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A Landlord in Medieval Bristol

by I. Keil
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By IAN KEIL

ALTHOUGH many students have told us about various aspects of the development of Bristol, the connections between the town and the major landlords of its hinterland deserve fuller exploration. The extents of the areas for which Bristol served as an economic, social and even legal centre during the middle ages await definition; these urban influences may have altered from time to time but no chronology of them has been worked out.¹ For example, we need to know how many of the prominent religious houses and secular nobility maintained houses or depots in medieval Bristol and for how long. As a contribution to the discussion of this problem we shall consider the part played by Bristol in the history of the wealthiest of all English monasteries, the abbey of Glastonbury.

Origins of regular contacts between Bristol and the abbey remain obscure. In the mid-15th century William of Worcester wrote an historical description of the town and he says:

'The parish church of St Stephen, near the quay of Bristol, situated in a place where formerly from ancient time, as I have heard, there was a priory of monks of the order of St Benedict, and it was a cell belonging to the monastery of Glastonbury'.²

Surviving archives and chronicles of the abbey make no mention of a dependent priory in Bristol, though Glastonbury established priories for a time at Lammana in Cornwall and at Bassaleg in Monmouthshire.³ The tradition repeated by Worcester may have some solid foundation for we find most of the abbey's property in Bristol lay in the vicinity of the church he names. Between 1193 and 1195 Henry de Soilli, bishop of Worcester (1193-95) and former abbot of Glastonbury

¹ A recent and valuable survey of the materials available in print appears in the bibliography of *The Cartulary of St Mark's Hospital, Bristol*, edited by C. D. Ross, Bristol Records, XXI (1959). In his introduction to the Cartulary Dr Ross discusses the size of Bristol, especially in regard to its development in the later middle ages. The significance of Bristol as a port has received attention in a number of studies. The best introduction to this aspect of the history of Bristol appears in the works of E. M. Carus-Wilson, see in particular the bibliography to her *The Merchant Adventurers of Bristol in the Fifteenth Century*, Bristol Branch of the Historical Association (1962).

² C. S. Taylor, 'The Chronological Sequence of the Bristol Parish Churches', *Trans. BGAS*, XXXII (1909), pp. 212-13, 218.

³ *The Great Cartulary of Glastonbury Abbey (G.C.)*, ed. Dom. A. Watkin, Somerset Record Society, LIX, LXIII, LXIV (1947, 1952, 1956), p. 78.

(1189-93) granted a pension of two marks from St Stephen's to the infirmary at the abbey.¹ The records do not show what motives the bishop had for making this grant, but two possible explanations seem worth mentioning. First, the bishop was concluding the settlement of rights that a priory might have possessed, a proposition in accord with the story of a priory although there is no reference to one in the grant. Secondly, the bishop hoped to assuage the wrath of his former brethren for advancing himself at their expense.² Subsequent confirmations of the pension contain no references to a priory. We may note that the establishment of colonies by monasteries took place most commonly after the Norman Conquest but the movement had ceased by the late 12th century.³ The abbey continued to keep an interest in the affairs of the parish for during the abbacy of Michael of Amesbury (1235-52): the abbey helped to settle a dispute between the rector of St Stephen's and the vicar of St Leonard's over the contribution of the latter to the pension payable to the abbey.⁴ The vicar agreed to find twelve pence annually to assist the ancient parish.

Properties owned by Glastonbury in and about Bristol were acquired at various dates. Whilst Henry de Soilli ruled the abbey he endowed the guestmaster's office with a number of rents so that visitors to Glastonbury from other religious houses should have fitting entertainment. Among the sources of income assigned for that purpose was a house in Bristol given by Robert Gilde to the abbey sometime before 1191.⁵ On 20 March 1247 Abbot Michael de Amesbury earmarked 63s 4d from Bristol and its environs for the support of his chantry. He mentioned annual rents from tenements in Redcliffe Street (20s 0d), in Broad Street (3s 0d), in Lewinsmead (12s 0d), near to St Nicholas's Church and by Bristol bridge (23s 4d).⁶

An account of 1539-40 shows that the largest concentration of

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

² Henry de Soilli (Sully) became bishop of Worcester and surrendered his abbacy of Glastonbury which then paved the way for the bishop of Bath and Wells, Savary de Bohyn, to acquire the abbacy of Glastonbury. Hostility between the see and the abbey had arisen some years before and so the monks saw the desertion of their abbot as providing the opportunity for their greatest adversary. For a modern account of this episode see M. D. Knowles *The Monastic Order in England*, 2nd edn. (1963), pp. 327-30.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 134-6.

