

## Yorkist Activity at Abingdon

**I think the basis is that Abingdon had been close to Richard II and unhappy at his fate. There was always the idea that Henry IV and his line were usurpers. This was acceptable when the king was active and able, but not when he was an idiot.**

**Richard of York** passed through Abingdon in Sept-Oct 1460 on his slow progress from the Wirral, where he had landed from Ireland, through the Marches, to London. Miri Rubin and a few others say his wife met him in Abingdon, but the Paston letters say she was sent for to Hereford. Others again say Ludlow. But in any case she must have been with him by the time he left Abingdon. At Abingdon, he took on 'clarioners and trumpeters' (which Google for references) to precede him on the road to London, where he made the journey take on the forms of a royal progress.

In London, he tried to get Parliament to accept him as king, claiming a better hereditary right than Henry, but the best he could get from them was to be accepted as heir apparent – which was a bit pointless since he was 10 years older than Henry. And it was a disinheriting of Henry's son. Margaret went north; York pursued and was killed before the end of the year at Wakefield attacking a much larger force.

### The 'monk of Abingdon'

See Warkworth's Chronicle (Camden Soc No 10, 1839) p. 5 and notes on 40sqq.

Henry somehow escaped from the battle of Hexham in July 1464 with a very few companions, and was hidden at Waddington Old Hall on the Lancs/Yorks border. Here in June 1465 he was recognised by the monk, William Cantlow. He escaped one attempt to arrest him, but was soon caught, wandering about the environs. Was taken back to London tied on his horse.

### Sante's plots after accession of HVII.

See Mienneke Cox, *Story of Abingdon* II p. 106.

I find in Landers *Wars of the Roses* p. 275:

'Yorkist hopes still flourished gathering around the young earl of Warwick, kept prisoner by Henry VII. In December 1489 the Abbot of Abingdon was implicated in a plot to set him free and was executed for his share in it.'

I think he got this from Curtis & Conway, *Henry VII's relations with Scotland and Ireland 1485-98* (1932) p. 32.

It is wrong, in that John Sante was plainly not executed.

The following is from *Parliament Rolls* for the Parliament of 1489 (*Rot Parl* VI 436-7).

<i>memb. 13]</i>	
Actus convictionis certarum personarum.	An act for the conviction of certain persons.
38. Item, quidam actus conviccionis et attincionis certarum personarum in presenti parlamento auctoritate	38. Item, a certain act of conviction and attainder of certain persons was issued in the present parliament,

eiusdem parliamenti editus est, cujus tenor sequitur in hec verba:

For asmoche as John, abbot of the monastery of oure Lady of Abington in the shire of Berk', John Mayne of the same towne, Cristofre Swanne late of the same towne and shire yoman, the first day of January, the < second > yere of the raigne of the kyng oure sovereign lorde Kyng Henry the .vij.<sup>th</sup>, at the seid towne of Abyngton, falsly and traiterously compassyng, conspyryng < and > ymagenyng the distruccon of the kyng our < seid > sovereyng < liege > lorde, and the subvercion of all this his realme, falsly and trayterously assemblyng them to gider, assented, cownaunted and agreed that the seid John Mayne shuld departe out of England, to the helpe and ayde of John < then > erle of Lincoln, then beyng a great rebell, enemy and traitour to the kyng oure seid sovereygn lorde, and for the perfourmans of that traiterous purpose and congeiture, the seid abbot gave to the seid John Mayne a certeyn summe of money; and ferthermore the seid John Mayne, aboute the first day of December, the .vi. [sic: read '.v.']<sup>th</sup> yere of the raigne of the kyng oure sovereign lord, at London, had comunycacion with on Thomas Rothwell, otherwise called Thomas Even, late of London priste, and then and ther confedred, conspired, falsly and traytoursly ymagened and commoned howe they myght have taken out of the kyng oure seid sovereign lordes < warde, > Edward the erle of Warwyk, then thynkyng that he had ben where in dede he was not, intendencyng, imagynyng and conspyryng by that, to have made grete dyvysion, rumour [p. vi-437][col. a] and insurreccion within this realme, and to have levyed werre ayens the kyng oure seid sovereign lorde, to thentent to have destroyed his moost roiall persone, and utterly to put this hole realme in confucion; uppon < the > which comunycacion, the seid John Mayne and the seid Thomas went to the howse of on Henry Davy < in London, and per they > mete with the seid Herrye and Edward Frank, and then and ther they .iiij. or persones had ferther comunycacion howe they myght perfourme and put in execucion the seid false and traiterus purpose; and their they .iiij. or concluded to take thadvyse of the seid John, abbot of Abyngton, to perfourme the seid cursed and false dede. Wheruppon they seynt to the seid abbot the seid John Mayne, the which John Mayne came to the seid abbot, and told to hym that a preste shuld comme to hym, that shuld shewe to hym the clernes of the seid compassed treason; wherof the seid abbot was joious, and bad the seid John Mayne chose what he would drynke, and seid this acte moust be wysely wrought, and when yt is don, ther muste be a letter left in maner as yt were lost, in the place where the seid erle shuld be, directed to somme good felowe, that he shuld comme unto them to Colchestr'. And after the seid John Mayne brought the seid prest to the seid abbot, when the abbot sawe hym, he told the same John Mayne that he would not shewe his mynd unto the seid preste, for he sawe by hym that he was but light witted, but he seid he would shewe his mynd in this mater to Edward Frank when he comme to London. And also the seid John Mayne, Cristofre

