Augustinian canons were first brought to Cambridge under the auspices of Picot, sheriff of Cambridge, and his wife Hugolina, in fulfilment of a vow that Hugolina had made when ill (Liber memorandorum, I 3 p. 38). Their foundation was made in the church of St Giles, close to Picot’s base in Cambridge castle and across the river from most of the developing town. According to the Barnwell chronicle, this foundation for six canons was made with the assistance and assent of both Remigius, bishop of Lincoln (died 8 May 1092), and Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury (nominated March 1093) (Liber memorandorum, I 4 p. 39). The date is given as 1092 (ib. I 18 p. 46). Anselm’s involvement was perhaps an enhancement by the chronicler. At the death soon afterwards of Picot and Hugolina, this inchoate establishment fell into the care of their son Robert, who was disgraced for plotting against King Henry; his forfeit possessions were given by the king to Pain Peverel (ib. I 7–8 pp. 40–41). Pain extended his protection to the foundation, and, seeing the inadequacy of its site, sought to transfer it elsewhere. With this in mind, he obtained from King Henry a site in the Cambridge fields—the narrative borrows from the wording of the supposed writ-
charter below—where a hermitage in honour of St Andrew had been established under one Godesone (ib. I 9 pp. 41–2). The foundation acquired a secondary dedication to reflect that of the former hermitage, and the endowment was increased by Pain Peverel. Construction on the new site is said to have begun in 1112 (ib. I 18, 32 pp. 46, 56). This narrative serves as the source for the early history given in VCH Cambs, ii. 234–49.

This story presented by the Liber memorandorum is clear and consistent, but undermined by the fact that the documents used to illustrate and justify it are for the most part forgeries. The acts in the names of the bishops, Remigius of Lincoln and Hervey of Ely (ib. I 15–16 pp. 44–5), can be discounted on the grounds of their anachronistic diplomatic, seen in such features as plural pronouns and the form of the episcopal styles (Smith, EEA 1 Lincoln 1067–1185, 2–3, no. 2; Karn, EEA 31 Ely 1109–1197, 3–4, no. 2). The deeds of Picot and Pain Peverel (Liber memorandorum, I 5, 11 pp. 40, 42–3) must also be faulted for anachronistic features and because their form is all but identical. The Liber memorandorum is a compilation from the end of the thirteenth century, continuing to the death of Prior Simon de Asscellis in 1297 and the election of his successor, Benedict. Parts of it are older, and authentic documents of the thirteenth century are incorporated. The forging of the foundation deeds and confirmations remains problematic with the possibility of more than one campaign of fabrication.

The single writ-charter of Henry I must be treated as part of the fabricated series, and the existence of a copy in Cartae Antiquae Roll K, apparently written in or very soon after 1208, provides a terminus ad quem for the work of forgery. This is a writ-charter with the correct regnal style and address, and the witness list is entirely plausible for a date at Easter 1110. The tenor of the act, however, is obviously not authentic. One can hardly say more than that the forger probably took the protocols from an authentic writ-charter for a beneficiary in Cambridgeshire. There are other likely forgeries used by the compiler of the Liber memorandorum that cannot be as early as 1208.\(^1\)

\(^1\) In 2005 Nicholas Karn allowed a date based on the notion that the false act of Bishop Remigius was cited in ‘an apparently genuine act’ of John of Fountains, bishop of Ely from 1220 to 1225, which is transmitted in a fourteenth-century roll of thirteenth-century episcopal acts (Karn, EEA 31 Ely 1109–1197, 4n), but by 2013 and with closer attention to the later texts he had changed his mind and thought Bishop John’s act ‘might be regarded as a forgery’ (id. EEA 42 Ely 1198–1256, 95–6, no. 103).
The archive of Barnwell has preserved no other acts in the name of a twelfth-century king. The chronicle mentions neither documents nor benefactions received after Henry I’s time until it comes to the gift of the church of Harston by the founder’s grandson Geoffrey Peche (Liber memorandorum, I 22 p. 47) and the recovery of several other churches, c. 1190 (ib. I 43 p. 66), which suggests that the archive had not been cultivated during the twelfth century. The complete absence of any act of Henry II is surely surprising. The first clearly authentic act is King John’s charter granting the canons’ tenure of Chesterton at a fee farm of £30, dated 27 April 1200 (ib. II 3 p. 76; RChart, 52), for which the canons paid fifty marks (PR 2 John, 169).