⁴ *G.C.*, p. 157.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 705.

⁶ *G.C.*, p. 711. We may note that Lewinsmead might have been given its name as a result of the land there once having been in the possession of Lewyn, chamberlain of the earl of Gloucester (see *G.C.*, p. 551). This Lewyn had dealings with the abbey in 1130 concerning land at Marksbury and Houndstret (Somerset) (*ibid.*, p. 551).

property in Bristol belonging to Glastonbury was in Marsh Street.¹ These holdings produced £4 15s 4d a year of a total revenue from the town of £6 0s 8d. It does not appear from the Glastonbury records available to us when the abbey acquired all of its property. However, we hear that in 1399 the abbey expected to obtain by reversion at the death of Agnes, the wife of William Canynges, three messuages, one toft, four shops and a 'sollar' in the 'suburb of Bristol' worth £5 0s 0d annually to be held in chief in burgage tenure.² The purpose of this transaction is not stated explicitly but in this period the abbey appears to have attempted to extend its income by purchases of real estate in other places in efforts to maintain a steady income from cash rents.³ This Bristol acquisition needed a licence permitting the alienation of land in mortmain and the abbey sought it through the agency of a number of its dependent clergy—a common method for powerful religious houses at this time.⁴

Glastonbury's archives do not show whether the abbey ever kept a house for the use of the abbot or his agents on business in Bristol but it seems that from at least as early as the mid-12th century the abbey had trading connections in the town. Between 1147 and 1154 King Stephen ordered that the town should not levy tolls or dues upon any food, clothing or money belonging to Glastonbury Abbey.⁵ Henry II in 1155 and John, Count of Mortain, in 1191 confirmed the privilege.⁶ On 10 December 1267 the Prince Edward (later Edward I) exempted the abbey together with the bishop of Bath and Wells and

¹ P.R.O. S.C. 6. Henry VIII 3184. This account shows that the abbey had twelve holdings in Marsh Street (four were each valued at 10s 0d per annum; four, each at 6s 8d per annum; two, each at 6s 0d per annum; and one, at 8s 0d per annum). Two shops in unspecified places were let for a yearly rent of 6s 8d and a cellar, also not located, brought in 5s 0d annually. A *dalario* (meadow?) was let for 5s 0d and a garden rendered 2s 0d in rent. The accountant was Davyd Hobbes who is called 'baliff' and it is possible that he was the then rector of St Stephen's.

These Bristol properties remained in the possession of the crown until August 1544 when 'tenements in the tenure of David Hobbes in the parish of St Stephen in Bristol' were granted in fee with much other property to Roger and Robert Taverner for £1027 19s 8d (*Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, xix, part 2, p. 85).

² *Calendar of Patent Rolls*, 1396-99, p. 471. We may surmise that the suburb was Redcliffe in which the Canynges family had property and other interests. The meaning of 'sollar' is not clear from the licence but perhaps it was a warehouse.

³ I. Keil, 'Impropiator and Benefice in the Later Middle Ages', *The Wiltshire Arch. & Nat. Hist. Mag.*, LVIII, pp. 351-61.

⁴ The crown conceded to the abbey of Glastonbury the right to acquire land in mortmain each year to a value not exceeding 40 marks at this date and the Bristol property appears to have been assessed at 10 marks (£6 13s 4d) by the royal escheator, the then mayor of Bristol, Thomas Knap. The clergy who obtained the licence on behalf of the abbey were the parson of Wrington (William Middelworth), the vicar of Ashcote (John Vax) and the vicar of Meare (John Elys). Two laymen also assisted in the transaction: John Panys of Prurigg and John, son of Richard Coker. See note 2, above.

⁵ *G.C.*, p. 148.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

the dean of Wells from paying a recent aid on imports by sea into the port of Bristol.¹ Such concessions in the case of Glastonbury may have related particularly to fish and wine, commodities which we know formed a regular part of the abbey's trade at later dates.

