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**Marshall, William M**

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**The administration of the dioceses of Hereford and Oxford, 1660-1760**

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THE  
ADMINISTRATION OF THE DIOCESES

OF

HEREFORD AND OXFORD,

1660 - 1760.

being a thesis submitted to the University  
of Bristol for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

by

WILLIAM MICHAEL MARSHALL

July 1978.

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I declare that this dissertation is the product of my own independent work, except where otherwise stated in the text, and that it has not previously been submitted in whole or in part to this or any other University.

William M. Marshall

11th July 1978

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## SYNOPSIS

The Introduction describes the geographical extent of the two dioceses and the differences in character between them.

Chapter I assesses the Restoration Settlement in the two dioceses with Bath and Wells added to increase the sample. The filling of administrative and parochial vacancies is explained and the difficulties caused by the Act of Uniformity are described.

Chapter II studies the administrative personnel, the archdeacons, chancellors, registers and apparitors; Chapter III portrays the initial restoration of powers of the Church Courts in 1660 and their subsequent decline after the 1680's and 1690's. The workings of the courts are explained.

Chapter IV is concerned with the parish clergy, their social and academic background and the growing pluralism of the eighteenth century, while Chapter V examines the liturgical life of the parishes, the extent of double duty, the frequency of Holy Communion and the extent of baptism and catechism.

In Chapter VI we see the involvement of the Church in social welfare, in particular in the field of education, almshouses and charitable gifts.

Chapter VII studies the attention of ecclesiastical authorities and of lay patrons to the fabric and furnishing of church buildings.

In Chapter VIII and IX the thesis returns to the centre of the diocese. In Chapter VIII we see in some depth the peculiarly episcopal functions of the bishop, ordination and confirmation and, less fully, episcopal visitation. Chapter IX concludes the work with a study of the bishops themselves, their social and academic background, their careers, and the distraction, if any, caused by their involvement in Parliament; the chapter ends with an assessment of the work of some of the more important prelates.



## ABBREVIATIONS

B.L.	British Library.
<u>Cal.</u>	A.G. Matthews - <u>Calamy Revised</u> . Oxford 1934.
<u>Church and State</u>	N. Sykes - <u>Church and State in England in the Eighteenth Century</u> . C.U.P. 1934.
D.N.B.	<u>Dictionary of National Biography</u> .
E.H.R.	<u>English Historical Review</u> .
Foster	J. Foster - <u>Alumni Oxonienses 1500-1714 and 1715-1886</u> . Oxford 1891.
<u>Green Re-Establishment</u>	I.M. Green - <u>The Re-Establishment of the Church of England 1660-63</u> . Oxford 1978.
Green	"The Process of Re-Establishment of the Church of England 1660-1663". Oxford D.Phil. Thesis 1973.
H.M.C.	Historical Manuscripts Commission.
H.R.O.	The County Record Office, Hereford.
Le Neve	J. Le Neve, <u>Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae</u> . Oxford 1854.
R.H.S.	Royal Historical Society.
S.R.O.	Somerset Record Office.
Venn	J. and J.A. Venn - <u>Alumni Cantabrigienses (to 1751)</u> Cambridge 1922.
W.R.	A.G. Matthews - <u>Walker Revised</u> . Oxford 1934.
46R	) <u>The Forty-sixth Annual Report of the Deputy</u>
	) <u>Keeper of the Public Records (London 1885)</u>
46th Report	) Appendix I.

## I N T R O D U C T I O N

When Charles II returned to England in May 1660, the future pattern of the Established Church was far from certain. There could have been a modified episcopacy, as the King himself, for 'politique' reasons, wanted; there could have been broad comprehension, but neither of these came to pass. A hundred years later at the accession of George III the Church was unassailably supreme in political terms, but it had lost its breadth and, some have thought, its efficiency and inspiration. The late Professor Norman Sykes noted that when "surveyed as a whole the pregnant century from Sheldon to Secker may be seen as the most influential epoch of English Church History between the Reformation and the Victorian Age".<sup>1</sup>

Led principally by Professor Sykes himself, much work has been done in the last half-century on this important period in the evolution of the Church of England. The consequent re-evaluation of the spirit and efficiency of the eighteenth century Church in general has been considerable, but inevitably the evidence has been based on research in a few only of the 26 dioceses. Professor Sykes worked principally on the dioceses of Canterbury, London, Lincoln and Chichester; others have concentrated elsewhere, Exeter, Winchester, Peterborough, York or Worcester, though often for only short sections of the period.<sup>2</sup>

This study is concerned with two very different dioceses. Hereford lies on the borders of Wales and includes many remote hill villages as well as important centres such as Hereford, Ross and Ludlow. Its origins go back to 676, when the Mercian kingdom was divided ecclesiastically into several dioceses;<sup>3</sup> in the period

1. N. Sykes From Sheldon to Secker (C.U.P. 1959) x.

2. For example:

Exeter diocese - A. Warne and M.G. Smith.

Canterbury and Winchester - I.M. Green.

Peterborough - G.V. Bennett.

Worcester - A.T. Hart.

York - A.T. Hart.

Warwickshire - J.L. Salter.

For titles of works see bibliography.

3. Le Neve Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae I 453-4.



1660-1760 its geographical extent had altered little and it was large, including not only all Herefordshire, but also the southern half of Shropshire and parts of Worcestershire, Radnorshire, Monmouthshire and Montgomery. In fact the western boundary of the diocese represents the pre-Norman Mercian political boundary with Wales.<sup>1</sup> Apart from this, the Archdeacon of Hereford had an anomalous jurisdiction over the Forest Deanery in the Gloucester diocese until 1836.<sup>2</sup>

By contrast the Oxford diocese with its one archdeaconry in the period of this study was more compact and was roughly co-terminous with the county of Oxfordshire. It had only about 180 parishes with another 40 chapelries. Though predominantly rural, it included the University and City of Oxford which, apart from anything else, gave the diocese a centre which was at once more metropolitan than Hereford and had constant contact with the capital and with intellectual centres abroad; the University had important links with the diocese that surrounded it and was, moreover, a seminary for the Church at large. Unlike Hereford, it was not ancient and had been carved out of the mediaeval diocese of Lincoln by Henry VIII in 1542.

There is therefore an important contrast between the two sees; the one an ancient 1,000 year old marcher diocese; the other only just over a century old at the Restoration and with the University at its centre more in touch with modern developments. One was comparatively wealthy, the other poor. One sprawled into several

1. The old boundary of England at this point can be determined by a study of Domesday. For instance, East Radnorshire in the Hereford diocese was assessed in hides, or even in five-hide units, not in carucates like the rest of Wales. Again, Bacton within the Hereford diocese is hidated, but Eywas Harold outside the diocese, though just below Bacton on the same bank of the river Dore is carucated. The old boundary of England coincides with the present diocesan boundary.

The southern deanery of Archenfield, however, was a twelfth century addition to the see. Together with Eywas, Ystradw (Crickhowell) and Talgarth, Archenfield (Ergyng - Roman Ariconium) formed a Welsh cantref which up to the twelfth century fell under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Llandaff.

F.C. Morgan et al. Herefordshire (Gloucester 1951).

V.C.H. Herefordshire I 263-6.

2. Le Neve I 435-6.

counties, the other fitted neatly into one.

This study is concerned with the life of the Church itself within these areas; the Church's important relationship with both recusancy and Protestant dissent and with the new force of Methodism, especially in Oxford, in the period is not part of this work and would provide material for further extended study.

Capitular authorities are extra-diocesan and, as such, do not form a part of this thesis, except where their activities impinge on the life of the dioceses.

We shall compare the re-establishment of the Church in the two sees in the 1660's and then the administration of them in the spheres of ecclesiastical justice, the staffing of the diocese and of the parishes, the liturgical life at parochial level, the Church's involvement in education and social welfare, its care of its buildings and, not least, ~~with~~ the calibre and activities of the bishops themselves during the century after the Restoration.



CHAPTER I

THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHURCH 1660-63.

The Interregnum which ended with the return of Charles II in May 1660 was a traumatic period in the history of the established church. The whole fabric of ecclesiastical administration, as it had existed since mediaeval times, had either been dismantled or had fallen into disuse. There were no bishops, archdeacons or deans and chapters and the whole elaborate structure of church courts had ceased to function. Only at the parish level did a vestige of the old system remain and then only where the pattern of presbyterian classes did not exist. Where the old parochial system survived, ministers continued to be instituted, though not under customary patrons. Instead patronage was generally operated by Triers and, in the case of former Crown patronage, by the Great Seal of the Protectorate. In these years many royalist clergy found themselves sequestered from their livings and replaced by men of a more puritanical hue.

Charles II's return signalled the revival of episcopacy, though at first to suit Puritan sensitivities only a modified form of it seemed likely to be introduced. The King made several overtures to the puritans to win them to the new ecclesiastical settlement. Apart from offering leading puritans at least three bishoprics, including the see of Hereford to Richard Baxter, he seems to have attempted a genuine balance, when using royal patronage to fill livings at the parochial level. But he failed, as we shall see later in the chapter, and by 1663 the Church had almost returned to the status it had enjoyed before the outbreak of the Civil War. In Dr. Boshers' view it was the Laudians who were responsible for thus reimposing the traditional principles and practices of the established church on the Puritan establishment; for him the settlement was virtually complete by May 1661.<sup>1</sup> Boshers' view has since been convincingly contested by Dr. Whiteman<sup>2</sup>

1. R.S. Boshers - The Making of the Restoration Settlement - The Influence of the Laudians 1649-62 (London 1951) 216 and Ch IV.
2. A. Whiteman - "The Re-establishment of the Church of England, 1660-63" in R.H.S. Transactions Fifth Series (1955) 111-131.

and Dr. Green.<sup>1</sup> For them 1663 was more significant than 1661 for "not till then was the episcopal administration in full working order and the re-establishment of the church a reality in most parishes throughout the land."<sup>2</sup> Dr. Green's intensive study of the financial recovery of bishoprics and chapters, the revival of diocesan administration, the enforcement of the Act of Uniformity in 1662 and the partial conformity of many of those who had conformed to the Commonwealth suggests that the re-establishment of Anglicanism was more difficult and more protracted than Bosher imagined. In Green's view the achievements of the Laudians both at the centre and in the provinces was much smaller than that of the Cavalier gentry at Westminster. At the centre the gentry thwarted the King's attempts at comprehension and in the counties brought pressure to bear on the Puritan clergy.<sup>3</sup>

In this study of the two dioceses of Hereford and Oxford, and to a lesser degree of Bath and Wells, we shall compare how quickly the restored administration was able to get back to work and to what extent the character of the settlement fitted into the national pattern.<sup>4</sup>

At the head of the diocesan administration was the bishop. Only nine pre-Interregnum bishops survived to the Restoration, two of whom were William Piers of Bath and Wells and Robert Skinner of Oxford.<sup>5</sup> There was a surprising delay in appointing replacements, a delay which drew criticism from the King's own supporters;<sup>6</sup> the first congé d'élire was not issued until the end of August and the first nomination of a new bishop was not until September 20th.<sup>7</sup> This was either because the cathedral chapters needed building up before episcopal elections took place or more probably it reflects Charles' caution; in Green's words he may have considered it

1. "The Process of the Re-Establishment of the Church of England 1660-63" - I.M. Green. (Oxford D. Phil. thesis 1973.) The thesis has been published under the title The Re-Establishment of the Church of England 1660-1663 (O.U.P. 1978).

Except where otherwise stated, references in the footnotes that follow are to the thesis, which is in some places a fuller version. References to the publication appear as Green Re-Establishment.

2. A. Whiteman - op. cit. 111.

3. Green - op. cit. Introduction ii.

4. Both Dr. Whiteman and Dr. Green have stressed the wide variety of usage in the different dioceses they studied; it is therefore wise to be cautious about any truly national pattern.

5. A total of 20 dioceses of the 26 in England and Wales received new bishops in 1660 or 1661 - only nine bishops had survived the Interregnum and of these three were translated almost immediately. Hereford and Bath and Wells were lucky. Green - op. cit. 166.

6. Green Re-Establishment 29, 83.

7. Green - op. cit. 119.



wise to give people a chance to grow accustomed "to the reappearance of lawn sleeves in England".<sup>1</sup> The King also feared that a too well-established episcopate would hinder his plans to help his Catholic subjects. His aim was for compromise, a modified episcopacy, comprising episcopal and presbyterian elements, as outlined in the Worcester House declaration of October 1660. Charles' nominees to dioceses, drawn from a wide background of churchmanship, reflect the breadth of his own approach.<sup>2</sup>

At the head of the Church the Archbishops were nominated on September 2nd from the nine surviving prelates. William Juxon, formerly Bishop of London, was translated to the see of Canterbury; though old and out of touch, he was very much a link with the past. He was not fit enough to function at the consecration of five bishops in October and he was only able to preside rather passively at the coronation of the King in April of the following year; the Bishop of London performed the actual rite on his behalf.<sup>3</sup> The former Bishop of Lichfield, Accepted Frewen, was translated to York.<sup>4</sup>

Unlike many dioceses in 1660, Bath and Wells and Oxford were fortunate, as we have already seen, in having bishops surviving from the 1640's and they were able to start work almost immediately. On the other hand Hereford was vacant; its bishop, George Coke, had died in 1646.<sup>5</sup> As we noted earlier, Charles in the interest of reconciliation had offered the see to Richard Baxter on 29th October 1660, but Baxter had refused a few days later and made 17 alternative suggestions.<sup>6</sup> Eventually as late as January 1661 the choice fell on Nicholas Monck who undoubtedly owed his promotion to the King's indebtedness to him personally<sup>7</sup> and to his brother, General George Monck, for what they had done to bring about the return of the

1. Green - op. cit. 119.

2. Green Re-Establishment 20, 29-32, 90.

3. Bosher - op. cit. 181, 216.

4. *ibid.*

5. Le Neve - Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae I 472.

6. Green - op. cit. 134.

7. Nicholas Monck had himself been responsible in August 1659 for taking Charles II's important message from London by frigate to George Monck in Dalkeith. He had committed the message to memory to avoid running the risk of interception and had travelled to meet George on the pretext of discussing his daughter's marriage. He returned to London in October to say that the General was ready to march.