by authority of the same parliament, the tenor of which follows in these words:

John, abbot of the monastery of Our Lady of Abingdon in the county of Berkshire, John Mayne of the same town, Christopher Swanne late of the same town and county, yeoman, on 1 January in the second year of the reign of our sovereign lord the king, King Henry VII [1487], at the said town of Abingdon, falsely and traitorously plotting, conspiring and scheming the destruction of the king our said sovereign liege lord, and the overthrow of all this his realm, falsely and traitorously assembling together, assented, settled and agreed that the said John Mayne should leave England to help and aid John, then earl of Lincoln, then a great rebel, enemy and traitor to our said sovereign lord the king, and for the performance of that traitorous purpose and scheme, the said abbot gave the said John Mayne a certain sum of money; and furthermore the said John Mayne, about 1 December in the fifth year of the reign of our sovereign lord the king [1489], at London, communicated with one Thomas Rothwell, otherwise called Thomas Even, late of London, priest, and then and there plotted, conspired, falsely and traitorously schemed and discussed how they might take Edward, earl of Warwick, out of our said sovereign lord the king's ward, then thinking that he had been where in fact he was not, intending, scheming and conspiring to cause great division, unrest [p. vi-437][col. a] and insurrection within this realm, and to have levied war against the king our said sovereign lord, with the intention of destroying his most royal person and of putting this whole realm into complete confusion. Upon which communication the said John Mayne and the said Thomas went to the house of one Henry Davy in London, and there met with the said Henry and Edward Frank, and then and there those four persons had further communication as to how they might perform and execute the said false and traitorous purpose; and there those four agreed to take the advice of the said John, abbot of Abingdon, in performing the said cursed and false deed. Whereupon they sent the said John Mayne to the said abbot, and he told the said abbot that a priest would come to him who would reveal to him the details of the said intended treason; about which the said abbot was joyous and bade the said John Mayne choose what he would drink, and said 'this act must be wisely wrought, and when it is done there must be a letter left as if it were lost, in the place where the said earl should be, addressed to some good fellow that he should come to them to Colchester'. And afterwards the said John Mayne brought the said priest to the said abbot, and when the abbot saw him he told the same John Mayne that he would not show his mind to the said priest, for he saw that he was simple-minded, but he said he would show his mind in this matter to Edward Frank when he came to London. And also, the said John Mayne, Christopher Swanne and Thomas Rothwell, otherwise called Thomas Even, priest, on 20 December in the said fifth year at the said town of Abingdon, similarly plotted, conspired and traitorously schemed and planned how they might

Swanne, Thomas Rothwell, otherwise called Thomas Even priste, the .xx. <sup>ti</sup> day of Decembre, the seid .v. <sup>th</sup> yere, at the seid towne of Abyngton, in likewyse confreded, conspired and traytorusly ymagyned and compassed the meanes howe they myght have perfourmed the seid false, coursed and traiterous dede, entending therby to have made werre and great rebellion ayens the highnes of the kyng oure seid sovereign lorde, intending < and > compassyng the destruccion and deposicion of his most roiall persone and the subvercion of all this realme. < And for > the perfourmyng of that false and traiterous purpose, Dan Myles Salley, commoyn to the seid abbot, delivered to the forseid Cristofre Swanne then and ther a certen somme of money, to execute and perfourme the false and traytorus purpose aforseid; the which Cristofre then and ther delyvered the same somme of money with more to the seid John Mayne; and the seid John Mayne then and their delivered the seid somme of money to the seid Thomas Rothwell priste, for the performans of the seid false and traiterus entent.

