

by the 18th century. The building depicted would therefore consist only of hall D and room C.

Small finds

Very little was found on the site of the priory buildings, other than a quantity of post-medieval potsherds and clay pipes. Three 14th-century green glazed body sherds and an unglazed fragment of the base of a cooking pot were the only medieval evidence, other than the floor tiles and ridge tiles noted below.

- Fig. 40, 1. Romano-British. Folded-over rim of a cooking pot in soft grey fabric. Two other eroded rim sherds were also recovered.
- Fig. 40, 2. Sagging base, possibly of Ipswich ware, in grey-brown fabric, rather soft for Middle Saxon wares.
- Fig. 40, 3. Thetford ware rim. Two other comparable rims were recovered from the area of the main building.
- Fig. 40, 4. Stepped finial of ridge tile. Spots of green and brown glaze. Cf. that from the Walton Old Hall site (no. 9). In rubble in hall A. For a possible date see below, p. 147. Similar examples have been found at Snape Priory (Ipswich Museum, 966.26).
- Fig. 40, 5. Stepped finial of ridge tile, spots of brown glaze. Outside north wall of room C.
- Fig. 40, 6. Orange-red ware with clear glaze internally and externally. Heavy reeded rim with zone of horizontal lines on the shoulder and two horizontal handles. Found in the rubble of hall D, associated with clay pipes in the early 18th century.
- Fig. 40, 7. Rim and shoulder of jug in fine, sandy, red ware and a bright, clear glaze. Upper portion ribbed, handle a flattened oval. Dating as for no. 6.

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THE BUILDINGS OF WALTON PRIORY

by R. Gilyard-Beer, O.B.E., M.A., F.S.A.

The history of this religious house shows that from its foundation until the early 14th century it was a fully conventual priory asso-

ciated with the church of St. Felix and occupying proper communal buildings, rebuilt by Prior Silvester, that would almost certainly have been designed on a claustral plan. The last mention of a full complement of monks in 1307, the exchange of land in 1317, and the mention of a reduced establishment in 1381 combine to suggest that early in the 14th century the establishment of the priory was reduced, that a full conventual life ceased to be practiced there, and that it was transferred to a new site near Walton Church, becoming a non-conventual cell where three or four monks were outstationed to secure Rochester's interests in its spiritual and temporal revenues.

It was not uncommon for a dependent priory to be founded with the intention that it should support a full convent living a communal life, and later for it to decline into a cell with only two or three monks. For this, it was necessary to reduce the buildings to fit the needs of the smaller establishment, and examples of the effect of this on a claustral plan can be seen at Jarrow and Finchale, both cells of the Benedictine cathedral-monastery of Durham.⁴

Walton is of particular interest in that it does not seem to have been faced with this problem. The reduction in its establishment may well have gone hand in hand with transfer to a new site associated with a different church, relieving it of the need to modify old buildings and giving it the opportunity to erect new buildings specially commissioned for the non-conventual cell. It is reasonable to suppose that these are the buildings recovered by excavation, and they are therefore a useful addition to the meagre amount of evidence for this aspect of monastic building.

A building of slight construction had occupied the site at an earlier date, but too little of it remained for satisfactory identification. The main foundations of the building that succeeded it are those of a fairly substantial stone house of purely secular design, making no concessions to the regular claustral plan but showing signs of having been extensively remodelled at some stage in its life (Fig. 41).

Detailed identification of the parts of the building must be tentative, for no more than the bare plan remained, but in its first phase it seems to have had a small hall (A) on a north-south alignment, with a chamber block (B) overlapping its south end to the east, and a second chamber block (C) projecting from its north-east angle. In the second phase the hall may have been demolished⁵

⁴ At Jarrow the refectory range of a claustral layout was 'cannibalised' to form a simple house intruding into the cloister (*Med. Arch.*, xiii, 1969, p. 55). At Finchale the claustral layout was kept but the real life of the reduced establishment was concentrated in the prior's house (C. R. Peers, *Finchale Priory*).

⁵ Mr. West points out that this provides the only intelligible explanation for the appearance of the west front shown on the drawing of the 'abbey ruins' (Plate X).