The early endowment of the canons comprised churches and tithes, according to the Liber memorandorum, where the properties are named in the forged deed in the name of Picot (Liber memorandorum, I 5 p. 40). They can be identified as the churches of St Giles, Cambridge, and churches in vills that were all held by Picot in 1086 (DB, i. 200b–201c): Hinxton (§ 32. 4), Harston (§ 32. 5), Tadlow (§ 32. 7), Guilden Morden (§ 32. 8), with its chapel at Redderia, Comberton (§ 32. 14), Bourn (§ 32. 23), with its chapel at Caldecote, Rampton (§ 32. 31), and Madingley (§ 32. 32).

1 Purported writ-charter giving to the canons of Cambridge thirteen acres at Barnwell in the fields of Cambridge for their church, together with the tithes of the king’s demesne in Cambridge, the church of St Giles, and the church of Comberton (Cambs)

CHANCERY ENROLMENT: Patent Roll 5 Richard II, pt 1, C66/311, mem. 33, inspeximus dated 8 July 1381 (CalPat 1381–5, 27) [B].
EXCHEQUER COPY: Cartae Antiquae Roll K (s. xiii), C52/10, no. 36 [C].
CARTULARY COPY: BL MS Harley 3601 (s. xiii/xiv), Liber memorandorum (Davis 20), fol. 13v (‘Carta gloriosi regis Henrici primi’) [D]. The manuscript was used by John Leland and William Camden; after 1607 it was in the hands of Sir Richard St George, and it was acquired by Robert Harley from John Covel in 1716.
ANTIQUARIAN TRANSCRIPTS: Bodl. MS Rawlinson B. 103 (copied by Sir Richard St George, 1554–1635), fol. 186r [from D]; BL MS Harley 7036 (copied by Thomas Baker, 1656–1740), p. 5 (now fol. 4r) [from D].
Revd Thomas Rutherforth (1712–1771), owned in 1790 by Revd Mr Peck, senior fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge; Monasticon, vi. 87, no. iii [from Dugdale]; J. W. Clark, Liber memorandorum ecclesie de Bernewelle (Cambridge, 1907), 43–4 [from D]; Landon, Cartae Antiquae Rolls 1–10, 148 (no. 319) [from C].

CALENDAR: Farrer 252; Regesta 939.

H(enricus) rex Angl(orum) Herueo episcope de Ely et Gileberto uicecom(iti) et omnibus baronibus suis francis et anglis de Cantebrigesire\(^a\) salutem. Sciatis me dedisse et concessisse ad preces Pagani Peuerel canonicis de Cantebr’ locum quendam in campis Cantebr’ iacentem circa fontes <de>\(^b\) Bernewell’ pro tresdecim acris terre ad domum suam stabiliendam et ecclesiam suam fundendam. Habendum et tenendum in liberam et perpetuam elemosinam libere quiete integre in sicco in\(^c\) marisco a platea usque in riuereiam de Cantebr’ secundum quod curia eorum in longum extenditur. Concessi etiam eis decimas de dominio meo de Cantebr’ et ecclesiam sancti Egidii et ecclesiam de Cumberton’ in perpetuam elemosinam. T(estibus) Rogero episcope Salesb(eriensi) et Will(elm)o episcope Exon(iensi) et Ioh(ann)e episcope Badue Turstino\(^d\) capellano Ham(one) dapifero. Apud Merleb(ergam) in pasca.