It is unfortunate that very few of the accounts of the domestic officials of Glastonbury Abbey have survived to allow us to see the full range of items purchased for the abbey.² Some glimpses of how the abbey provided for its needs come from some of the manorial accounts of Wrington in Somerset and the extant obedientiary records. Between the last years of the 13th century and the middle of the 14th century we find that the abbey sent its carts to and from Bristol by way of Wrington. Although this place lay off the direct route from Glastonbury to Bristol it had two advantages for the abbey. First, the straightforward route by way of Wells and Chewton Mendip involved severe gradients in several parts and made the goods in transit liable to tolls at Wells. Even though the abbey possessed holdings at Camley and at Temple Cloud these were probably unable to provide the necessary food and accommodation for the men and horses involved in heavy transport by this route.³ The second, but longer, journey (approximately 34 miles compared with 27 miles) passing by way of Wrington avoided many strenuous uphill pulls and from Glastonbury almost to the gap in the Mendips at Axbridge the vehicles travelled through abbey land. At a distance of about 23 miles Wrington gave opportunities for both men and animals to refresh themselves. Secondly, the abbey could meet the costs of haulage from its own resources, making use of carting services and its manorial stables and facilities for most eventualities. The decline of all kinds of villein labour services

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

² I am deeply indebted to the Marquess of Bath for permission to consult his muniments relating to Glastonbury Abbey at Longleat House (L.) The absence of accounts of the domestic economy of the abbey for much of the middle ages respecting almost all the obediences makes for a much less complete understanding of the trading done in Bristol or with merchants of that city. Nonetheless the accounts which are available give us some hints concerning the nature of the contacts. It is reasonable to suppose that these records may indicate the types of goods purchased although they cannot allow us to measure fluctuations induced by price changes, fashion or to meet exceptional needs that might have arisen from time to time. Accounts from a large number of the obedientiaries survive for the last year of the existence of the abbey (P.R.O. S.C.6 Henry VIII 3118) and these have received some examination in A. Watkin, 'Glastonbury, 1538-9, as shown by its account rolls', *The Downside Review*, LXVII, pp. 437-50. The medarer's account of 1536-37 (P.R.O. S.C.6. Henry VIII 3116) is translated in *Notes and Queries for Somerset and Dorset*, XII, pp. 146-49. Also of value are the guestmaster's account of 1517-18 (L L 10749), the pittancer's account of 1532-33 (P.R.O. S.C.6 Henry VIII 3114). For manorial accounts see note 2, page 48.

³ In 1537-38 the abbey possessed only two free holdings in Temple Cloud and rents of assize (copyholds) produced £20 13s 4d from Camley but we have no details of the nature of the holdings for no other account survives (P.R.O. S.C.6. Henry VIII 3111). Sources for the period when the abbey had extensive demesne farms make no mention of a demesne in the lord's hands at Camley.

after the Black Death might be one of the reasons why the accounts of Wrington cease to mention the Bristol traffic.¹

The cost of the Bristol connections to the manor of Wrington in the early 14th century appears in the account of 1300-1.² In cash the abbot authorized the reeve to pay 12*d* and 4 quarters, 3 bushels and 3 pecks of oats to William Le Barbour and Richard Le Carter for their keep and feeding horses (number not stated) drawing the *longa carrecta* (wain) to fetch wine and fish from Bristol. In addition the reeve received orders to give 4 bushels of wheat to Thomas Minerel, 'burgess of Bristol', but we are not told why the abbot made this gift. Two years later the cellarer visited Bristol and had a bushel of wheat from the manor for his needs and 5½ bushels of oats for feeding his horse, since they were away for two nights. In this year too, a number of journeys were made to Bristol on behalf of the abbot or the cellarer, including one for the purchase of wine. Unfortunately the available information does not allow us to see what part of the total cost of the Bristol traffic came from the funds of this manor. It seems possible that some of the abbey visitors travelled between Bristol and Glastonbury using the direct route.