M. Ashley - General Monck (Cape 1977) 160-161 and 167.

4

King.<sup>1</sup> At 50 he was the youngest of the new bishops whose average age at consecration was 65;<sup>2</sup> this was notably lower than 74, the average age of the nine surviving bishops in the country as a whole. The nine survivors included William Piers, who had been at Bath and Wells since 1632 and was 79, and Robert Skinner, who had been Bishop of Oxford since 1641 and was 69. The overall average for both surviving and newly consecrated bishops was as high as 70.<sup>3</sup>

The two survivors stayed long enough to see their dioceses through the initial stages of the new order; Piers continued at Wells until his death in 1670 and Skinner remained at Oxford until his translation to Worcester in 1663. At Hereford, however, there was yet another change before the settlement period had ended; in December 1661, within a year of consecration, Nicholas Monck died without, as far as we know, even setting foot in his see.<sup>4</sup> There is little if any, evidence of his impact on it, apart from his nomination of Timothy Baldwin as Chancellor.<sup>5</sup> He was succeeded by Herbert Croft who since 1644 had been Dean of Hereford and belonged to an old landed Herefordshire family. The fact that he knew the diocese well was especially important in the difficult period of restoration when so many threads had been lost.<sup>6</sup> A bishop's familiarity with the local scene was an asset recognised by the Government in its appointment of bishops in 1660 and in the years immediately

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1. The letter recommendatory for Nicholas Monck was received at Hereford Cathedral at a Chapter Meeting on 8th December 1660. He was elected three days later. (Chapter Acts 1600-1712. 195). He was consecrated on 13th January 1660/1. Hereford Episcopal Reg. 1635-77. 176<sup>v</sup>.  
There are varying accounts of his qualities. Ashley calls him "a timid and honest man with royalist affiliations". Ashley op. cit. 160  
Green - op. cit. 140 - calls him a "singularly unremarkable character", but Mercurius Publicus of 18th December 1661 (p792) spoke of him as "a person of candour, fidelity and excellent conversation that were he not only a brother of ... (Albemarle) yet for his own sake will be found too great a loss to all his acquaintance as well as to the poor who will feel the greatest want of him."
  2. Green - op. cit. 143.
  3. Green - op. cit. 144. D.N.B.
  4. Le Neve - op. cit. I. 472.
  5. Hereford Diocesan Register 1635-77, 179-180.
  6. D.N.B. (Croft).



following.<sup>1</sup>

Thus by January 1662 all three dioceses had bishops who knew the local situation and were well qualified to restore order in the shortest possible time. Even so, only one of them, Piers, could claim a long experience of episcopal administration.<sup>2</sup> Skinner had been Bishop since 1641, but for much of that time he had been unable to exercise episcopal authority and had to be content with carrying out clandestine ordinations and other matters in secret during the years of the Interregnum.<sup>3</sup> At Hereford, Nicholas Monck had no experience of church government at all, but his successor, Croft, was doubly qualified; he had, apart from his local background, experience of capitular administration, first as Prebendary of Worcester and Canon of Windsor and then as Dean of Hereford, where he had been ejected from his cathedral at gunpoint in 1646 by Parliamentary soldiers.<sup>4</sup>

In the process of resettlement the re-establishment of cathedral chapters was important, for until they were up to strength, or at least at 50% strength, new bishops could not be formally elected. The King's patronage in this field was abnormally large; according to Green, 100 traditional dignities and prebends usually in his gift had fallen vacant and at least another 100 capitular and archidiaconal posts had fallen to the Crown through lapse. Nearly all these posts were filled by the King in August and September.<sup>5</sup>

At Wells the five dignities, the *quinque personae*, were filled by September 12th; of the 46 prebendaries, 11 had survived the Interregnum and a further 16 had been appointed by the end of September; by the end of the year 41 of the 46 had been filled.<sup>6</sup> At Oxford, of the Dean and eight canons only one, the fifth stall, was vacant by the end of 1660: one canon had survived the Interregnum. The Dean, George Morley, and

1. Green - op. cit. 155.

2. Le Neve - op. cit. I 146-7.

3. *ibid.* II 506.

M.S. Tanner - 48, 25-25<sup>v</sup> (Skinner to Sheldon, Bishop of London, 17th August 1662).

4. D.N.B.

5. Green - op. cit. 83-4. Boshier suggests that the reason for haste was to prepare chapters for episcopal elections, but Green has showed that there was little relationship between the two; there were often long delays between the completion of the chapter appointments and the election of bishops. *ibid.* 86.

The King made 223 presentations to dignities, prebends and archdeacons between June and September. Green Re-Establishment 64.

6. Le Neve - op. cit. I. 154, 157, 161, 165, 168, 171, 174, 178, 179-211.

six canons were appointed on the same day, 27th July. The fifth stall remained vacant owing to the ejection of Henry Cornish during the year.<sup>1</sup>

The strength of the chapters at Wells and Oxford was less important than at Hereford where there was a vacant bishopric. Like Wells, Hereford as a cathedral of the old foundation had a large number of prebends, 28 as against 46 at Wells. Of the 28 at Hereford 13 had survived the Interregnum and at least a further 11 were appointed before the end of September.<sup>2</sup> The chapter was therefore up to strength well before the King's abortive offer of the see to Baxter at the end of October; when Monck's nomination was made early in the New Year, they were ready to elect.

When did the chapters meet for the first time since before the Interregnum? According to Green the Canterbury chapter met early, in mid-July to appoint a Vicar-General and other officials; Exeter met on the last day of August, Winchester on 5th September and again in full session on the 10th September to make the first episcopal election since the Restoration.<sup>3</sup> The Dean and Chapter of Christ Church, Oxford, met first on 23rd July, though the first full meeting was not until 27th July.<sup>4</sup> At Hereford the Chapter met for the first time on August 8th when George Benson was installed as Prebendary of Wellington.<sup>5</sup> The Wells Chapter Act Book for the period between 1644 and 1664 is missing.<sup>6</sup>

Before diocesan administration could be properly swung into action and, particularly where the bishops were inexperienced, archdeacons, vicars-general, registrars and their subordinates had to be appointed. Dr. Green tells us that nearly a half of Charles I's archdeacons in the country at large still survived; of them one third continued in office without immediate preferment. This provided a measure of continuity and stability.<sup>7</sup> In Somerset the Bishop still had his son whom he had appointed Archdeacon of Taunton in 1643.<sup>8</sup> But the other two archdeaconries

1. *ibid.* II 513, 518-531.

2. A further three were appointed at an unknown date in 1660. Le Neve - *op. cit.* I 478, 481, 487, 490, 496-535.

3. Green - *op. cit.* 98.

Whiteman - *op. cit.* 113. The Salisbury chapter first met on 14th September and on 1st October sat to elect a new bishop.

4. Christ Church Chapter Act Book 1648-88, 101-2.

5. Hereford Cathedral Chapter Act Book 1600-1712, 183-4.

6. *ex. info.* Canon P.M. Martin, Chancellor of Wells Cathedral.

7. Green - *op. cit.* 171. Archdeacons may have been unusually important at the Restoration because of the large number surviving from 1641. Lincoln had 3 of its 6. Green - *op. cit.* 171.

8. Le Neve - *op. cit.* I 168.



were vacant; at Wells Grindal Sheaves was installed on 12th August 1660 in succession to William Watts who had died in 1649. At Bath William Davis was succeeded by William Sellecke in June 1661.<sup>1</sup>

In the Hereford diocese too there was no stability as in other parts; George Benson at Hereford and Thomas Cooke as Archdeacon of Salop were both new.<sup>2</sup> In Oxford with its one Archdeaconry, Barton Holliday, who had held the post since 1625 survived, albeit in a frail condition, until 2nd October 1661.<sup>3</sup> His successor, Thomas Barlow, Provost of Queen's, was appointed in June 1662, but was not installed until June 1664.<sup>4</sup>

The chief legal officers were important if the administrative machinery was to get off to a good start. At Wells the surviving Bishop, Piers, appointed Sir Edmund Pierce Vicar-General as early as 2nd July 1660,<sup>5</sup> even earlier than the presumed date for Sir Richard Chaworth's appointment to the key position as Vicar-General of Canterbury in mid-July.<sup>6</sup> At Oxford the new Vicar-General, Henry Alworth, was appointed on 18th December, whilst at Hereford a month later the new Bishop issued Letters Patent to Timothy Baldwyn on 24th January 1660/1 within three weeks of his own consecration.<sup>7</sup> According to Green, most dioceses received new Vicars-General between October 1660 and January 1661, though Lichfield and Coventry had neither Bishop nor officials until December 1661.<sup>8</sup>

At the local diocesan level restoration of pre-Civil War methods of administration, which varied from diocese to diocese, went on apace whilst at the centre, "the political struggle against the Presbyterians was being played out";<sup>9</sup> in fact in many ways it looks as though the tail was wagging

1 Le Neve - op. cit. I 161, 165.

2 Le Neve - op. cit. I 481, 484.

3 Le Neve - op. cit. II.516. Wood - Life and Times I 388.

4 Le Neve - op. cit. II 516.

5 H.M.C. Wells II 430. Piers was able to do this only no doubt because he was one of the few surviving bishops. Sir Edmund Pierce was also Commissary General of the Diocese of Canterbury. Green - op. cit. 176. There is no indication of any family relationship.

6 *ibid.* 176.

7 Hereford Episcopal Register 1635-77. 179-180. Baldwin was also Principal of Hart Hall, Oxford, and Chancellor of Worcester. Green - op. cit. 168.

8 Green - op. cit. 179. Henry Alworth was Fellow of New College until he was ejected in 1648. He was Lieutenant of the University troop in 1685 at the outbreak of the Monmouth Rebellion. Foster (Aylworth).

9 Whiteman - op. cit. 130.

the dog. At the hub of diocesan administration were the Registrar and his deputies and there is evidence that some at least of the pre-Interregnum staff survived to bring back the old ways. In Oxford Gregory Ballard who was Registrar as early as 1630 was back at work in the courts in February 1660/1.<sup>1</sup> At Hereford the Lawrences seem to have been much in evidence in the 1630's; James Lawrence was Deputy-Registrar in 1630 and William in 1637. After the Restoration in June 1664 William was back again as Principal Registrar to the Bishop.<sup>2</sup> At Wells Alexander Jett who was Deputy Registrar in November 1640 was Registrar in May 1662.<sup>3</sup> In some dioceses continuity is exemplified by the continuation of records in the same volume on the next page.<sup>4</sup> Apart from the Episcopal Registers at Hereford and at Wells this does not seem to have happened in the three dioceses of this study. At Hereford register entries for 1660 and 1661 are haphazard and ill-kept, but the same book is used; at Wells the same register book is continued from 1632 to 1669, but there are no entries between 9th December 1645 and 23rd June 1660. At Oxford, though the Registrar is the same man, he started a new book.<sup>5</sup> In all three dioceses the Court Act Books after 1638 are fragmentary, which leads one to suppose that volumes current at the beginning of the Civil War were destroyed; at all events in these dioceses new Act Books were started

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1. MS Oxford Dioc. c.2. 72 (25th September 1630) and Dioc. c.3. (9th February 1660/1).
  2. Hereford County R.O. and Diocesan Registry.  
Act Book (Instance) Box 12, Book 27 (1630-30/1) 24th September 1630.  
Act Book (Office) Book 98 (1637-9) 20th January 1637.  
Episcopal Register (1635-77) 203, 15th June 1664.
  3. Somerset R.O. D/D/Ca 334. 98.
  4. Green - op. cit. 181.
  5. Hereford Register 1635-77.  
Oxford Register 1660-1702. MS Oxf. Dioc. d.106.  
Bath and Wells D/D/B Register 20. William Piers. (1632-69).



at the Restoration.<sup>1</sup> There were also new Subscription Books. At Hereford there were two new Subscription Books, one for institutions (1661-1691) and one for schoolmasters, surgeons and curacies (1661-83).<sup>2</sup> At Oxford also there were two subscription books - one for institutions and curacies (1662-1730) and one for ordinations, which must originally have started in 1662 and ended in 1671, but the first 46 pages have been lost and hence it effectively starts in 1665.<sup>3</sup> At Wells the subscription book for 1660 and early 1661 is missing. A new book was started on 24th October 1661 and ended on 27th December 1662.<sup>4</sup>

How soon did administrative activity begin? At Wells the first parish incumbent was instituted on 23rd June 1660, less than a month after the King's return;<sup>5</sup> Piers instituted a further 76 parish incumbents and 30 prebendaries and dignitaries by the end of the year.<sup>6</sup> At Oxford, Skinner, also a surviving bishop, held his first recorded institution a month later, on 28th July 1660,<sup>7</sup> and admitted a further 14 clergy to parishes in the course of the year.<sup>8</sup> At Hereford, which was without a Bishop until Monck's consecration on 6th January 1660/1, there was no institution until 15th January within nine days of the Bishop's accession to office.<sup>9</sup>

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1. (a) Hereford Act Books (Office) Box 28, Book 98. (1637-39 Hereford Archdeaconry).  
Act Books (Office) Box 39, Book 146. (1636-8 Salop. Archdeaconry).  
Court Books Fragmentary Misc. 10. (1640-1641).  
The first post-Restoration Act Book is Box 12, Book 28.
  - (b) Oxford Act Books - Oxf. Dioc. c.2 (1630-31)  
Oxf. Archd. c.11 (1632-40)  
Oxf. Archd. c.2 (1637)
  - (c) Bath and Wells (D/D/Ca 336).  
First recording in Instance is 18th December 1660 in a new book.  
There was also a new Office Book, first entry 28th January 1662.
  2. H.R.O. Subscription Books.
  3. MS Oxf. Diocesan papers e.22 and e.14.
  4. ex. info. Wells Diocesan Registry.
  5. S.R.O. Piers Register. D/D/B Register 20. 79<sup>v</sup>.
  6. *ibid.* 79<sup>v</sup> - 90<sup>v</sup>.
  7. Oxford Episcopal Register (1660-1702) Oxf. Diocesan papers d.106. 9.  
George Morley to be Rector of Haseley.
  8. *ibid.* 9-10.
  9. Bannister - Institutions 31.  
An account of the situation in the parishes follows at page 13.

