance.

In 1195, when the abbot of Cwmhir Abbey (Powys) enforced the prohibition of beer in the granges, the lay brothers stole his horses. They were ordered to Clairvaux Abbey on foot to receive their sentences.

In 1195, the General Chapter issued a statute to all the abbots of abbeys in Wales reminding them of the prohibition of beer in the granges and ordered that they were not to receive any more novice lay brothers until water was the only drink available at the granges.

A founding endowment of Garendon Abbey (Leicestershire) was an estate devoted to beer production. In 1196, the General Chapter decreed that the beer produced was not to be consumed by the lay brothers of the Abbey but sold and the income put to other uses, or the grange was to be returned to the benefactor; later that year the abbot was seriously wounded for enforcing the ban.

In 1202, the abbot of Croxden Abbey (Staffordshire) was punished for permitting lay brothers to drink wine in the granges. Undeterred, the lay brothers were still drinking wine in the granges of Croxden Abbey seven years later.

In 1206, the lay brothers of Margam Abbey conspired against their abbot, threw the cellarer from his horse, armed themselves and chased the abbot for fifteen miles; after which they barricaded themselves in their dormitory and withheld food from the monks. The offending lay brothers were punished as conspirators and the ringleaders were sent to Clairvaux Abbey on foot, then dispersed to other abbeys.

Until this was observed, Margam Abbey was not to receive any more lay brother novices without the consent of the General Chapter.

Notes:

apostasy - the formal disaffiliation from, abandonment of, or renunciation of a religion by a person

livre tournois - the 'Tours pound', a medieval French currency equivalent to 80.88 grams of fine silver that was sub-divided into 20 *sous tournois,* each of which was further sub-divided in to 12 *denier tournois*; the only sub-division to be minted as a coin was the *denir tournois* each of which weighed approximately 4.4 grams, 240 of which equating to one *livre tournois* (an abbot contributing the lowest taxation to the General Chapter would, therefore, travel with 2,160,000 coins - modern comparison would be to travel with £21,600 in one pence pieces)

Martyrology - book of martyrs and saints listed in order of their anniversaries

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Article #10 - Female Houses (Nunneries)

The origins of Cistercian female houses lay with the wives and female relatives of those who entered Citeaux Abbey (France) with Bernard in 1113. This first Cistercian female community was originally settled in Molesme (France) but in the same year relocated to Jully in Langres (France) where they established a Priory. Although a foundation of the Cluniac monastery of Molesme, the nuns adhered strictly to the Cistercian *ordo*. A second Cistercian female community was founded in Tart, near Genlis in Burgundy (France) in 1125. Although a daughter-house of Jully Priory, it is considered as the first true Cistercian nunnery; Tart Abbey itself was to found eight daughter-houses.

In the early thirteenth century Cistercian nunneries were filiated to either Citeaux Abbey or Clairvaux Abbey (France). In 1213, the General Chapter regularised the rules pertaining to Cistercian nunneries. Nunneries incorporated into the Order were to be fully enclosed, and no new nunneries were to be founded without the consent of the General Chapter. Although the abbess of a nunnery held the same position of authority over their house as an abbot, they were not equal in status nor in the decision making process of the Order; as exemplified by abbesses being barred from attending General Chapter. Nunneries were to be under the care and supervision of an abbot who carried out the annual visitations of a Father Immediate and provided for the nuns' spiritual needs, celebration of Mass and confession; abbesses were not to be present during the filial visitation of an abbot. Mother Abbesses who made their own visitations to daughter-nunneries were not to change anything ordained by an abbot. In 1218, the General Chapter decreed that nunneries should be located no closer than five miles to a male abbey, in order to prevent economic competition between the two. During the period 1220 to 1241, the General Chapter issued numerous statutes prohibiting the incorporation of newly founded nunneries into the Cistercian order. Despite these statutes, however, the founding and incorporation of nunneries into the Order flourished in the first half of the thirteenth century; culminating in a peak between 1235 and 1245, with few nunneries being founded after 1250. In Germany, for instance, approximately 235 Cistercian nunneries were founded between 1200 and 1250 with a further fifty by 1300. In 1251, Pope Innocent IV issued a Papal bull allowing the General Chapter to refuse any more nunneries into the Order, however, the fervour had already passed and the marked reduction in new nunneries was a natural decline rather than a result of the Papal bull.