On some occasions the abbey imported heavy goods from Bristol by water, a method that involved using coastal shipping and the extensive water-ways of the Somerset Levels which had not then been extensively drained. One glimpse of this means of communication appears in the manorial account of Brent for 1300-1 which shows that the abbey had two consignments of 6 tuns of wine each by

¹ Fifteen miles is approximately the distance between most market towns in medieval England and this distance is the maximum convenient for horse haulage so that a journey and business can be made in a day. The manorial customs of all Glastonbury manors imposed obligations on unfree tenants to cart not merely field crops to the barns but produce or goods to places chosen by the lord. These customs are to be found in the customals of all the abbey manors made for Abbot Michael de Amesbury in the first half of the 13th century and repeated in somewhat greater detail where ambiguities or uncertainties existed in later repetitions of the customs culminating in the customs and obligations due to the lord set out in the manorial surveys made during the first three decades of the 14th century. *Glastonie Rentalia et Custumaria Michaelis de Ambresbury*, 1235-1252, et *Rogeri de Ford*, 1252-1261, ed. C. I. Elton, Somerset Record Society, v. *passim*; and also British Museum. Egerton Manuscripts, 3321/f. *passim*. Not only do we find villein tenants of Wrington owing carting service to Bristol but also men of similar status with the same carting obligation on manors close to Chippenham in Wiltshire.

² L 11272 (1300-01), and also for Wrington accounts see:—L 11271 (1302-03), L 11215 (1304-05), L 10655 (1312-13), L 10656 (1313-14), County of Somerset Records Office: D.D./SAS Braikenridge Collection (BC). membrane 65 (1328-29), L 10761 (1330-31) BC membrane 66 (1331-32), L 10632 (1333-34), City and County of Bristol Record Office (BRO): Smyths of Ashton Court Collection: AC/M10/5 (1342-43), BRO AC/M10/6 (1343-44), BRO AC/M10/8 (1351-52), BRO AC/M10/9 (1352-53), BRO AC/M10/10 (1353-54), BRO AC/Mo/11 (1401-02), BC D/P/wri (1418-19), BRO AC/M10/12 (1447-48), BRO AC/M10/13 (1463-64), BRO AC/M10/14 (1482-83), BRO AC/M10/15 (1491-92), P.R.O. S.C.6. Henry VIII 3109 (1534-35), and P.R.O. S.C.6. Henry VIII 3112/3113 (1537-38).

way of Rokesmill near Berrow to Glastonbury. The first shipment from Bristol to Berrow cost 7s 7d, unloading it there cost a further 12d and then the wine was carried to Glastonbury by a means not stated but which added 6s 0d to the charges. The second load of wine cost 13s 8d to bring from Bristol to Brent.¹

Qualities of wines or fish, by price or name, are not known before the 16th century. The obedientiaries' accounts show purchases of salt salmon, presumably from Ireland, and of 'secke', probably sherry or a fortified wine.² No complete figures exist to allow us to calculate the total amounts that the abbey spent on either fish or wine so as to reveal the importance of the Bristol business in respect of the expenditure upon these items incurred by the abbey.

Bristol merchants sometimes bought from the abbey. For example there is a contract made between two of them and Abbot Walter Monington (1342-75) in 1363, whereby Richard Le Spicer and Richard Le Inhame agreed prices for the abbey's wool clip. We are not told the amount of wool only the prices and mode of payment.³ It is interesting to note that these men were prominent in the affairs of

¹ L 11272.

² Glastonbury purchased two of the commodities that formed important items in the trade of the port of Bristol in the 16th century. The quantities of fish and wine obtained by some of the obedientiaries were intended to meet the specific obligations demanded of their office and did not represent more than likely to satisfy these imposed needs and the requirements of their own hospitality. Thus, only if we had access to all the domestic accounts could a calculation be made of the total quantities consumed by the abbey. The same may be said of some of the spice and other foods bought by the individual obedientiaries.

The pittancer's account of 1532-33 shows this side of the domestic economy at work and reveals that the purchases he made in Bristol were from the scarcer and more expensive items. His job originally was concerned with providing extra dishes at meals for special occasions, for visitors in monastic orders, or for monks of the house whose circumstances permitted them to have food in addition to that served in the refectory (M. D. Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England*, pp. 463-5, 641). By the 16th century the pittancer at Glastonbury had a net income assigned to his office of £24 3s 2d a year of which food for special occasions that had to be put in store cost £9 4s 11d. In the weeks when he provided extra food (the four weeks of Advent and the weeks between Epiphany and Lent) he spent about 20s 0d a week. Most of the remainder of the income he spent on wages, utensils and making over small sums to other obedientiaries. (There were other officials involved in paying out doles in food, money or kind to the monks.) Often the account does not show where goods came from and only exceptionally from whom they were purchased. We might assume that some of the spices and wine bought by the pittancer for his stores came from Bristol or Bristol merchants, but the only item whose provenance is stated is a pipe and Salt Salmon which cost 29s 0d. Carriage was an additional 4s 10d. Salt Salmon formed an important element in the fish trade with Ireland.