To fill the many vacancies with canonically ordained men it was essential to hold ordination ceremonies at an early stage, so that both those who had refused to accept non-episcopal ordination in the Interregnum and those who sought re-ordination could present themselves. Robert Skinner was indefatigable in this respect. He claimed to have ordained four to five hundred during the Interregnum at some risk to himself.<sup>1</sup> He held his first regular ordination of the Restoration in Merton Chapel on 2nd August 1660, when he admitted eleven to the orders of both deacon and priest on the same day, though to do so was uncanonical;

- 1 Skinner to Sheldon 17th August 1662. MS. Tanner 34. 25 & 25<sup>v</sup>. These were mainly held at Launton, after examination by Ralph Bathurst, Fellow of Trinity, who, though in priest's orders, was practising as a physician. Bathurst used to travel to Launton for the ordinations on the pretext of visiting patients. Handbook to the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Launton. F. Sharpe, F.S.A.(1971) 15.
- Skinner's last recorded regular ordination was held in Trinity College Chapel on Saturday, 3rd October 1646. Oxf. Dioc. e. 13. (Oxford Subscription Book (1628-46) 546. "Dr. Lamplugh in those dismal days did not fewer than three hundred journeys betwixt Oxford and Launton for the work of confirmation and ordination . . . . Cornwall and York and all foreign counties as well as the nearer will witness for me. And for preaching I never failed one Sunday for fifteen years together." Skinner to Sheldon 17th August 1662. MS. Tanner 48. 25 & 25<sup>v</sup>. But see also The Life of Dr. Barwick 218-9. "To these two," the Bishops of Oxford and Exeter "only of all the bishops the liberty of preaching in public was indulged by those who were then in power that they might seem forsooth to do some credit to their illgotten goverment by acts that were not ill. And this was perhaps the reason that these venerable persons prosecuted the business of the Church with less application than was fit, lest they should seem to render themselves unworthy of this favour of the usurpers."



he clearly felt that the urgency of the situation demanded such action.<sup>1</sup> He followed this with a further twelve ordination ceremonies before the end of the year - on 16th, 21st and 30th August, 12th and 20th September, 10th and 20th October, 7th, 13th and 14th November and 4th, 16th and 22nd December - so that by Christmas Skinner had admitted a total of 95 men simultaneously to deacon's and priest's orders, 20 to deacon's and 15 to priest's.<sup>2</sup> This was a formidable number, though it should be remembered that at that period the Bishop of Oxford had a special role to play as the diocesan Bishop in whose geographical area the University lay; many of those being ordained would have been potential College Fellows or new graduates who still had some studies to complete.<sup>3</sup>

At Wells the first ordination recorded in the Register did not take place until 22nd December 1662, but it seems fairly certain that there were some earlier.<sup>4</sup> Likewise at Hereford ordination records are imperfect. Apart from spasmodic entries of ceremonies held by Irish and Welsh bishops there is no recorded admission to orders before 1664,

1 MS. Oxf. Dioc. papers d.106 - Ep. Register(1660-1702) 1. Among the 11 ordained on 2nd August at least one, Hugh Willis, was over 40, 3 were over 30. Three of them almost immediately obtained livings in the Hereford diocese; Richard Warter of Merton became Vicar of Brace Meole in Shropshire; John Goode, Fellow of Balliol, later held the living of Kinnersley in the Hereford diocese (1663), and subsequently of Fillingham in Lancashire. Francis Wheeler of Balliol became Rector of Willey in Shropshire in 1680 and Archdeacon of Hereford in 1684. Foster. Bannister Hereford Institutions 32, 44, 47.

Kingdom's Intelligencer 546(August 1662) Gilbert Sheldon advertised at the entrance of St. Paul's a fixed day (21st August 1662) for Anglican ordination for those persons "who might want the desired means of reception or return to their Mother the Church by the sacred imposition of hands at this critical season."

2 *ibid.* 1-4<sup>v</sup>.

3 For instance, the batch included Richard Berry who was chaplain or minor canon of Christ Church until 1670 and Rector of Peter-le-Bailey from 1661; another was John Hooke who was Fellow of Magdalen from 1655 to 1664 and Rector of Bletchington.

4 Piers Register 132. Though the earliest ordination in the Wells Register is 22nd December 1662, evidence from the subscription books show that Piers was ordaining at least as early as August 1662, when he held several ceremonies on about the 8th, 17th and 21st August, in time for the St. Bartholomew's Day deadline. (The 1660-1 subscription book seems to be missing).



after which there is another gap until 1669.<sup>1</sup>

An important aspect of episcopal administration was systematic visitation of the diocese. Though there is evidence of a visitation by the Archdeacon of Berkshire in September 1661 and of another to Salisbury Cathedral in the same month,<sup>2</sup> Dr. Green considers it unlikely that more than about half the bishops made a first visitation of their dioceses before 1662.<sup>3</sup> Among the early ones was Herbert Croft, the new Bishop of Hereford, who visited the Deanery of Wenlock in Shropshire as soon as 2nd May 1662 and the deanery of Weobley on 27th May 1662, within four months of his consecration.<sup>4</sup> The Oxford records are scanty but we know that Skinner visited the Henley Deanery on September 23rd.<sup>5</sup> It was often the practice at the time for visitation to be accompanied by confirmation of the laity; in both dioceses confirmations were carried out in 1662 and were popular.<sup>6</sup> Though Croft's visitation

1 This may reflect on the efficiency of William Lawrence, the Registrar. Hereford Episcopal Register 1635-77.

180<sup>v</sup> 29th October 1645 in Trinity College Chapel, Oxford, Edward Betham was ordained deacon by Robert Skinner, Bishop of Oxford.

181 12th February 1656 Samuel Matthews was ordained deacon and priest by Thomas Bishop of Ardfert and Aghadoe in Ireland.

181<sup>v</sup> 21st April 1661 Christopher Handley was ordained deacon and priest by William Lucy, Bishop of St. David's, in Camarthen church.

2 Whiteman - op. cit. 121.

3 Green - op. cit. 199. According to Green only a few bishops visited before St. Bartholomew's Day (August 24th). This was principally because Convocation had not agreed on a standard set of articles until March 1662. E. Cardwell Synodalia II 631-673; 646-7.

The 1662 visitation was of particular importance because it was the first opportunity for the Bishop and his staff to enquire into the titles and ordination of their incumbents and curates.

4 Hereford Visitation Books, Box 2, Book 18. (1662 & 1662/3). Hereford Visitation documents Box 18.

This was not as early as Humphrey Henchman who visited his new diocese of Salisbury as early as September 1661. Whiteman - op. cit. 114.

5 The Kingdom's Intelligencer 653, 23rd September 1662.

6 When Skinner visited Henley, "there was such a confluence of people to be confirmed that his lordship could not finish that work until candle-lighting." Again we read that the Bishop of Hereford "hath won very much the hearts of all sorts of people so that there came in yesterday to be confirmed by him at least 500 persons who received his Benediction and Confirmation to their great joy and comfort."

The Kingdom's Intelligencer 653 (23rd September 1662) and Mercurius Publicus No 5. 79.

in the Hereford diocese was earlier than elsewhere, it was still almost two years after the Restoration. In Green's view the delay may have been caused by the attempt to standardise visitation articles for all dioceses. The matter was discussed in the Upper House of Convocation on 21st June 1661. Nine months later a committee of bishops produced a draft book of articles which was accepted by the full House and passed up to the Archbishop for approval. There were still further delays, for Skinner as late as June 1662 was complaining that the standard set of Articles had not reached him. Nevertheless evidence shows that for the 1662/3 visitations there was a standard set in use. In both the Hereford and Bath and Wells dioceses the Articles were identical and in Oxford there were only minor variations.<sup>1</sup> Another cause of delay may have been the passage of the Act of Uniformity in May 1662, at the moment when so many bishops were awaiting the Articles for this might have caused some changes in their composition; in fact, however, when they were published no revision was attempted.

The reconstruction of diocesan administration at the centre was a considerable problem, though it continued relentlessly and without hesitation in spite of the political and ecclesiastical uncertainties at Whitehall and Westminster. It is probably true to say that far greater difficulties were involved in re-establishing parochial life, for there were many former incumbents who had been sequestered out of their livings in the 1640's; there were those who had taken their place under the Commonwealth and there were yet others, previously unbeneficed, who saw themselves as deserving a benefice for their loyal suffering under the Interregnum. It was clearly impossible for patrons - or, indeed, royal and diocesan authorities - to satisfy all comers.

It seems fairly certain that the small Puritan majority in the Convention Parliament hoped to confirm as many Commonwealth incumbents' titles as possible, even where sequestered ministers laid claim. The King himself took a moderate view; all who had entered livings where incumbents were dead should be allowed to continue without being pressed to any particular standard of religious practice until Convocation had

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1. Green - op. cit. 200-201. Green has looked at 21 sets of articles and finds them standard - seven, including Hereford and Bath and Wells, were virtually the same; Oxford, St. Davids and Llandaff had only minor variations.



decided on the matter; but those in livings where the former incumbents still survived would have to go, though with adequate compensation.<sup>1</sup> A Proclamation in June insisted that the status quo should remain until Parliament had had time to make its decisions.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, it is evident that in some parts of the country force was used to eject the Puritans and there was a large number of presentations to livings in the summer, when the sitting incumbents should have been protected by the June Proclamation until the Act for Confirming and Restoring Ministers had come into effect.<sup>3</sup> This Act confirmed all ministers serving cures on 25th December 1659 except in those livings where the former minister sequestered in the Interregnum was still alive, those in livings to which nominees had been presented by lawful patrons but had been refused admission by Triers without good cause, those in livings to which fresh presentation had been made by the King before 9th September and those who had petitioned for the death of Charles I or denied the validity of infant baptism. The process of restoring sequestered clergy was to be complete by 25th December 1660.<sup>4</sup>

How did this complicated process work out in the three dioceses with which we are concerned? The Crown took a large part in the presentations immediately after the Restoration because of the Canon Law principle of lapse. In the normal course of events patronage lapsed to the Bishop if a vacancy continued for longer than six months, to the Archbishop after a further six months and finally to the Crown after another period of six months.<sup>5</sup> During the Interregnum only a few patrons had exercised their rights; consequently a very large number of livings had lapsed to the Crown. During the first four months after the King's return, from June to September inclusive, the Crown made throughout the Kingdom a total of 837 presentations, of which 614 were to parish livings. There were 61 in June, rising to 239 in July and 357 in August, and then dropping to 180 in September and to a more normal monthly number of 20 a month in 1661.<sup>6</sup>

1 Green - op. cit. 7.

2 Green - op. cit. 8-9.

3 Statutes of Realm V 242-246. Green - op. cit. 24.

It received the royal assent on 13th September. Green - op. cit. 24.  
Calamy Revised 4.

4 *ibid.*

5 Gibson Codex (1713) II. 803, 808-10.

6 46th Report of Deputy Keeper of Public Records (London 1885)  
Appendix I 18-126. (not always accurate)

In the three dioceses of this study there was a total of 38 Crown presentations to parishes in the same period of four months.<sup>1</sup> At least in Hereford and Oxford the greatest number of presentations occurred in July.<sup>2</sup>

Of the 44 presented by the King to parishes in the three dioceses up to the end of the year at least 12, perhaps 14, had conformed to the Commonwealth regime either in the Church or in the University.<sup>3</sup> Indeed at least 7 who had received their livings in the Interregnum were confirmed in possession of them by royal presentation.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, men who through their loyalty to Crown and Church had been sequestered out of their livings formed a much smaller group which is perhaps surprising.<sup>5</sup> Out of a total of 44 receiving royal presentation to parishes at most only 12 had "suffered"

1. It is impossible to work out the proportion that this makes of the total of presentations in the three dioceses. In Hereford the Register is imperfect; in Oxford there were only eleven presentations altogether between July and September.  
Hereford Episcopal Register 1635-77.  
MS Oxf. Dioc. d.106. (Register 1660-1702). Piers Register 1632-69.