In England and Wales only two nunneries were recognized by General Chapter as having been incorporated into the Cistercian Order; Tarent Abbey (Dorset) and Marham Abbey (Norfolk). However, a nunnery that had chosen to follow the Cistercian *ordo* could be formally considered as 'being Cistercian' by a Cistercian abbot or a senior clergy (archbishop or bishop), and would receive the same privileges and freedoms as male Cistercian houses; as many as thirty-three nunneries were so identified, of which thirteen are confirmed as such in the Monasticon Anglicanum.

In the main, nunneries were similar to their male counterparts. All nunneries were subordinated to an abbey, the abbot of which was the Father Immediate who conducted visitations as he would on any of his subordinate abbeys; in the case of Marham Abbey, Sawtry Abbey (Huntingdonshire) and Sibton Abbey (Suffolk) were the closest male Cistercian abbeys, so it is quite possible the abbots of Sawtry Abbey became the Fathers Immediate and had filial responsibility as such. Some abbots with filial responsibility of a nunnery complained of the burden this placed on their abbeys; financially - as nunneries were less self-sufficient due to smaller endowments and donations than their male counterparts, and spiritually - as ordained monks were sent as chaplains to the nunneries. Female communities comprised of choir nuns, novices and lay-sisters (who worked within the inner court) and lay-brothers (who remained in the outer court, worked the granges and managed other properties), an ordained monk who was the resident chaplain who celebrated mass, preached and heard confession (who also lived in the outer court) - in

larger communities there would be more than one chaplain. Choir nuns followed the *opus dei* in the same manner as monks and knew all 155 psalms. Nunneries were led by an abbess (or prioress, in smaller communities) whose symbol of office was as that of an abbot, the crozier, and whose responsibilities for the daily routine, economy, liturgical observances and reception of guests were no different to those of an abbot. The economy of a nunnery was more dependent on rents, control of parish church and tithes, and the right to appoint priests, rather than income from granges. Unlike monks, nuns ran schools for girls where they taught both the basic *trivium* (grammar, logic and rhetoric) and the advanced *quadrivium* (arithmetic, music, geometry and astronomy). They also cared for the sick and poor, performed penitentiary services (rites of reconciliation), and intercessory prayers for benefactors and patrons. Female houses were commonly involved in caring for lepers and many Cistercian nunneries served as a mausoleum for wealthy families; in 1202, the nunnery of Trzebnica (Poland) was founded by Duke Henry the Bearded of Silesia and his wife Hedwig with the specific purpose of being the place their burials and for perpetual liturgical commemoration, it also served as the place where Hedwig would retire to following the death of Duke Henry.

List of Cistercian Female Houses in England

Dorset
- Tarent Abbey

Lincolnshire
- Greenfield Priory
- Legbourne Priory

Norfolk
- Marham Abbey

Northamptonshire
- Catesby Priory

Yorkshire
- Basedale Priory
- Hampole Priory
- Hoton Priory*
- Keldholm Priory
- Nun Appleton Priory
-- Codenham Priory* (of Nun Appleton)
- Syningthwaite Priory
-- Esholt Priory (of Syningthwaite)
- Swine Priory
- Wickham Priory*

English Nunneries (**locations unknown and not shown on image*)

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Article #11 - Novitiate

Unlike other monastic orders, the Cistercian order did not accept oblates (children under the age of fifteen). Postulants (those wishing to be accepted into the Order) were to be aged fifteen years or older; this was later raised to the age of eighteen years by a statute of the General Chapter in 1175 - an abbot was to send away any postulant who looked younger in stature, face and demeanour. They were to be literate (able to read Latin) in order that they could begin theological and spiritual training from the start (they were to know the psalms by heart by the end of their *novitiate*), whilst other studies focused on the Rule of Benedict. In 1349, in an attempt to counter the rapidly declining numbers of choir monks, the General Chapter reduced the requirement for postulants to be of 14 years of age - in order that they would be fifteen years of age when making their profession. Postulants must not be married, convicted or suspected of heresy, and were to detach themselves from their families. A postulant or novice who was found to be married, convicted or a heretic was to be sent away immediately or locked-up. They must also not already have been accepted into another monastic order.