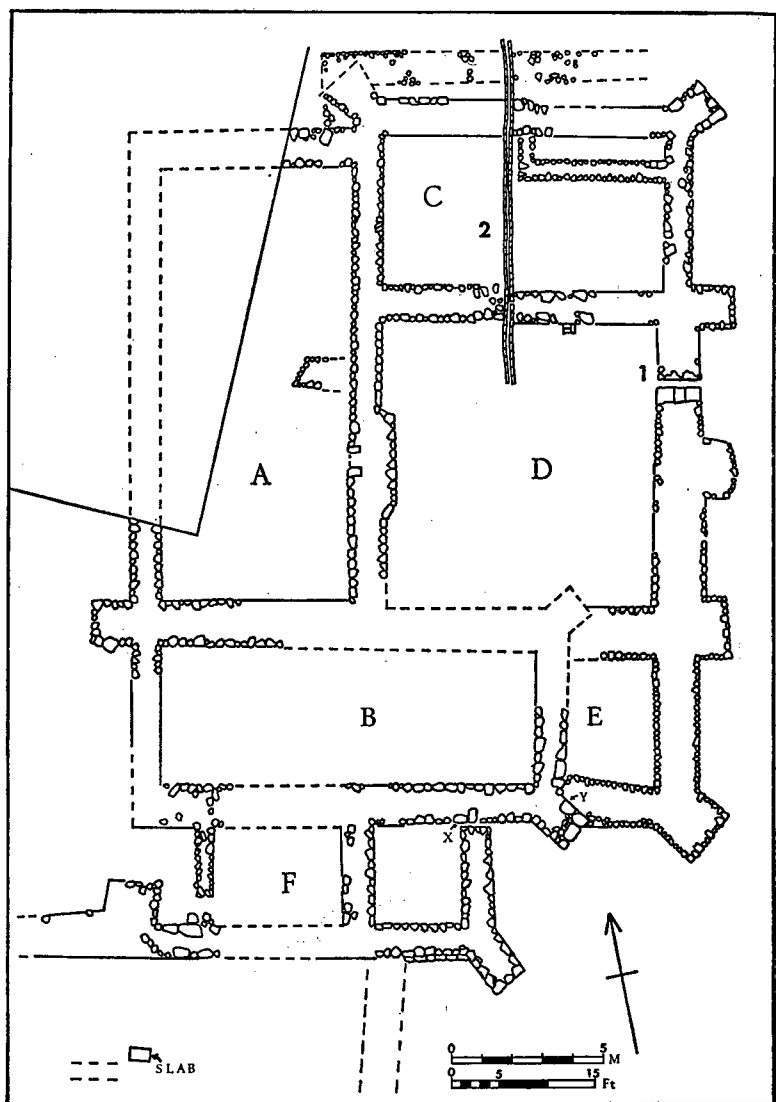


FIG. 41.—Walton Priory. Plan of main building.

and replaced by a new hall (D) on more massive foundations immediately to the east, the east wall of the old hall being adapted to serve as the west wall of the new one. The east wall of the new hall was on a line with the east wall of the old northern chamber block, and the southern chamber block was extended eastwards (E) to the same line, giving the house a symmetrical east front of four bays. Additional structures, probably garderobes serving the southern chambers (F), were built on the south side.

In both its phases, therefore, the house had a hall with chamber blocks at each end, a common type of secular plan that suits the information given in the document of 1499 and the inventory of 1528, from which it can be seen that both chamber blocks were of two storeys, one containing the parlour with a chamber above it, and the other having service rooms with another chamber above. No chapel was needed, for the 1499 document shows that the monks were using the adjacent parish church. The lesser foundations to the south and west probably represent the stables, barns and 'long house' of the documents, bordering a court or farmyard, the whole arrangement being typical of a small medieval manor house or a monastic grange.

The use of simple houses as non-conventual cells goes back a long way. A 12th-century example has survived at Beckford (Worcs.) where there was an alien cell of the Augustinian priory of Sainte Barbe-en-Auge with a resident prior and one or two monks during most of the Middle Ages. Here, at some little distance from the church that the monks leased in 1247, there are incorporated in the basement of the refectory of the present Salesian Training College substantial remains of the lower storey of a typical 12th-century 'upper hall' house that no doubt formed the domestic buildings of the cell. Later examples could be multiplied from documents, and an occasional one has survived, as at Wilmington Priory (Sussex).⁶ A useful glimpse of another 14th-century cell like Walton is given by a reference to Allerton Mauleverer (Yorks.),⁷ an alien priory dependent on Marmoutier, where in 1378 the resident monks held the church for their own use and lived nearby in a dilapidated hall with chambers and offices.

HISTORY OF WALTON PRIORY

by Katharine Davison, B.A.

The name Walton is now retained for the westerly suburb of Felixstowe but in medieval times it covered a far greater area which included present-day Old Felixstowe and stretched beyond this to

⁶ *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, LXIX (1928), pp. 1-52.

⁷ *Victoria County History, Yorkshire*, III (1913), p. 387.