2. *ibid.* seriatim.

3. Appendix IIa.

4. Appendix IIa.

A private presentation made to William Morris for Sutton Montague was corroborated on 31st August 1660.  
S.R.O. D/D/B 20 Piers. 84A.

At Broughton Poggs Matthew Butt who had been instituted and inducted as Rector on 13th October 1653 conformed to the Restoration by reading the 39 Articles at evening prayer on 14th October 1660.

Broughton Poggs Parish Register d.1. 19.

5. But we do have references to the return of some former incumbents. Bodenham parish register records the return in 1660 of John Pember who had been ejected in 1646; the first entry is 13th May 1660 two weeks before the actual return of the King.

Bodenham Parish Register 1584-1674.

Watlington provides us with an example of an incumbent restored in 1661. From 1653 the parish register was kept by one chosen "by the Oliverian inhabitants of Watlington until 1661 at which time **King Charles II** was restored to his dominion and in this year Mr. Ralph Wells was restored to his vicarage after he had for some years been illegally kept out and deprived of it by the Oliverian inhabitants." Ralph Wells lived at Fiddington during the period of his ejection and "by the suffrage of the inhabitants there supplied the Church or Chapel of Piddington till he was restored."

Watlington Parish Register d I, 1653-82. 29.



and five of these had later thought better of their loyalty and conformed to the Commonwealth.<sup>1</sup> In fact in the country as a whole, if we exclude patents to 25 Anglican "sufferers" to confirm their earlier titles, only about 50 out of over 800 such men received new livings from the King. According to Green, most of these were fellows or scholars and inexperienced in parish life and belonged to a group that was not outstanding for its suffering on behalf of King or Church.<sup>2</sup> It is clear that in all this the King was prepared to compromise; unimpeachable orthodoxy was not demanded.

If we look at the other side of the picture, at those who lost their livings, we find that in the three dioceses total ejections amounted to 27 in Bath and Wells, 19 in Hereford and 14 in the Oxford diocese, making a grand total of 60, of whom 27 were replaced by the former sequestered incumbents. Three of the 60 were ejected because the Crown presented to "dead" livings when the three concerned should have been secure under the terms of the Proclamation of June and the later Act.<sup>3</sup> In Hereford Robert Taylor had to go following the presentation of ~~Sellock to Thomas Tyrer,~~ <sup>Thomas Tyrer to Sellock</sup> Anthony Stephens was replaced by George Morley at Haseley and in Bath and Wells Tobias Tidcombe was replaced by Robert Baskett. We do not know why this should have happened, though the 40 presentations of this sort throughout the country caused some embarrassment to the government.<sup>4</sup>

By 1662 the less tolerant Cavalier Parliament had been elected and had begun to enact legislation designed to entrench Anglican orthodoxy in every sphere of the nation's life more firmly than ever before. As far as the Church itself was concerned the Act of Uniformity of May 1662 was the most important part. The easier atmosphere of 1660 had gone. Under the Act there were three tests which every bishop was to expect of his clergy. First, by the last Sunday before St. Bartholomew's Day, that

1. Appendix IIb.

2. Green - op. cit. 54.

Matthews in Walker Revised xiv - xvi shows the great difficulties involved in reckoning the total of surviving "sufferers" in 1660 but he considers that it must have been over 800. The total number of benefices under sequestration between 1643 & 1660 was about 2,425 - Somerset 104, Oxfordshire 51, Herefordshire 33, Shropshire (both parts) 25

3. "Dead" livings were those where the sequestered clergy had died.

4. There is no reference to Robert Taylor in Foster; Anthony Stephens was Fellow of Magdalen, Oxford, from 1648-1652; he was delegate of the Visitors in 1647; Rector of Great Haseley until his ejection. In 1670 he became Rector of Avington in Hants. Tobias Tidcombe was Fellow of Corpus Christi, Oxford, by appointment of the Parliamentary Visitors and became Rector of Ditchat in 1656 where he remained until his ejection in 1660. Calamy Revised 478, 462, 486. Green Re-Establishment 47.



is 17th August, every minister had to read Morning and Evening Prayer from the newly revised Prayer Book and to make public assent and consent to the contents. Secondly, by St. Bartholomew's Day itself (24th August) they had to subscribe to two declarations before the Ordinary of the diocese or, if at a University, to the Vice-Chancellor. They were to declare that they were against taking up arms against the King and that they had no obligations to the Solemn League and Covenant. Thirdly, if they held a cure and had not received episcopal ordination they had to obtain it as soon as possible.<sup>1</sup>

The bishops and clergy were thrown into confusion by the Act which turned out to be something of an administrative bungle. The two Archbishops gave no lead; Juxon was too ill and Frewen of York presumably too inexperienced. In fact the first of the tests was little short of a charade, for the Prayer Books were not available until the beginning of August, too late for widespread distribution; many incumbents must have sworn to the new liturgy which they had not even seen, while others may have bided their time, knowing that it was difficult for the authorities to check up so soon.

The second test, subscriptions, was easier to carry out, though it involved the diocesan authorities and clergy in a fair amount of travel. At Hereford, an apparently complete subscription roll exists, though as it only contains the names of 197 incumbents for the 372 parishes, there was presumably at least one other.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, there is enough in the document to reveal something about the method used for taking the subscriptions. The first two clergy to enter their names were Patrick and George Panter, Rectors respectively of Holgate and Tugford in the Deanery of Wenlock. From then, 21st July, there were a few more in July and early August, but the largest numbers were recorded on 15th August (28), 16th (36), 18th (30) and 21st (39). The last subscriptions to be dated were made on 23rd August, the day before the deadline; there follow five undated ones which may have been made after St. Bartholomew's Day. The method of collecting so many subscriptions varied from diocese

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1. Green - op. cit. 290.

2. H.R.O. Subscription Box 5 - 1662 Roll. A further search has shown that its companion, if there was one, no longer exists.

to diocese. In Canterbury and Winchester the clergy were expected to attend the Bishop or Chancellor, whereas in the York diocese the Chancellor himself travelled to the clergy.<sup>1</sup> George Morley, Bishop of Winchester, collected all the subscriptions in person.<sup>2</sup> We have no means of knowing how the operation was managed in the Oxford and Bath and Wells dioceses,<sup>3</sup> but in Hereford it seems as though the clergy on most days had to travel to the Chancellor or Registrar, for the one roll includes names indiscriminately from all over the diocese.<sup>4</sup> We do not know whether Herbert Croft, the Bishop, attended to the matter himself.<sup>5</sup>

As far as the third test, ordination, was concerned, many bishops were perturbed about the procedure to be adopted for re-ordination, if it were needed. To carry out such ceremonies before 24th August posed certain problems. Until there had been a visitation and incumbents had been asked to produce their letters of ordination, it was impossible for bishops to know the credentials of their clergy; added to this, ordination ceremonies before 24th August would be extra tempora and therefore legally would require special dispensation. Most difficult of all was the thorny problem of the form the re-ordination should take. Dr. Whiteman believes that only oral instructions had been issued to bishops to avoid overmuch controversy. Some bishops, like Cosin, took a liberal view and re-ordained conditionally - "If thou hast not been ordained, I ordain thee"; others took a stronger line, one in particular

1. Green - op. cit. 299-300.
2. Green - op. cit. 302.
3. The Oxford subscription books or rolls no longer exist. The only evidence of subscriptions of Bath and Wells incumbents and curates to fulfil the test were 20 who subscribed on 10th August and a further two on 8th August. (This does not take into account those who had been ordained before St. Bartholomew's Day).  
Bath and Wells Subscription Book 1661-2.
4. On a few selected days there is a strong predominance of names from one Archdeaconry or the other. For instance, on August 15th, 18th and 19th all the subscriptions (28, 30, 7) come from the Hereford Archdeaconry, and on the 21st 36 out of the 39 come from the Archdeaconry of Salop. This could mean that the official made himself available at certain points on certain days.
5. Nevertheless Croft expressed pleasure that he had persuaded "all the considerable persons" in the diocese to subscribe.  
Croft to ..... 8th September 1662. MS Tanner 48. 41.



making Presbyterians who sought reordination renounce their former orders.<sup>1</sup>

The numbers involved in re-ordination are difficult to assess.<sup>2</sup> Two bishops particularly popular for this purpose in the period after the Restoration were Bishop Reynolds of Norwich and also Bishop Sydserff of Galloway who required no more than a general promise that the candidate would not contravene the discipline of the Church.<sup>3</sup> In the summer of 1662 several bishops went out of their way to give those seeking re-ordination a chance; Bishop Laney of Peterborough appointed a special ordination ceremony on the Sunday before St. Bartholomew's Day; Bishop Sheldon of London held a special ordination in St. Paul's on August 21st; Archbishop Frewen of York ordained 37 deacons and 44 priests on August 17th, though it is impossible to estimate how many of these were 'intruders' and how many were new clergy.<sup>4</sup>

Unfortunately there are no records in Hereford of such ceremonies taking place.<sup>5</sup> In Wells, Piers, like his fellow-bishops elsewhere, gave his clergy a chance to validate their position. There is evidence in the subscription books of a few ordinations in the summer before St. Bartholomew's Day 1662; on 8th August 1662 William Piers ordained eight men from the Exeter diocese deacons and priests.<sup>6</sup> On 16th August he ordained two deacons; on the 17th August he ordained three men deacon and a

1. I am indebted to Dr. Green's thesis 306-308 for the background material here. Calamy Account 286.  
M. Henry - The Life of the Rev. Philip Henry A.M. (London 1825) 97.
2. A.G. Matthews, however, has estimated that of those ejected in 1662 45 had been sufficiently encouraged by the liberal nature of the King's Declaration of 1660 to obtain episcopal reordination before their ejection. Calamy Revised lxi.
3. *ibid.* lxi.
4. Green - *op. cit.* 307-308.
5. The Hereford Register shows no ordinations between 1660 and 1669 apart from three ceremonies in 1664. Likewise neither the Subscription Book (1661-1683) for schoolmasters, surgeons and curacies nor the Subscription Book for visitations (1661-91) shows any sign of ordinations. The Oxford Subscription Book (1665-71), as it exists to-day, starts in December 1665, but, as it starts at f.47 in its original foliation, it is clear that the earlier parts have been lost for good. MS Oxf. Dioc. Papers e.14. Sub. Book 1662-1730 (MS. Oxf. Dioc. Papers e.22) deals with institutions and curacies.
6. Seth Ward, Bishop of Exeter, had only been consecrated on 20th July; presumably he was not ready to ordain by this date. Le Neve - *op. cit.* A further three from Exeter diocese were ordained on 21st August. (two deacons and one priest).

further 25 priests, many of whom were already incumbents. For instance, Matthew Paul, already Rector of Rympton, was ordained deacon.<sup>1</sup> In the Oxford diocese Skinner carried out a number of single ordinations at his own parish church at Launton during the summer months; six deacons and four priests were admitted on nine occasions in July and August.<sup>2</sup> In fact the test itself may well have been regarded as suspect, for it confused episcopal ordination and Anglican orthodoxy. In the immediate post-Restoration years at least 420 of the ministers ejected had received episcopal ordination before the Civil War.<sup>3</sup>

Thus the tests must have thrown a considerable strain on bishops and officials, most of whom were new to their posts and all of whom were still trying to reconstruct a decayed or damaged administrative machine. On top of the first Restoration visitations and the first sessions of the ecclesiastical courts, they now had to cope with a mass of subscriptions, the distribution of Prayer Books and reordinations. Only one Bishop, Seth Ward of Exeter, seems to have brought the non-subscribers before the Consistory court and formally deprived them of their livings. In fact, as Dr. Green has shown, it was a mass resignation rather than an ejection.<sup>4</sup> Certainly in the three dioceses of this study there is no evidence of any formal deprivation as at Salisbury.

Those ejected from livings in these three dioceses in 1662 were often neighbours or near-neighbours of others ejected at the same time.<sup>5</sup> For instance, in the Oxford diocese Banbury, Broughton and Bloxham are contiguous and only one parish separates the group from Deddington and Soulderns; Heyford Warren and Middleton Stoney are an adjacent pair nearby. All the Oxford parishes involved apart from Bampton were in the north-east of the diocese. In Bath and Wells, Angersleigh, Pitminster, Taunton St. Mary, West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine are adjoining. There are also a number

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1. See D/D/Vc 4. 45<sup>v</sup> - Paul was instituted by royal presentation to Rympton on 23rd January 1660 but not ordained deacon until August 1662. Appendix IIa.
  2. MS Oxf. Dioc. d.106 (Ep. Reg. 1660-1702) 7. Of these one John Whitehall was ordained deacon at Oxford on 28th May 1662; the rest were all ordained at Launton.
  3. A.G. Matthews - op. cit. lxi.
  4. E.A.O. Whiteman, 102. "The Episcopate of Dr. Seth Ward, Bishop of Exeter (1662-7) and of Salisbury (1667-1688/9)". Unpublished Oxford D. Phil. thesis. 102.  
Green - op. cit. 318-9.
  5. Appendix II c.

of parishes in groups of two or three - Croscombe, Doultling and Shepton Mallet; Winsford and Dulverton; Cameley and Clutton; Winsford and Cricket St. Thomas with Cricket Malherbie nearby. In the Hereford diocese Brampton Bryan and Leintwardine are adjoining with Clun and Knill not far away at the western end on the Herefordshire-Shropshire boundary. It is clear that incumbents in these parishes must have received encouragement from discussing the issues and making decisions together.