Postulants were first admitted to the gatehouse where they remained for at least four days, after which they were brought to the chapterhouse where they prostrated themself before the abbot. The abbot then asked *quid petis* (what do you ask for?), to which postulants would reply *misericordiam Dei et vestram* (the mercy of God and to be received). Postulants then stood and were told by the abbot of the difficulties of monastic life and asked if they were willing to embrace it. If they were willing to do so the postulants replied 'yes' and returned to the gatehouse for three more days. On the third day postulants became novices and were taken to the *cella novitiorium* (novices dayroom and dormitory) to start their year-long *novitiate*.

The twelve months *novitiate* was a period of assimilation into monastic life, its routines and rituals under the guidance and supervision of the monastic official known as the novice-master; preparatory to the solemn ceremony of profession, when the novice was permanently admitted into the community. During their *novitiate*, novices followed the same daily routine and received the same diet as the choir monks, but were not yet considered full members of the community. They worked, rested, read and slept at the same times as the monks, and ate the same food at the same time as the monks. Novices did not, however, go to daily chapter. Novices wore monastic habits without the cowl, were not tonsured, ate and slept separately (in the *cella novitiorium*) from the choir monks, and always walked behind the monks in procession. If a novice died he received the same privileges as a monk. At the end of their *novitiate* the cellarer again led the novices to the chapterhouse where they made their profession to the abbot and received the tonsure, whereby the crown of the head was shaved. The ceremony of profession then continued in the church where Mass was celebrated, and the new monks took vows of obedience, stability and chastity. They were then officially welcomed as full members of the monastic community and took their place with the rest of the monks in the church, refectory and dormitory.

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Article #12 - *Cura Corporis*: Care of the Bodies

The principal element of *cura corporis* was blood-letting. This was considered to be a beneficial and preventative act, connected to the medieval medical theory of humours; the theory being that health was dependent on the balance of four humours - blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile. Blood-letting was also believed to cleanse the body of impurities.

All choir monks and lay brothers underwent compulsory blood-letting four times a year in February, April, September and prior to the feast of St John the Baptist; on days that would cause the least disruption to the abbey, and specifically not during harvest or the high feast days of the Nativity, Easter and Pentecost. Whilst considered beneficial, with up to four pints being removed from an individual, blood-letting came with the risk of haemorrhage and infection. Consequently, the General Chapter of 1180 issued a statute that blood-letting was only to be performed by a competent practitioner (*minuator*).

Choir monks had their blood-letting in the warming room, whilst lay-brothers had their blood-letting in their refectory (unless permitted by the abbot for this to also take place in the warming room. Blood-letting was carried out between the canonical offices of *terce* and *sext* on ordinary days and between *sext* and *nones* on fast days. Choir monks and lay brothers recovered from blood-letting in their respective infirmaries for four days. They continued to take meals in their respective refectories where, in addition to the normal diet, they receive a pound of white bread (in winter only) and a pittance of egg or fish, and received mixt - even on a fast day. For the first two days after blood-letting, choir monks attended the day offices only in the retro-choir with the other infirm monks, on the third day they returned their allotted stall in the choir for day offices only (standing) and sat for two psalms of the little hours. On the fourth day they resumed full observances of both day and night offices. Lay brothers similarly only attended day officers (that the lay brothers were required to attend), with the other lay brethren in the west choir, for the three days after blood-letting, and attended all required day and night offices from the fourth day. Choir monks and lay brothers did not carry out any manual labour for the three days after being bled and on the fourth day only carried out light work.

Sickness was believed to be sent by god as both a punishment and purification of sin. The suffering of ailments was viewed as a manifestation of holiness and purification in preparedness for entry into heaven. If a monk was sick and did not need the infirmary, but could not attend choir, he informed the community during chapter and the abbot decided what regime the monk was to follow; whether he was to work or not, if he was to sit in the infirm choir or not, whether received mixt or not. Similarly, if a lay brother was sick but did not need the infirmary, but could not work, he informed the cellarer who determined what regime the lay brother was to follow. If the illness was uncertain or lasted for several days, the monk or lay brother would be admitted into their respective infirmary.

When a monk or lay brother is sick and needs to be treated in their respective infirmary, he takes his meals there and receives mixt. He may only speak with the infirmarian, and only then quietly about necessities, and must not do so during mealtimes or when office is being said in the Church. It was believed that recovery was a result of liturgical intervention as much as medical treatment. Being able to see the elevation of the host was also considered to be helpful to recovery, as well as easing the passing to paradise for the dying. Those in the infirmary who can get up from bed are to say as much of the office together as they can; those who are able to, can go to church (where they take their seat in the allotted place within the choir) during day hours, and for professions. Visitors to the abbey who became ill were cared for in the guest house under the care of the guest-master; and those who were able to get up from bed would pray in either the gatehouse chapel or the galilee porch at the west door of the nave.