\(^a\) Cantebr’ C \(^b\) om. BCD, supplied from fontes de Barnewelle in Pain Peverel’s deed \(^c\) in CD ] om. B \(^d\) Turstano C

*Henry king of the English to Hervey bishop of Ely and Gilbert the sheriff and all his barons French and English of Cambridgeshire greeting. Know that I have given and granted at the prayers of Pain Peverel to the canons of Cambridge a place in the fields of Cambridge lying next to the springs of Barnwell counted as thirteen acres of land for establishing his house and founding his church. To have and to hold in free and perpetual alms freely quietly fully in dry land in marsh from the highway as far as the riverbank of Cambridge according to how far their court extends in length. I have also granted to them the tithes of my demesne of Cambridge and the church of St Giles and the church of Comberton in perpetual alms. Witness Roger bishop of Salisbury and William bishop of Exeter and John bishop of Bath, Thurstan the chaplain, Haimo Dapifer. At Marlborough during Easter.*

DATE: After Hervey became bishop of Ely, 17 October 1109; and before Thurstan the chaplain was nominated archbishop of York, 16 August 1114. The king is only known to have kept the Easter feast at Marlborough on one occasion, 10 April 1110 (ASCChr).
His whereabouts at Easter in 1111 and 1114 are not known, but a return to Marlborough is unlikely.

ADDRESS: The shire court of Cambridge.

WITNESS: Bishop Roger of Salisbury and Bishop William Warewast of Exeter were much more frequent witnesses than Bishop John of Bath. Three bishops appears rather weighty for a small transaction, but that is not in itself an objection to the witness list. Pain Peverel was himself a courtier, the date indicates a court occasion, and the transaction may have been seen as the foundation of a small religious house.

PLACE: Marlborough (Wilts).

CONTEXT: The narrative context discussed in the headnote provides all the background available to us. It is not known when Pain Peverel acquired Bourn and his interests in Cambridgeshire; the date c. 1122 in Saunders, English Baronies, 19, is without foundation. The site given to the canons is defined as lying between the platea (magna platea in Pain’s deed, quoted under Authenticity), a word with various meanings, and the riueria. The river provides the northern boundary of the site, and it the southern limit of the site was the Barnwell causeway, carrying the Newmarket road eastwards from Cambridge. Platea ‘open space’ was used to mean ‘street’ in an urban setting and could denote a highway, which makes best sense here. The buildings lay to the north of the later church of St Andrew the Less, known as the Abbey Church, on Newmarket Road. Following excavations a plan was drawn up by J. W. Clark & W. H. St John Hope, ‘An attempt to trace the architectural history and plan of the church and conventual buildings of Barnwell priory, Cambridge’, Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society 7 (1888–91) [1893], 222–54.

AUTHENTICITY: Only the protocols are likely to be authentic. The wording of the tenor is very close to the deed in Pain Peverel’s name, which refers to the king’s gift to Pain: ‘Concessi similiter eisdem canonicis quendam locum iacentem in campis Cantabrigie pro tresdecim acris circa fontes de Barnewelle quem Henricus rex mihi dedit ad domum eorum stabiliendam et fundandam, ad habendum et tenendum in liberam et puram et perpetuam elemosinam libere quiete integre a magna platea usque in riueriam de Cantabrigia in sicco et in marisco secundum quod curia eorum in longum extenditur, et sicut dominus rex mihi et heredibus meis illum locum dedit’ (I 11 p. 43; the date c. 1119 proposed in VCH Cambs, ii. 235, has no basis). One may speculate that the authentic act that supplied the protocols may have been King Henry’s gift to Pain Peverel, which may have come to the canons, but the attestation of three bishops points rather towards an ecclesiastical beneficiary. The writer of the Barnwell chronicle refers to the charter more than once: ‘impetrauit ille Paganus Peuerel a rege Henrico locum quendam extra burgum Cantabrigie a magna platea usque in riueram Cantebrigia se extendentem’ (I 9 p. 41), and again, ‘rex eciam iste Henricus fecit ipsis canonicis bonam cartam de situ de Bernewelle a magna platea usque in riueram de Cantebrigia et decimas eis dedit de toto dominico suo in Cantebrigia et ecclesiam sancti Egidii et ecclesiam de Cumbertone. Hec quidem carta est ipsis canonicis utilis in multis angustiis, cuius tenor superius scribitur’ (I 32 p. 55–6).