Some of those ejected at St. Bartholomew's 1662 remained on good terms with clergy of the Established Church. Herbert Croft, Bishop of Hereford, for instance, already had a high regard for Richard Hawes, Vicar of Leintwardine, until the ejection, and allowed him to continue preaching "a month after Bartholomew Day and professed it to be contrary to his inclination to have such as he removed, saying it was the law who turned him out and not he." Later still, both William Lloyd, Bishop of Llandaff, and William Nicholson, Bishop of Gloucester, allowed him to preach in their dioceses.<sup>1</sup> At Banbury in the Oxford diocese Samuel Wells remained on good terms with Richard White, his successor, and often attended the church, while White himself "(tho' secretly) would sometimes hear him in private."<sup>2</sup> Richard Alleine, the ejected Rector of Batcombe, was buried in Frome Church when he died in 1681, though he had continued to preach as a Nonconformist minister; at his funeral the Vicar of Frome, Richard Jenkins, preached a sermon.<sup>3</sup> John Toombes, Vicar of Leominster, until the ejection, was an Anabaptist of whom Bishop Croft wrote "I never knew a prouder, the very child of old Marcion", but even he continued to receive the sacrament in the Established Church.<sup>4</sup>

Most Nonconformists continued preaching, but some practised medicine. For instance, Francis Cross, former incumbent of Charlinch, went to Leyden, where he obtained a doctorate in Medicine, and returned to practise in Bristol.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, James Stephenson of Martock, who earlier in life had received medical training at Leyden, made use of it

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1. A.G. Matthews - Calamy Revised (Oxford 1934) 253.
  2. *ibid.* 520.
  3. *ibid.* 6-7.
  4. *ibid.* 487-8.
  5. *ibid.* 148.



after being ejected from Martock.<sup>1</sup>

Most ejected ministers had no doubts about the rightness of their stand against the tests. For instance, Thomas Forward of Pitminster constantly refused offers from the patron of the living for him to return to his incumbency.<sup>2</sup> Some were more hesitant; John Rusbach, Rector of Coreley in Shropshire, recovered his living and his son, Samuel, who received Anglican Orders succeeded him in 1668.<sup>3</sup> John Mumfrey, the ejected Vicar of Frome in Somerset, was more dramatic. At an earlier stage he had received reordination from the Bishop, William Piers, only to regret it. He apparently drew up a declaration renouncing episcopal orders and read it out in the Registrar's presence; he then took his deacon's and priest's orders and tore them up, the former in front of the Registrar; half his priest's orders he threw on the fire and the other half he sent to the Bishop with a covering letter.<sup>4</sup>

There were 28 St. Bartholomew ejections from incumbencies in the Bath and Wells diocese, eight in Hereford and nine in Oxford. There was some danger in leaving the parishes vacant for too long, as it would be only too easy for the Puritan element to make use of the opportunity, so it is all the more surprising that the process of replacement took so long. It is hard to discover the exact length of the vacancies because of the difficulty in finding exactly when the nonconformist departed or when his successor actually took up residence, though a change in the handwriting of the parish register could be of help in doing so.<sup>5</sup> In some dioceses a bishop like Henchman at Salisbury would put in temporary preachers or readers,<sup>6</sup> but there is no evidence that

1. Calamy Revised 463. According to Matthews a national total of 59 practised medicine, two of whom, Edward Hulse and Richard Morton, reached the front rank of the profession.

ibid. lvi.

2. ibid. 208.

3. ibid. 420-1.

4. ibid. 284-5.

5. See Appendix IIc.

Deddington parish register (Deddington c.I 1634-78) records on page 63 "Here I begin to write down the baptising of children" - between the dates 3rd December 1660 and 11th January 1661. On page 269 the incumbent noted the return of Charles II without bloodshed - "his father was put to death on the 30th January 1648 by the tyrannical powers of Oliver Cromwell...."

6. Green - op. cit. 323.

this took place to any great extent in any of the three dioceses of this study. Certainly the process of replacement was remarkably slow in these areas. Dr. Green found that by the following Christmas 5/8 of the Bartholomew's livings in London had been filled, 2/3 in Winchester and 3/4 in Canterbury and he regarded this as slow progress.<sup>1</sup> The record in Bath and Wells, Oxford and Hereford was very much worse; by Christmas 1662 only between 1/3 and 1/2 had been filled in the first two of these dioceses and in Hereford none at all.<sup>2</sup> On St. Bartholomew's Day 1663, exactly one year after the ejections, there were still 2 out of the 8 Hereford vacancies empty, one in Oxford and 2 in Bath and Wells dioceses.<sup>3</sup> In Hereford the length of vacancy varied from 5 months in the case of Knill, to 14 months in the case of Aylton; the average was just over 9 months per parish.<sup>4</sup> In the Oxford diocese the quickest replacement was at Middleton Stoney (1½ months), the longest at Deddington (21 months); the average length of vacancy was just over 7½ months per parish. The Bath and Wells record was distinctly better; one living, Whitestaunton, was actually filled on 23rd July, a month before the deadline for the tests; two were filled within a week (Dulverton, West Monkton) and in spite of the larger number of vacancies, only two were for longer than a year (Martock 15½ months and Croscombe 27 months). The average was just over 4½ months per parish.<sup>5</sup> According to Dr. Green the averages for Winchester, Canterbury and London were 3 months, just over 3 months and over 4 months respectively.<sup>6</sup> There were three possible reasons for the delay, in Green's view;<sup>7</sup> the inadequate time for the performance of the tests did not give the bishops time to recognise the extent of nonconformity in their dioceses; there was a shortage of episcopally-ordained clergy; thirdly, and perhaps most important, was the complex system of patronage. The greatest patrons, the Crown, the great peers, and Oxford and

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1. Green - op. cit. 333-4. Of 80 vacancies in Exeter diocese only 24 were filled by the end of 1662 and only 60 by March 1663. Whiteman - op. cit. 124.
  2. Appendix II c. 12 of 28 in Bath and Wells, 4 of 9 in Oxford.
  3. Appendix II c.
  4. John Rusbatch of Coreley regained his own living and the vacancy is not counted in this computation.
  5. Appendix II c.
  6. Green - op. cit. 333.
  7. *ibid.* 334-9.

Cambridge Colleges had advowsons all over the country and it naturally took them time to discover how many of their incumbents had conformed. Some may have been reluctant to see their old incumbents go and indeed a Puritan like Harley<sup>1</sup> may have had hopes raised by a rumour of royal indulgence in the autumn and were prepared to procrastinate rather than commit themselves to new, less congenial men in their places. Sometimes delay gave the ejected minister time to reconsider matters. At Coreley, for instance, as we have already seen, the ejected minister, John Rusbatch, appears to have changed his mind; not only did he recover his living, but his son was granted succession to it in 1668.

Green's discovery that the Dean and Chapter of Windsor were notoriously slow is borne out by its delay of as much as 21 months in filling the vacancy at Deddington, 12 months longer than Bloxham which was in the patronage of Eton College. In the Hereford diocese the peers took the longest time. Harley delayed 14 months at Aylton and 11 months at Brampton Bryan; Lord Herbert delayed 13 months at Monmouth. Lord Saye and Sele took 10 months to fill Broughton (Oxford). In the Bath and Wells diocese, apart from one very long vacancy (27 months at Croscombe), the average time taken to fill the 16 parishes under noble or gentry patronage was 3.7 months. By contrast royal appointments were speedy. The Crown filled Porlock (Bath and Wells) in 2 months, Ubley <sup>(Bath and Wells)</sup> ~~(Oxford)~~ in 3½ months, Bampton (Oxford) in 4 months and Leominster (Hereford) in 5½ months. Some bishops also seem to have acted quickly. The Bishop of Oxford filled Banbury in 3 months; the Bishop of Lincoln filled Middleton Stoney (Oxford) in 1½ months; on the other hand the Bishop of Bath and Wells took 15½ months to fill Martock. There were no vacancies under episcopal patronage in the Hereford diocese. The Dean and Chapter of Wells were particularly rapid in filling Dulverton in 7 days and Winsham in one month. Sir Robert Brett had actually filled Whitestaunton on 23rd July 1662 a full month before St. Bartholomew's Day.

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1 Harley like several other wealthy men, including the King himself, distributed charitable relief to the ejected.  
Calamy Revised lvi.



No doubt Parliament in framing the Act of Uniformity expected the replacements to be learned and to have a good record of orthodoxy, but those instituted in these three dioceses were less distinguished for these qualities than Parliament might have hoped. Though there was a marginal increase in the number of higher graduates, 8.8% of the replacements compared with 6.6% of those ejected, there was a notable decrease in the number of graduates as a whole, 42.2% compared with 62.2%. The replacements consisted of one D.D. in Hereford, one B.D. in Oxford and one D.Med. and one B.D. in Bath and Wells,<sup>1</sup> but only 19 others are known to have been graduates. On the other hand among those ejected were three with higher degrees and 28 others who were graduates. There is little doubt that the standard of learning among incumbents had declined as a result of the Act.<sup>2</sup>

In contrast with the Canterbury and Winchester dioceses where 45% and 50% respectively of the replacements had held parish livings under the Commonwealth or Protectorate, only one man seems to have done so in the Oxford diocese and none in the other two.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand between 12 and 15 had conformed to the Interregnum regime enough to have attended the purged universities of the period<sup>4</sup> - and three of them had held college fellowships<sup>5</sup> which would have involved a more stringent degree of conformity.<sup>6</sup> By comparison it seems clear that, whereas in Winchester and Canterbury there were only a few replacements who had been sequestered out of their livings for loyalty to the Crown, similarly in the three dioceses concerned in this study hardly any 'sufferers' were instituted at this stage. There were two in the

1. Israel Tonge (D.D), Joseph Maynard (B.D), John Atwood (B.D), Hammett Ward (D. Med.).
2. Appendix II d.
3. Green - op. cit. 362.  
Richard White who became incumbent of Broughton had been Rector of Wigginton, Oxford, in 1652.
4. Thomas Broad, Israel Tonge, Joseph Jackson, Nicholas Page (?), Samuel Northcote, John Robinson, William Ford, Henry Gregory, Robert Gale, John Atwood, Joseph Glanvill, Thomas Blanchflower, William Parsons.
5. Israel Tonge (Durham College), John Atwood (Immanuel, Cambridge), William Parsons (Corpus Christi, Oxford).
6. These are necessarily conservative figures because of the difficulty of tracing and identifying non-graduates and in some cases graduates. Appendix II d.

Bath and Wells diocese, none in Oxford and possibly one in Hereford.<sup>1</sup>

By the middle or end of 1663, after a period of piecemeal reconstruction, life in the three dioceses was more or less back to normal for the first time in twenty years.<sup>2</sup> Each had a bishop who knew his diocese, even if, as in the case of Skinner and Croft, their experience of diocesan administration was slight. Bishops were once again involved in their customary round of ordination, visitation and confirmation. Though the archdeacons were in most cases new to their tasks unlike in many other dioceses, they had begun their work; each diocese had a vicar-general and a diocesan registry in full working order; the courts were once again active, as we shall see more fully in a later chapter. The original restaffing of the parishes in 1660 and 1661 was to some extent disrupted by the legislation of 1662, but by the end of 1663 ejected incumbents had largely been replaced. The stage was set for a century of change, change which, though less violent than that of the Interregnum, was to be important in the history of the Church of England.

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1. Green - op. cit. 357. Canterbury 2 and Winchester 4. William Parsons who had lost the living of Forscote but was also elected Fellow of Corpus Christi, Oxford, in 1649. Emmanuel Sharpe had been removed from the Rectory of Batheaston.
  2. Though the High Commission remained abolished. 13 Car. II St. I c.12.



CHAPTER II.