perform the said false, cursed and traitorous deed, intending thereby to have made war and great rebellion against our said sovereign lord the king's highness, intending and plotting the destruction and deposition of his most royal person and the overthrow of all this realm. And for the performance of that false and traitorous purpose, Dan Miles Salley a fellow-monk of the said abbot, then and there delivered a certain sum of money to the aforesaid Christopher Swanne to execute and perform the aforesaid false and traitorous purpose; which Christopher then and there delivered the same sum of money and more to the said John Mayne; and the said John Mayne then and there delivered the said sum of money to the said Thomas Rothwell, priest, for the performance of the said false and traitorous purpose.

Wherfor be it ordyned by the auctorite of this present parliament that the seid John Mayne, Cristofre Swanne, Edward Franke and Henry Davy be ajuded, demed and atteynted of high treason; and that the seid John Mayne, Cristofre Swanne, Thomas Rothwell, Edward, Henry and Myles forfaite all their londes and tenementes, godez and catallez which they, or eny other persone to their use, had of estate of fee symple or fee tayle, in demeane or yn revercion or otherwise, the seid first day of December or any tyme sythen; and over that, that the seid abbot forfeite all his londes and tenementes, or other possessions and hereditamentes, which he, or any other to his use, had the seid first day of December or any tyme sith, in demene, revercion or otherwise, not amortised, and all such goodez and catalles that the seid abbot, or eny other, < had > to his use, the seid first day of December or eny tyme sith, not perteynyng or belongyng to the seid monasterrye. And that it be ordeigned by the seid auctorite that this acte undre this fourme made be not prejudiciall ne hurtfull to the kynges roiall prerogatif, [col. b] < ne > to the prejudice of the comyn lawe of this lond, for the kyng intendith a ferther punysshment to be had ayenst the seid abbot, Dan Myles and Sir Thomas, by the advyse of his lordes spirituall and temporal, which shall be so done and executed that all other the kynges subgietes shall fere eftsons so to offend.

Wherefore be it ordained by authority of this present parliament that the said John Mayne, Christopher Swanne, Edward Franke and Henry Davy be adjudged, convicted and attainted of high treason; and that the said John Mayne, Christopher Swanne, Thomas Rothwell, Edward, Henry and Miles shall forfeit all their lands and tenements, goods and chattels which they, or any other person to their use, had of estate of fee-simple or fee-tail, in demesne or in reversion or otherwise, on the said 1 December or at any time since; and moreover, that the said abbot shall forfeit all his lands and tenements or other possessions and hereditaments which he, or anyone else to his use, had on the said 1 December or at any time since, in demesne, reversion or otherwise, not amortised, and all such goods and chattels as the said abbot, or anyone else, had to his use on the said 1 December or at any time since, which do not pertain or belong to the said monastery. And that it be ordained by the said authority that this act made in this form shall not be prejudicial or harmful to the king's royal prerogative, [col. b] or prejudicial to the common law of this land, for the king intends further punishment against the said abbot, Dan Miles and Sir Thomas, by the advice of his lords spiritual and temporal, which shall be done and executed so that all the king's other subjects shall hereafter fear so to offend.

[editorial note: Responsio.]

[editorial note: Answer.]

Le roy le vuelt.

The king wills it.

[memb. 14]

A new book Desmond Seward, *The Last White Rise: the secret wars of the Tudors* (2010) pp 48-56 goes into much more detail. Sante was indicted in January 1490. Wasn't executed – he had benefit of clergy. In prison to September 1490. Fined £1000, forfeited all land and goods, but these restored 1493, but he bequeathed all his movables to Henry 'in token of all the grace shown to him'.

Author suggests this rattled Henry. There was unrest in Abingdon in spring 1492 and many arrests but he ordered proceedings stopped and their release. In Jan 1494, with a danger of a rising in favour of Perkin Warbeck, he went on a progress through Berkshire.

Since this is a 'popular' book the author skimps on references. But most of this comes from a paper by Lockett : Lockett, D. A. 'The Thames Valley Conspiracies against Henry VII', *Historical Research* **68**, 164-172, (1995).

The Miles Salley who escaped execution was the abbey kitchener, says Mienieke, and ended up as Bishop of Llandaff

See also CH Williams on the rebellion of Humphrey Stafford in EHR 1928 Williams, C. 'The rebellion of Humphrey Stafford in 1486', *EHR* **143**, 181-189 (1928).

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