Although the medarer only supplied part of the wines and other beverages necessary for the abbey we find that his account for 1536-37 shows that he bought five consignments of wine, costing £24 11s 4d (including carting and other expenses). Only the tun bought for the king appears without a statement of its place of purchase and carriage charges. This might be an accounting device that meant that in fact he paid 100s 0d to the king in lieu of goods. The other wine came from Lyme (Regis)—2 tuns, Bridgwater—1 tun, and only a pipe from Bristol. However, the Bristol wine was 'secke' and its price excluding carriage was £6 6s 8d a tun compared with the other wines at £4 13s 4d.

³ British Museum Manuscript. Arundel 2, fo. 67 (dorse). Gross wool was priced at £5 6s 8d per sack and similar quantities of lambswool at £3 0s 0d.

Bristol including administering the staple.¹ Doubtless other merchants of Bristol tendered for the wool and other cash crops produced by the abbey demesne farms. It is difficult to assume otherwise in view of a bequest of John Stokes, a former mayor of Bristol, in favour of an abbot and two monks, and the people with Bristol connections involved with the abbey in land settlements.²

Glastonbury Abbey had reasons for visiting Bristol other than those required for the management of property or trade there. During the reign of Edward I the castle at Bristol was the nearest permanent royal base to the abbey. This circumstance became particularly significant when the abbey was engaged in its struggles to remove the interference of the bishop of Bath from its affairs, notably in connection with the question of the patronage of the abbey.³ When Abbot Robert de Pederton (elected in 1261) died in 1274 the abbey seized the opportunity of introducing the king into the dispute in a direct manner: the prior sent word of the abbot's death to the custodian of the castle in Bristol and on the news the royal escheators in nearby counties took possession of various abbey properties for the king and forstalled any precipitate action by the bishop. As a result of the subsequent legal manoeuvres the king resumed the royal patronage of Glastonbury and the bishop received compensation from the abbey which included a number of manors including all the abbey properties in Gloucestershire except those in Bristol. Almost a century later, in 1373, the then abbot of Glastonbury, Walter Monington (1342-75), served on the commission which determined the county boundaries of Bristol.⁴ Doubtless the position of the abbot as head of one of the greatest land owning corporations in the west of England made his appointment seem proper to the crown, but it is interesting that the town and the abbey, although nearly 30 miles apart, should have each played some role in adding to their respective power and prestige.

¹ Richard Le Spicer is probably the cloth exporter listed in 1366 and who two years before had acted with others in notifying the king of the election of Walter Derby as mayor. His name appears in several lists of Bristol merchants engaged in overseas trade (E. M. Carus-Wilson, *The Overseas Trade of Bristol in the Later Middle Ages*, Bristol Record Society, vii, *passim*).

Richard Le Inhame may be 'Richard Inhyn' who acted as a constable of the Staple in this period (*ibid.*, p. 300). Also see T. P. Wadley, *Notes or Abstracts of the Wills in the Great Orphan Book and Book of Wills*, Bristol and Glos. Arch. Soc. (1886), *passim*, where Spicer and probably Inhame (variously spelt) figure as witnesses in wills of the period.

² John Stokes was mayor of Bristol for several years including 1362 and 1365. His trading interests included exporting cloth and he died rich enough to found a chantry in 1382 to benefit the king and Walter Monington, Abbot of Glastonbury (1342-75), besides two monks of the same abbey and various relatives. The will appears in Wadley, *op. cit.*, p. 5 and in *Trans. BGAS*, viii, p. 235.

For others concerned with the abbey see footnotes 3, 4 (page 51) and 1, 2 (page 52).

³ The best modern discussion of this episode appears in Susan Wood, *English Monasteries and their Patrons in the Thirteenth Century* (1956), pp. 8, 23-4, 25, 30, 32-3, 42, 70, 77, 80, 104-5 also cf. 'Glastonbury Abbey' in *V.C.H. Somerset*, ii, pp. 90 ff.

⁴ *Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1370-1374*, p. 392.