OFFICERS OF THE DIOCESE

In his study of the Exeter diocese M.G. Smith has shown that bishops in this period were far from being masters of their own diocesan administration. They had no power to remove archdeacons or chancellors and the legal and judicial hierarchy could sometimes act independently of the wishes of the bishop. For instance, a bishop like Frampton of Gloucester complained that it was only with the greatest effort he could get a cause suspended.<sup>1</sup> On several occasions Herbert Croft, the Restoration Bishop of Hereford, found it necessary to write to Griffith Reynolds, his deputy-register, to remonstrate about the distress caused by legal officers in their pursuit of suspected offenders.<sup>2</sup> In 1667 one M.P., Sir William Hickman, argued that bishops had little power in the Church save ordination. The Ecclesiastical Courts were complained of by the bishops, he said, "as mysterious and troublesome to the people", while another M.P., Sir John Earnly, found them "obnoxious".<sup>3</sup> Even a dynamic prelate like Gilbert Burnet at Salisbury found it impossible to reform his own consistory court.<sup>4</sup> Another leading bishop, Nathaniel Crewe of Durham, confessed to Sancroft that, when choosing a new chancellor, he chiefly aimed at being his own Chancellor "as much as I can by having a person who will be directed and governed by me." He resented how bishops generally in their patents had granted away too much authority

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1. M.G. Smith "A Study of the Administration of the Diocese of Exeter during the Episcopate of Jonathan Trelawney 1689-1707". 4-5 etc. (Unpublished Oxford B.D. thesis 1965).  
T. Simpson Evans (ed) Life of Robert Frampton Bishop of Gloucester (London 1876) 142-3.
  2. e.g. Bishop of Hereford to Reynolds, 24th August 1680.  
H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.
  3. Grey - Debates in the House of Commons 1667-1694 (London 1763) I 110-111.
  4. Supplement to Burnet's History ed. H.C. Foxcroft (Oxford 1902) 503.

to Chancellors.<sup>1</sup> William Lloyd at St. Asaph tried to maintain a grip on the administration by appointing three commissaries to act with the Chancellor and by keeping the power of excommunication in his own hands.<sup>2</sup> The life tenure of chancellors which had been the norm since the sixteenth century made for independence, but rendered the bishop himself powerless except when the chancellorship fell vacant either by death or, more rarely, by resignation; this was a situation acknowledged by William Wake.<sup>3</sup>

The semi-autonomy of the diocesan administrative machine makes it all the more important to investigate closely the personnel working under the bishops. The immediate subordinates of the Bishop were the archdeacons. According to Gibson, the office was first instituted at the end of the third century, when their main duty seems to have been primarily liturgical and included attendance on the bishop at the altar and at ordinations, direction of the deacons at divine service and management of church revenues.<sup>4</sup> Though they had some visitatorial power as early as the seventh century, it was not until the Norman Conquest that archdeacons were given territorial jurisdiction and a century or so later that the archdeacon's court was recognised as a regular part of the judicial hierarchy of the Church.<sup>5</sup> A Hanoverian authority<sup>6</sup> wrote that it was the archdeacon's duty to take care of the clergy so far as it may regard their "conversation and honour". He had the power not only of correction, but of visitation too and, as we shall see, there is ample evidence from both the Oxford and the Hereford

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1. C.E. Whiting Nathaniel Lord Crewe, Bishop of Durham 1670-1721 (London 1940) 145.

2. A.T. Hart William Lloyd 53.

3. N. Sykes William Wake I 201.

4. J. Ayliffe Parergon Juris Canonici Anglicani 1726. 96-7.

Care needs to be taken, for Ayliffe's experience was connected with at most two or three dioceses, whereas practice in the different dioceses varied widely mainly because there had been no centralised teaching of Canon Law since the reign of Henry VIII. See chapter III of this thesis for more on this and on the various lawyer's guides. E. Gibson Codex Juris Ecclesiastici Anglicani 1713. 1008-9.

In the Middle Ages archdeacons were usually in deacon's orders "in order that sacerdotal hands might not be soiled with the questionable subject matter that was brought before them."

Report of the Commissioners appointed to enquire into the Constitution and Working of the Ecclesiastical Courts. (1883) 26.

5. Ecclesiastical Courts Commission (1883) Vol. I Historical Appendix by Canon Stubbs. 25-6.

6. Ayliffe op. cit. 96.



dioceses to show that these duties and rights were still exercised in the eighteenth century.<sup>1</sup> Thus the archdeacon was very much the representative of the bishop - Pope Clement V in the early fourteenth century had called him Oculus Episcopi - though in his own right he had a station and a dignity. The bishop could neither remove him at his "beck and pleasure" nor exercise the office himself.<sup>2</sup>

During our period the Hereford diocese was divided into two archdeaconries, Hereford and Salop,<sup>3</sup> while in the Oxford diocese there was only one archdeaconry, co-terminous with the diocese. Included in the Archdeaconry of Hereford, however, was the anomalous Forest Deanery which had been part of the diocese of Hereford before the creation of the Gloucester bishopric; this deanery remained under the archdeacon of Hereford, though since Henry VIII it had been part of the Gloucester diocese. The rights of the Archdeacon of Hereford in this area were taken seriously; there still exist two Act Books of the archidiaconal court for the period 1730 to 1767 which show regular sessions of the archdeacon's court at Mitcheldean Church for the Forest Deanery.<sup>4</sup>

Clergy who became archdeacons at this time usually held higher degrees, but, predictably perhaps, this was less likely in the border diocese of Hereford than in Oxford, where a substantial number of the parish livings were held by College Fellows. Two of the six Hereford Archdeacons and six of the nine Shropshire Archdeacons in the period held higher degrees on their appointment or gained them soon afterwards.<sup>5</sup> Two of this total of fifteen were dons; Adam Ottley (Salop 1687-1713) was a Fellow of Trinity Hall and Richard Crosé (Salop 1727-1732) a Fellow

1. See Chapter III of this thesis.
2. Ayliffe op. cit. 96.  
See also Gibson "ut per eum, tamquam per oculi organum, quid recte, quid secus, per universam diocesis geratur, episcopus videat."  
Gibson op. cit. 1010.
3. There were two archdeaconries of Salop, one covering southern Shropshire in the Hereford diocese, the other to the North was in the Lichfield and Coventry diocese.
4. Hereford Diocesan MSS Box 30. Act Book 111 (1729-1767), seriatim.
5. Brian Turner appointed Archdeacon of Hereford in 1729 but who died before installation is not included. Nor is Hon. John Harley who was appointed Archdeacon of Salop in 1760.

of New College.<sup>1</sup> Three were lawyers; Crosse and Egerton Leigh (Salop 1741-1760) held Cambridge LL.D. degrees and Stephen Phillips (Salop 1669-1684) had been a Student of Lincoln's Inn.<sup>2</sup> Samuel Croxall (Salop 1732-38), however, was a man of letters and a satirist. He was a D.D. of St. John's, Cambridge, and started his literary career with a satire, the first of many, against the Earl of Oxford's Administration. In 1722 he published his translation of Aesop's Fables which with its quaint woodcuts became the basis of the future popularity of Aesop in this country. He bore the burden of Bishop Egerton's work in his declining years. His interest in music is displayed in his sermon on "The Antiquity, Dignity and Advantages of Music" at the meeting of the three choirs at Hereford in 1754, the last year of his life.<sup>3</sup>

In the Oxford diocese eight of the nine archdeacons held degrees above M.A. Five held high rank in the University. Thomas Barlow (Archdeacon 1664-1675), previously Bodley's Librarian, was Provost of Queen's and Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity. Timothy Halton (1675-1704), also a Provost of Queen's, held the Chair of Moral Philosophy and for a time was Vice-Chancellor; he seems to have been dedicated to the academic life, for in 1661 he claimed to have refused offers of chaplaincies to the Bishop of St. David's and to the Queen of Bohemia, both of which would doubtless have led to ecclesiastical preferment. He preferred to stay in Oxford.<sup>4</sup> William Baker (1714-1723) was Warden of Wadham, while Humphrey Hody (1704-1707) and George Rye (1724-1741) held the Regius Professorships of Greek and Divinity respectively. Apart from William Baker and George Rye, these don-archdeacons had had no experience of parochial life within the diocese, though it is true that Humphrey Hody had been beneficed in London and Buckinghamshire. Of the four remaining non-University archdeacons

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1. Crosse's Fellowship and his incumbency at Broughton, Oxon. may have resulted in considerable absence from his archdeaconry. Certainly he was living at Broughton with his 16 year-old daughter in 1732. Keble Coll. Ox. MSS - Diary of Thomas Wilson (23rd May 1732) 27.
  2. Appendix IIIa.  
Hon. John Harley (Salop 1760-69) is not included.
  3. D.N.B.  
Croxall was a friend of Egerton's and owed his many preferments to him. See also Venn.
  4. D.N.B.



Barton Holliday (1625-1661), who survived the Restoration by a year and a half, albeit in a frail state of health,<sup>1</sup> had had long experience as Vicar of Brize Norton; and Timothy Goodwin (1707-1714) in his last four years as archdeacon was Rector of Heythrop, a living in the gift of the Duke of Shrewsbury, his patron. Robert Cooke (1724) had been parish priest in Gloucestershire and a Canon of Gloucester; John Potter (1741-1767), the son of the Archbishop and the last Archdeacon of the period, had been Rector of Elme in the diocese of Ely.<sup>2</sup>

Archdeacons were usually appointed personally by their bishops, though sometimes the Archbishop would make the choice either through lapse or as the Archbishop's option, the first appointment of a bishop's term of office in a new diocese. Sometimes, by lapse too, the Crown stepped in and then a government minister might be an influential agent in the choice. According to Wood, Timothy Halton obtained his archdeaconry and his Provostship of Queen's through the influence of the Secretary of State, Sir Joseph Williamson, a Queen's man himself.<sup>3</sup> When Philip Bisse, Bishop of Hereford, died in 1721, his brother, Thomas, asked Archbishop Wake to use his option in securing the succession of William Wotton to the Archdeaconry of Hereford which he expected to be vacant shortly afterwards; he seemed certain that Thomas Fox, then 73 or 74, "who grows more infirm every day" would die shortly afterwards. In fact Fox did not die until 1728. In any case, much to Wotton's chagrin, Bisse soon grew cool about the matter and little more was heard of it.<sup>4</sup> When Baker was preferred to the bishopric of Bangor in 1723, Potter wanted George Rye to succeed him, because he had already "for near nine years

1. Wood reports that Holliday was involved in a series of mishaps at an ordination held by Skinner in March 1661. The canopy of Christ Church altar fell on the vessels, spilt the wine and "tumbled the bread about." Then at the communion Holliday took the "bole of wine in his hand to administer it, fell down and hurt his face." Thomas Lamplugh of Queen's had to administer the wine in his place.  
Wood Life and Times I 388 31st March 1661.  
See also page 159 of this thesis.  
Holliday died 2nd October 1661 between 7 and 8 in the morning. *ibid.* 417.
2. Appendix IIIa.
3. There was a delay between 1661 and 1664 because of his dispute with Thomas Lamplugh. Wood Life and Times II (1664-81) 438.9th February 1679.
4. Thomas Bisse to Archbishop Wake of Canterbury 4th October 1721, 18th October 1721, 21st October 1721.  
Wake MSS XXII 64-8.

done a great part of the archdeacon's duty."<sup>1</sup> But it was in the gift of the Crown and in spite of pleas by both Potter and Archbishop Wake, the Crown's choice after a delay fell on Robert Cooke, a canon of Gloucester.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless Cooke died shortly afterwards and to Rye's great joy Potter was able to appoint him.<sup>3</sup> John Potter, the last of the Oxford archdeacons in the period, owed his preferment to the presentation of his father, the Archbishop, who exercised "a certain advowson and right of patronage granted by Thomas, Lord Bishop of Oxford."<sup>4</sup>

In the normal course archdeacons who were young enough at their appointment could expect further promotion. George Benson, the Restoration Archdeacon of Hereford, became Dean of Hereford in 1672;<sup>5</sup> in the Shropshire archdeaconry Adam Ottley, after being canvassed to succeed Humphreys as Bishop of Hereford in 1712,<sup>6</sup> became Bishop of St. David's in the following year, while another, Robert Breton, was promoted to the senior Archdeaconry of Hereford in 1741. Of the seven men who held the Archdeaconry of Hereford in our period one, as we have seen, became a Dean; of those who held the Archdeaconry of Salop one became a bishop, one was promoted to the senior archdeaconry of Hereford, two became residentiary canons. The Archdeacons of Oxford, as one might expect, fared rather better. Of the nine men who filled the post in our period three became bishops. Timothy Goodwin went to Ireland in October 1713 with his patron, the Duke of Shrewsbury, the new Lord-Lieutenant; shortly afterwards Goodwin was preferred Bishop of Kilmore and Ardagh and later Archbishop of Cashel;<sup>7</sup> Thomas Barlow (1662-75)

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1. Potter to Wake 2nd December 1723. Wake MSS XXII 259, 259<sup>b</sup>.
  2. The delay meant that several clergy who had been instituted could not be inducted, which caused Secker to write to Potter for advice. *ibid.* 259.
  3. "My Lord Bishop of Oxford has been so kind to make me his Archdeacon." Rye to Wake 28th August 1724. Wake MSS XXII 328.
  4. Oxford Episcopal Register (1737-1802). Bodleian MS Oxf. Dioc. Papers b.21. 14.
  5. Appendix IIIa. In November 1694 Wood reported that William Johnson was to be Dean of Hereford in succession to John Tyler who was to be Dean of Lincoln. Wood was wrong; Samuel Fuller became Dean of Lincoln and Tyler remained at Hereford until 1724, after 1706 in commendam with the see of Llandaff. Johnson remained Archdeacon of Hereford until his death on 2nd February 1697-8.  
Wood - *op. cit.* III (1682-95) 472 and note.
  6. Ottley succeeded Bisse at St. Davids. It was the latter who succeeded to Hereford.
  7. D.N.B. Appendix IIIa.



was consecrated Bishop of Lincoln in 1675, while William Baker became Bishop of Bangor in 1724 and was later translated to Norwich.<sup>1</sup>