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Article #13 - Death and Burials

Cistercians viewed death, not as the end of life, but as the beginning of the true life that monastic life was but a preparation. Choir monks and lay brothers were treated as equals in death. The same procedures were followed for both, they received the same prayers and were buried in the same cemetery. When death was imminent the monk or brother was laid out on the ground on a blanket covered mat or straw. A wooden tablet or gong was repeatedly struck, calling the community to assemble at the deathbed. The Litany and the Seven Penitential Psalms were said, and when a lay brother died the Office of Commendation was also said. After death the body was washed and then taken in procession to the church where a continuous intercession of psalm recitals was held until the funeral Mass. After burial each priest said three Masses, each cleric one hundred and fifty Psalms, others one hundred and fifty recitals of the *miserere*, or *pater nosters* if the former was not known.

Abbots were typically buried in the chapter house, and from the last quarter of the thirteenth century, also in the church. Each burial was marked by an abbatial grave slab that was integrated into the floor. Initially, abbatial grave slabs had few distinguishing marks other than perhaps an engraving of a crozier, however, over time, and as a reflection of the enhanced status of abbots, abbatial grave slabs become more elaborate with full sized effigies and inscriptions.

Until 1147, no others were permitted to be buried within the precinct boundary, however, from 1147, the servants of an abbey who died within the precinct boundary were allowed to be buried in the monastic cemetery. In 1180, a General Chapter statute permitted secular burials within abbey churches but limited to kings, queens and bishops; in 1316 this was expanded to include other prelates of the Church. In 1197, the General Chapter permitted burials in the monastic cemetery of founders and those others 'who could not be refused without causing a scandal'; entitlement being determined at the discretion of the abbot. This was regularized in 1202 to founders and their descendants, guests (who died whilst staying in an abbey guesthouse), and two *familiares* (supporters or patrons of the abbey) with their wives and servants. By 1217, lay burials in abbey cemeteries had become common practice that only required a licence from the secular parish priest of the 'applicant' in question, whilst General Chapter focus shifted to specific burial locations within the precinct for differing lay status, with explicit prohibition of any lay burial in the most sacred places - the chapter house, the church and the cloistral arcades. By 1300, permissions had changed again and chapels - specifically for the burial of founders, benefactors, other patrons, their families and descendants, began to be established at the eastern end of church naves. Aristocratic lay burials also began to be located in the monks choir at this time.

Known burials in Sawtry abbey include:

> Margaret of Huntingdon, Duchess of Brittany (d.1201); daughter of Henry of Scotland and Ada de Warenne, sister of King Malcom IV of Scotland and King William I 'The Lion' of Scotland, married to - (1) Conan IV, Duke of Brittany (1160), (2) Humphrey III de Bohun, Hereditary Constable of England (1171), (3) Sir William fitz Patrick de Hertburn (1183).
>
> David “Etherington” de Huntingdon, 8th Earl of Huntingdon (d.1219); son of Henry of Scotland and Ada de Warenne, grandson of King David I of Scotland and Maud (2nd Countess of Huntingdon), younger brother of King Malcom IV of Scotland and King William I 'The Lion' of Scotland, married to Matilda de Kevelioc (Meschines) of Chester.

Matilda (Maud) de Kevelioc (Meschines) of Chester, Countess of Huntingdon (d.1233); married to David de Huntingdon.

Isabella de Brus (d.1252); second daughter of David de Huntingdon and Matilda de Kevelioc (Meschines) of Chester, married to Robert de Brus IV Annandale.

It was also recorded in Scots Peerage that Robert de Brus IV Annandale (d.1245) - great grandfather of King Robert I of Scotland and married to Isabella de Brus, was buried in Sawtry abbey; but this is considered unlikely as, at the time of his death, Guisborough Priory was the burial location of choice for the de Brus family.

Notes

miserere - alternate term for Psalm 51 due to the opening words, '*Miserere mei, Deus*'
pater nosters - Roman Catholic version of the Lord's Prayre in Latin

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