Some references in a number of surviving sources suggest that the abbey had various legal and possibly political reasons for its connections with Bristol. Amongst the latter we may include its relationship with the Despensers, the favourites of King Edward II, whose dealings with the abbey emerge but fitfully from the Registers of Abbot Geoffrey Fromond although it is apparent that the abbey had entered into some financial arrangements with these men.¹ The precise nature of their business does not become clear from the abbey materials but perhaps the Despensers had concluded loan agreements as with some of the other wealthy though less politically influential landlords. Payments by the abbey to the Despensers were made at St Augustine's by Bristol. This religious house received commissions from Pope John XXII in 1328 and in 1329, first to protect the abbey's property and subsequently to hear and settle the dispute between Glastonbury and the bishop of Bath and Wells concerning the expenses of vicars attending convocation and other ecclesiastical bodies.² The abbey evidently believed that these seculars from its archdeaconry received sufficient revenues from their parishes to pay any necessary dues and since the bishop and the abbey were in dispute over a variety of matters only a neutral referee could adjudicate. We have no record of the outcome available to us.

More mundane, but nonetheless important, were the references the abbey made to the courts of the mayors of Bristol concerning the financial standing of parties to transactions involving land ownership. Several of these mayoral certificates were needed during the first half of the 14th century to permit the abbey to consolidate all its holdings in a number of manors where it wished to have unhampered control. For example, in 1305 the abbey undertook to pay a debt of £60 to Thomas Glade of Bristol owed by William Pasturel from whom the abbey was buying rights as hereditary baker to the abbey, and also some properties in the town of Glastonbury.³ Again in 1309 we find registration of a debt of John Mon who was then engaged with the abbey in selling a number of properties in Glastonbury and his obligation to a Bristol burgess, and sometime mayor, William Randolph, appears.⁴ Two other connections with Bristol emerge in the consolidations of landed holdings: the purchase of the manor of East Street in Somerset, and some rights and possessions at Ashcott, Greinton

¹ I. Keil, 'The Abbots of Glastonbury in the Early Fourteenth Century', *The Downside Review*, LXXXII, p. 336.

² *G.C.*, pp. 10, 14. I. Keil, 'The Archdeaconry of Glastonbury in the Later Middle Ages', *Notes and Queries for Somerset and Dorset*, xxviii, pp. 129-33.

³ *G.C.*, p. 284.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 349-50. William Randolph was mayor in this year and is a witness to the charter of William Tilloy made in 1333 (footnote 2, page 52).

and Walton in Somerset. In the former case one of the crucial final agreements was signed at St Mary's in Redcliffe and during the negotiations the mayor of Bristol certified that Lucy de Estrete owed no debts.¹ The second case concerns the Tolloy family of Bristol who acquired rights in the three Somerset manors about 1300 from Peter Fardeyn.² In 1330 Thomas Tolloy's widow, Alice, made over the holdings to her son Richard. He died at a date unstated. His heir William became the manager of the estate and during 1333 he transferred the properties to the attorneys of Glastonbury Abbey. Evidently he owed the abbot 200 marks according to a declaration he made in February 1333. In the previous November he came before the mayor and corporation of Bristol of which town he was once a burgess and proved himself to be of age. The abbey eventually gained control of the lands and rights. What is worth noticing is the interest of a prominent Bristol family in securing land well outside of Bristol. It would be interesting to know how many Bristol merchants invested in landed estates and what motives they had for these ventures. Certainly London burgesses bought country properties for social as well as economic reasons.

The varieties of connections between Bristol and Glastonbury Abbey for which evidence survives allow us to suggest that further investigation of the relationships of Bristol with the prominent landlords of its hinterland might provide some valuable insight into the question of the importance of towns in the development of medieval England.

¹ *G.C.*, pp. 341-5.

² Tilloy, alias Tilli, or Tilly, or Tilley, were a prominent family in Bristol. Thomas Tilloy served twice as mayor (1291 and 1300) and may have been the first of the family to buy property in the Polden area of Somerset. The sale of these properties and the rights to them was through clergy employed by the abbey as its attorneys. We are not told how William Tilloy became indebted to the abbey, but at various dates different Bristol merchants would have been in this position, if, for example, they were engaged in the wool trade (E. Power, *The Medieval Wool Trade, passim*). Some other transactions may have produced a situation in which the abbey might be creditor. See *G.C.*, pp. 394-400.

It is interesting to note that Thomas Babbecary, another Bristol merchant, owed Abbot Walter Monington 100 marks in 1362 (British Museum Manuscript, Arundel 2, fo. 31).