It is clear that archdeacons could fulfil many roles within the diocese. They had their own courts and some of them took this aspect of their work seriously. There is evidence of George Benson (Hereford 1660-84) and William Johnson (1690-98) taking an active interest in visitation and the court.<sup>2</sup> It is clear that other archdeacons such as Timothy Halton in Oxford and Comyn and Walker, Breton and Harley in Hereford sat personally in court from time to time.<sup>3</sup> Earlier in the period Johnson, as bishop's chaplain based at Whitborne and as archdeacon, was often a channel for correspondence between the bishop and his clergy;<sup>4</sup> Holliday was Skinner's assistant at an ordination in 1661.<sup>5</sup> We find both Johnson in Hereford and Rye in Oxford involved in sifting the academic qualifications of ordinands for the bishop.<sup>6</sup> Less officially we find Ottley acting as intermediary between Croft and Archbishop Sancroft in August 1688 when the bishop had earned the displeasure of other bishops for trying to keep James II's favour.<sup>7</sup> Again as we have already seen, Croxall is said to have borne much of the burden of the diocese of Hereford in Egerton's later years.<sup>8</sup> Also, though some archdeacons lived outside

1. Appendix IIIa.
2. H.R.O. Box 352. Visitations of Deaneries of Weobley (1688), Ross (1681), Weston (1681).  
H.R.O. Box 353. Visitation of Deaneries of Frome (1694), Ross (1694).
3. H.R.O. Box 30. Act Books 111, 155, 156, 157, 158 seriatim.
4. Adney to Johnson 1st March 1671/2. H.R.O. Visitation Box 15.  
Elton to Johnson 21st February 1674/5. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.
5. Wood Life and Times I 388 (31st March 1661).
6. Adney to Johnson 1st March 1671/2. H.R.O. Visitation Box 15.  
Keble College MSS, Diary of Thomas Wilson 1731-6, 16 (18th December 1732).
7. Croft to Sancroft 22nd August 1688. MS Tanner 28. 167.
8. D.N.B.  
Henry Egerton was Bishop of Hereford from 1724 to 1746.

the diocese in benefices elsewhere<sup>1</sup> it is clear that they fulfilled a useful purpose as bishop's assistants, ecclesiastically and administratively.

For centuries archdeaconries had been sub-divided into rural deaneries, at the head of which were the rural deans. In several dioceses this office had been in abeyance during the Interregnum,<sup>2</sup> but was re-established after 1660 at varying speeds. In Oxford, for instance, they were apparently not appointed again until the episcopate of John Fell (1676-86).<sup>3</sup> In the Hereford diocese rural deans were back in action within five years of the King's return. At least three of the six deaneries in the southern archdeaconry of Hereford had deans by 1665;<sup>4</sup> in fact James Clarke, Vicar of Bromyard, is mentioned as Rural Dean of Frome Deanery as early as December 1664.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand Archenfield, Ross and Weston Deaneries in the southern archdeaconry and all six deaneries in the northern archdeaconry of Salop were without deans according to the official records of 1665.<sup>6</sup> By 1671 the diocese was fully staffed<sup>7</sup> and from this time for the rest of the period appointments occur regularly in the episcopal registers, though no names are given in 1743 and 1759.<sup>8</sup> Except apparently in the Norwich diocese the office was purely temporary, unlike incumbencies and other positions in the hierarchy.<sup>9</sup> The rural dean's duty was to 'inspect' the lives and manners of the people.

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1. Stephen Phillips, Archdeacon of Salop, died at his living at Bampton, Oxfordshire in August 1684. Wood Life and Times III 107 (20th August 1684). Richard Crosse, Archdeacon of Salop, lived at Broughton, Oxfordshire. See page 30 of this thesis.
  2. Gibson Codex 1010-1011. In 1562 regulations ordered that in every deanery in the country there was to be constituted by the bishop "one grave and discreet priest to be Archipresbyter or Decanus ruralis."
  3. Secker Works IV 144-5. (His Charge of 1753). There is not much documentary evidence of their activities in the Oxford diocese.
  4. Leominster - Henry Phillips)  
Frome - James Clarke ) H.R.O. 1665 Book 21.  
Weobley - William Fabian )
  5. H.R.O. Act Book 99 (1663-5) 264<sup>v</sup>.
  6. H.R.O. Book 21 (1665).
  7. H.R.O. Visitation Book 22 (1671).
  8. H.R.O. Visitation Books 35 and 36.
  9. Gibson op. cit. 1011. In fact in the Exeter diocese in the early eighteenth century they were elected annually by the clergy. This was unique. They also carried out their own visitations. M.G. Smith op. cit. 217. Warne op. cit. 13.



In the Hereford diocese at least their duties seem to have included the induction of incumbents, traditionally the role of the archdeacon. In October 1670 Jonathan Edwards, Vicar of Kington, complained of his difficulty in getting the induction fee that was his due as a rural dean; "some will not pay unless I come in person although I may be hindered by never so urgent business and yet give a deputation to a neighbour minister to induct, and others will not pay the usual customary fee of one noble claiming that only ten groats is payable."<sup>1</sup> Deans were also responsible for the collection of money for charity briefs; Phineas Jackson, for example, the rural dean of Frome, complained in 1672 that eight of his incumbents had failed in answer to a charity brief to pay contributions for the redemption money for captives.<sup>2</sup>

The bishop's chief legal officer, and in many ways his deputy, was the Chancellor under whom the whole judicial process was conducted. He was the judge in the Bishop's court in all sorts of ecclesiastical causes. Under his authority fell the proving of wills and the granting of administrations; he also granted licences for marriages, for practising "Physic and Surgery" and for alterations to church fabric; he admitted parish clerks and incumbents, sequestered profits of vacant livings and could institute to these benefices with the bishop's certificate.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Edwards to Reynolds 7th October 1678. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13. There is a mandate dated 14th August 1662 for Samuel Barkley Rural Dean of Clun to induct John Reynolds into the vicarage of Lidbury North. H.R.O. Visitation Box 15.  
A noble was worth 6s 8d. A groat was worth 4d.
  2. Jackson to Staverton 5th February 1671/2. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.
  3. Hereford Episcopal Register 1723-56. 44<sup>v</sup> - 45.  
During a vacancy of the see the Vicar-General might be made commissary for the Archbishop or, if the Archbishopric was also vacant, of the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury. On 4th May 1691 Timothy Baldwin remonstrated with George Oxendon of Doctor's Commons and Dean of Arches that, though he styled Baldwin as commissary during the vacancy, this was incorrect, for the Bishopric "is not vacant as your letter supposeth but full of the person of the Right Reverend Father in God Herbert ..."  
Hereford Episcopal Register 1682/3 - 1709. 110.  
Baldwin to Oxenden 4th May 1691. Croft died 18th May 1691.  
Eccles. Courts Commission (1883) 26. By mid-12th century there was concern over the extension of archidiaconal powers; the creation of the official as a 'judge ordinary' to execute all the jurisdiction inherent in the person of the bishop or archbishop was used "to limit the authority of the archdeacons' courts and to supersede their action".  
Ecclesiastical Courts Commission (1883) 26.

The title of Chancellor itself is not usually found in the Letters Patent of the period. In Gibson's view the use of the term grew up in imitation of the similar title in the state, for he was the keeper of the bishop's seals.<sup>1</sup> The Chancellor had two other titles, Vicar-General-in-Spirituals and Official-Principal, by which he was known in legal documents.<sup>2</sup> According to contemporary legal authorities there was some significant difference in meaning between the two titles. Though Officials had ecclesiastical jurisdiction they did not have the power of inquisition, correction or punishment of offenders nor could they appoint clergy to nor deprive them of livings.<sup>3</sup> Vicars-General on the other hand had all the bishop's judicial authority, except collation, to benefices deputed to them. Indeed the Vicar-General's position was such that he had an ordinary<sup>4</sup> power equivalent to the bishop himself, so that appeals from the vicar-general lay not to the bishop, as they did from the arch-deacon's court, but straight to the superior Court of Arches. Nor could bishops without express reservation in the Patent resume the power to execute office should they see fit to do so. It was Ayliffe's view that by assigning to the Official Principal jurisdiction over contentious matters the bishop removed his own right to exercise it. But as far as so-called voluntary jurisdiction was concerned, the bishop's right of visitation, institution and granting of licences remained with him notwithstanding his general grant to the Vicar-General.<sup>5</sup>

In this period the Vicar-General was appointed for life, and under Canon XI of 1640 the office could not be assigned or pass to a man's heirs.<sup>6</sup> In an earlier century the vicar-general's appointment ended with the death of the grantor, but according to the Letters Patent of this period the holder was to continue in office under successive episcopates.

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1. Gibson Codex II 1027n.

2. Gibson op. cit. 1027n.  
Ayliffe op. cit. 160.

3. Ayliffe op. cit. 160-1.  
Gibson 1027n.

4. In canon law "ordinary jurisdiction" is that permanently and irremovably annexed to the office of an ecclesiastic; it may extend over rights of teaching, governing, adjudicating and administering the sacraments.

F.L. Cross (ed.) The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church (1958) 990.

5. Gibson op. cit. 1028n.

6. Gibson op. cit. 1028n.



There were other stipulations. Under Canon 127 of 1603 the Chancellor had to be at least 26 years of age and be learned in Civil and Ecclesiastical Law and at least an M.A. or B.C.L.<sup>1</sup> Since Henry VIII's reign it had been possible for laymen to hold the office.<sup>2</sup> In the Oxford diocese in this period there were five Chancellors of whom four held doctorates in Law and one, Daniel Burton, held a doctorate in Divinity.<sup>3</sup> Most of them had a close connection with academic life. The first, Henry Allworth (1660-1699) was a staunch Royalist who had not only been ejected from a New College Fellowship in 1648, but also as late as 1685 led the University troop at the time of the Monmouth Rebellion.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, he felt able to take the oath to William and Mary in July 1689.<sup>5</sup> His successor, Thomas Ayloffe (1699-1714) was a Cambridge man, a Fellow of Trinity Hall and Regius Professor of Civil Law there in 1702. Earlier in his career he had worked as a surrogate in the Exeter diocese.<sup>6</sup> We do not know why he gave up the office, but in 1714 William Talbot, Bishop of Oxford, appointed his son, Charles, to the post.<sup>7</sup> Though originally destined for the Church, he was 28 on appointment which might appear nepotistic, but the choice was a good one and amply justified by Charles' talents. He became more distinguished in the legal and political world than in either the

1. Gibson op. cit. 1027-8.

2. Aylyffe op. cit. 162.

3. For details see Appendix IIIb.

4. Foster op. cit. I 49.

Wood Life and Times III 146 (28th June 1685). Wood reported that after dinner on 28th June 1685 "the University troop headed by Dr. Henry Allworth, Chancellor of the Diocese, went some miles from Oxon. to meet and conduct thereto four loads of muskets, pikes etc. that came from Windsor for the scholars to train with....." Of the said troop ... "Allworth was the lieutenant". There are a number of letters to and from Allworth still extant which show his active role in the administration of the diocese.

eg. Sweit to Allworth 26th March 1667. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.650 13.

Allworth to Henry Parker 28th October 1675. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.650 20.

5. Wood op. cit. III 305.

6. M.G. Smith op. cit. 150.

7. D.N.B.

Charles Talbot was granted the Lambeth degree of LL.B. in 1714 by Archbishop Tenison.

Wake MSS VI (Cant. 1716-18) 280-1.

academic or ecclesiastical. Though a Fellow of All Souls' he became a Bencher of Lincoln's Inn in 1719 and M.P. first for the Cornish borough of Tregony and then of Durham City. After a spell as Solicitor-General from 1726 he became Lord Chancellor in 1733. One authority has stated that "he had a character and a capacity above the common level of keepers of the King's conscience .... He was an especial foe to professional chicane and the law's delays".<sup>1</sup>

Talbot's elevation to the Lord Chancellorship in 1733 created another vacancy at Oxford. His successor, Thomas Tenison, like Thomas Ayloffe, was a Fellow of Trinity Hall and held a Cambridge LL.D. A son of Edward Tenison, Bishop of Ossory, and a cousin and heir of Archbishop Tenison, he held a living at Chiddingstone in Kent.<sup>2</sup> It was during his Chancellorship that the dispute between his jurisdiction and that of the archdeacon, about which there will be more in the next chapter, came to a head. The last Chancellor of the period was Daniel Burton who took the oath on 5th June 1742.<sup>3</sup> He had an Oxford D.D. in 1735.<sup>4</sup> He was Secker's appointment and there is much evidence of his close collaboration with the bishop. In April 1745, for example, he reported that he had completed two parts of his own visitation and had given notice of Secker's impending confirmation at Banbury, where he had ordered the Apparitor to attend. He reported at length in his own hand on what he had found on his visitation then, in April, and again in the following month.<sup>5</sup> He and the Bishop were in agreement that some of the fees exacted were too high and did something to put the matter right.<sup>6</sup> Though rightly jealous of the pre-eminence of his office over against that of the Archdeacon and his Official, he was diplomatic; in a dispute over the issue of marriage licences, he felt he could make the Archdeacon's Official, Bettsworth, agree to "put a stop to such depredations for the future."<sup>7</sup>

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1. D.N.B., Foster.

2. E. Carpenter Thomas Tenison 314 and 436.

3. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.2139 11<sup>v</sup>. 5th June 1742.

Burton was already active by 18th July when he wrote to Secker suggesting St. Bartholomew's Day as the best for the consecration of the Goring almshouse chapel because he had to preach as chaplain to the High Sheriff at the Rochester Assizes on August 4th.

Burton to Secker 18th July 1742. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.651 124-124<sup>v</sup>.

4. Foster op. cit.

5. Burton to Secker 21st April 1745. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.652 67-8<sup>v</sup>.

6. Secker to Beaver 29th July 1751. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.652 43.

7. Burton to Secker 15th August 1756. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.653. 158-159.



In the Hereford diocese there were only four Chancellors in the whole century after the Restoration, but we know comparatively little about most of them, apart from what appears in the official records.<sup>1</sup> The first was Timothy Baldwin, a royalist of Shropshire stock who had, however, conformed to the Commonwealth enough to be a member of the University.<sup>2</sup> An academic, he had been a Fellow of All Souls' since 1639 and was Principal of Hart Hall, Oxford, from 1660 to 1663. He was knighted by Charles II and was a Master in Chancery for twelve years; in 1679-80 he acted as one of the Clerks in the House of Lords.<sup>3</sup> His successor in 1691 was his nephew, Charles Baldwin, the holder of a B.C.L. from Queen's, Oxford, and M.P. for Ludlow from 1690 to 1698.<sup>4</sup> When he died ten years later in 1707 he was succeeded by Edward Wynne, a son of the Earl of Anglesey who became a D.C.L. in 1711.<sup>5</sup> He was 28 years of age at the time of his appointment and held the post for 47 years. Wynne was succeeded in 1754<sup>6</sup> by Joseph Browne a man of 55, who was both a cleric and an academic. He was Rector of Bramshott in Hampshire, held the degree of D.D. and was Provost of Queen's from 1756-1767; he was also Sedleian Professor of Natural Philosophy at Oxford and for a time (1759-65) Vice-Chancellor of the University.<sup>7</sup>

Though the Archdeacon's court was subordinate, the Archdeacon's Officials were far from being insignificant lawyers, especially in the Oxford archdeaconry, about which we know more than its counterpart in Hereford. Immediately after the Restoration we find a distinguished

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1. See Appendix IIIb.
  2. In 1655 he was one of a number of royalists in Oxford who encouraged an apothecary to sell coffee publicly in his house next to All Souls'. D.N.B.
  3. D.N.B. and Foster.  
He was author of "The Privileges of an Ambassador" (1654).  
In 1656 he published a Latin translation of Lord Herbert of Cherbury's History of the Expedition to Rhé in 1627.  
In 1663 he published The Jurisdiction of the Admiralty of England.
  4. Foster.
  5. Foster.
  6. Browne's Patent is dated 11th April 1754. Foster's date, 1752, thus is incorrect.  
Hereford Episcopal Register 1723-54. 151-2.
  7. Foster.

academic lawyer, Sir Giles Sweet, filling this role.<sup>1</sup> He had been Principal of St. Alban Hall since 1641 and from 1661 until his death in 1672 he was Regius Professor of Civil Law; from the Restoration until 1672 he was Dean of the Arches, the senior ecclesiastical judge in the Province of Canterbury.<sup>2</sup> Whether immediately or not, he was eventually followed by Thomas Stafford, who certainly by 1691 was acting as Archdeacon's Official and, often simultaneously in the same court, as surrogate of the Vicar-General.<sup>3</sup> In academic life he was Vice-President of Magdalen and held the degree of D.C.L. He died in February 1723.<sup>4</sup> In 1733 Henry Brooke, the Professor of Civil Law at Oxford, was appointed and held office through the turbulent period of conflict with the Vicar-General's Court.<sup>5</sup> When he died in 1752, Archdeacon John Potter did his best to heal the breach and appoint a man who was acceptable both to the Bishop, Thomas Secker, and to the University. He chose Richard Smallbrooke, a son of the Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry and joint-Chancellor with his brother of that diocese.<sup>6</sup>

It is more difficult to discover the names of the Archdeacon's Officials in the Hereford diocese. Initially, it seems, in 1663 a "Mr. Cole" was appointed Official to the Archdeacon of Salop,<sup>7</sup> but in 1677 Timothy Baldwin, already diocesan Vicar-General, accepted the post of Official to the Archdeacon of Hereford. Certainly by the time of his resignation in 1691 he held the triple post of Vicar-General and Official to each of the two archdeaconries.<sup>8</sup> This provoked the dispute of the 1690's about which we shall

1. MS Oxf. Dioc. Papers c.3, 1<sup>v</sup> (16th Feb.1660/1), 4<sup>b</sup> (5th October 1661).  
MS Oxf. Dioc. Papers c.4, 131<sup>v</sup> (21st August 1663).
2. Foster.
3. MS Archd. Oxon. Papers.  
c.24. 12<sup>v</sup> (13th Feb.1691/2) - as surrogate of H. Alworth.  
c.24. 13 (13th Feb.1691/2) - as Official of Archdeacon.  
c.25. 179<sup>v</sup> (10th March 1715/6) - as Official of Archdeacon and surrogate of Charles Talbot, the Chancellor.
4. D.N.B.
5. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.266 26 et seq. Foster.  
Ward shows that Brooke was much concerned at Jacobitism in Oxford especially during the opening of the Radcliffe Camera in 1749, a great Tory occasion. Ward Georgian Oxford 168-9.  
Brooke was also involved in the dispute over patronage with Lincoln College. eg. Isham to Secker 4th Jan. 1739/40. MS Oxf.Dioc. c.651. 70.
6. Potter to Secker June 1752. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.653. 68-9.  
Foster op. cit.
7. H.R.O. Procurations, Fees and Synodals Box. Bundle "Dr. Bramston's opinion concerning commutations" 17th March 1708/9 in the case of the Archdeaconry of Salop.
8. *ibid.*



read in the next chapter.<sup>1</sup> Presumably after that, as the archdeacons' courts regained their independence, separate officials were appointed, but at present we have no evidence of their identity.<sup>2</sup>

At the hub of the administrative system was the Register of his Deputy. By Canon 123 of 1603 his presence was essential for the validity of any judicial act either of contentious or voluntary jurisdiction. He had to be present or represented at all meetings of the consistory court, all ordinations and institutions, and he had to witness legal documents such as licences, mandates and excommunications.<sup>3</sup> It seems to have been frequent practice to appoint absentee Principal Registers, as in the Exeter Diocese,<sup>4</sup> and later in the Hereford Diocese, but this was not always the case, for both Griffith Reynolds at Hereford (1673 - c.1691) and George Cooper at Oxford were for part of their time described as Principal Registers.<sup>5</sup> Usually, however, most of the work was carried out by a Deputy-Register, who had no life tenure and would thus be more closely under the direction of either the Bishop or the Chancellor.<sup>6</sup> We have a large collection of letters and other documents, sent to Griffith Reynolds during his period of office. It is clear from this correspondence arriving at his house in Castle Street,<sup>7</sup> Hereford, that clergy of all ranks in the

1. See p 57 of this thesis.
2. Egerton Leigh, Archdeacon of Salop, made his son, Austin Leigh, his Register in November 1758.  
Hereford Episcopal Register 1755-71 41.
3. Gibson op. cit. II 1036/7.
4. At Exeter Thomas Tylot, a Principal Register at the turn of the century never set foot in the diocese. This had its good points because in days of poor transport it was useful to have a representative in London.  
M.G. Smith - op. cit. 155-7.
5. Michaelmas 1680 - Ludlow. H.R.O. Act Book 168. 28.  
Bodleian MS Oxf. Dioc. c.2137 (25th March 1734) iv.
6. As in the Exeter diocese. M.G. Smith op. cit. 172.  
Later in the eighteenth century in the Oxford Diocese there is a case of a Deputy-Register, Walsh, being removed at the wish of the Bishop. Scott to (Bishop) 14th September 1793. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.653. 130-1.
7. A letter in May 1674 refers to his office being in the College in Hereford, which implies that part of the College was in Castle Street.  
Broster to Reynolds 2nd May 1674. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.

diocese referred to him for advice or any complaint about the working of the courts or of the network of apparitors; as we shall see, even the Bishop himself on more than one occasion felt impelled to remonstrate with him against the unfairness of the bureaucratic machine.<sup>1</sup> It is also clear from Secker's correspondence and some letters of Herbert Beaver, the Deputy Register in the Oxford diocese, that the latter was the mainspring upon whom Secker relied for clearing up anomalies and generally increasing the efficiency of the diocesan machine,<sup>2</sup> though even Secker, at least once, found occasion to curb Beaver's keenness to amass power at the centre.<sup>3</sup>

According to a nineteenth century report there was no stipulation in either diocese that Registers or their Deputies should have had a legal training,<sup>4</sup> but in practice they frequently had had good experience as proctors in the diocesan courts or as clerks in the Registry. As in the Exeter diocese, Deputy-Registers were nearly always drawn from the ranks of the proctors and their names frequently appear in causes long before they were promoted to the higher position.<sup>5</sup> To be a proctor, for instance, in the Exeter diocese, a man had to be a Notary Public and had to have served for at least five years as a clerk to a judge or the Register. He received the title of Notary Public by faculty from the Faculty Office of the Archbishop of Canterbury.<sup>6</sup> M.G. Smith's observation that in the Exeter diocese there was a common fellowship of registers

1. See page 46 of this thesis.

On another occasion the Rector of Stoke Lacy, Francis Stedman, promised Griffith Reynolds 40 to 50 carp the following spring.

Stedman to Reynolds 5th December 1679. H.R.O. Visitation Box 20.

2. Beaver notified Jonathan Arrowsmith, Vicar of Charlbury, of the bishop's intention to confirm on 22nd July 1739; he gave notice of Secker's intention to put a curate at Watlington in February 1740/1. In April 1741 William Holmes said he had received Secker's command "by Mr. Beaver". In June 1744 Beaver wrote Secker a letter of advice on court procedure. In 1746 we hear of him preparing the documents necessary for the institution of the Vicar of Dunstew.

Arrowsmith to Secker 7th July 1739. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.651. 44.

W. Holmes to Secker 7th April 1741. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.651. 92.

Beaver to Secker 1st June 1744. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.652. 40.

Beaver to Secker 9th October 1746. *ibid.* 103.

3. Secker to Beaver 29th July 1751. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.653. 43.

4. The Report of the Commission of Enquiry into the Practice and Jurisdiction of the Ecclesiastical Courts in England and Wales (1831-2). XXIV Appendix B. 304 answer 8, 323 answer 8.

5. Smith - *op. cit.* 167.

6. *ibid.* 166.

and proctors, many of whom practised not only in the episcopal and chancellor's courts but in the courts of the archdeacons and of the peculiar jurisdictions, is paralleled in the two dioceses of this study.<sup>1</sup> At Oxford the Registers, who in the eighteenth century lived and worked in Holywell "near the Printing House",<sup>2</sup> in the parish of St. Peter in the East, were all graduates or had at least attended one of the Colleges or Halls. Gregory Ballard, who had to pick up the threads in 1660 after the Interregnum, had been educated at Merchant Taylors' and St. John's and held the degree of B.C.L.<sup>3</sup> Whether he started as Deputy-Register is uncertain, but we know that by 1663 he held the title of Principal Register to the Bishop.<sup>4</sup> The Register Books were not well kept at this time especially in the early years of the Restoration, a fault which drew from Herbert Beaver, inspecting them some 60 or 70 years later, the criticism that "many institutions and ordinations are irrecoverably lost".<sup>5</sup>

Ballard's successor, Nicholas Horsman, who was active in the mid- and late 1670's<sup>6</sup> and early 1680's had been a student of the Middle Temple in 1659 and entered Gloucester Hall, Oxford in 1664.<sup>7</sup> Under him the Register Books definitely improved in their format and accuracy.<sup>8</sup> He was followed by Ben Cooper and his son, George, who besides holding their ecclesiastical posts were both Registrars of the University; in fact, their combined spell at the latter post covered the years from 1659 to 1737.<sup>9</sup>

1. *ibid.* 171.
2. *ibid.* c.2137. 114 (1739/40) 33<sup>v</sup> and *seriatim*.  
At an earlier stage the Register's office was in the parish of St. Mary Magdalen. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.4. 132. (1663).  
Usually the official was known as the "Register" but occasionally as in the Act Book for 1740-42 he is referred to as the "Registrar". MS Oxf. Dioc. c.2137 *seriatim*.
3. Foster.
4. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.4, 130.
5. Oxford Episcopal Register 1660-1702. MS Oxf. Dioc. d.106 opposite fl.
6. In October 1675 Horsman was clearly acting under Alworth's orders. Alworth to Parker 28th October 1675. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.650. 20.
7. Foster.
8. MS Oxf. Dioc. d.106. 49<sup>v</sup> onwards.
9. Foster.



Both seem to have been reasonably efficient. In 1683 we see Ben Cooper checking the incumbent of Adderbury for neglect of church repairs;<sup>1</sup> in 1688 he was responsible for circulating through the apparitors copies of the Declaration of Indulgence for reading in the churches.<sup>2</sup> By 1733 George Cooper was Principal Register not Deputy.<sup>3</sup>

In George Cooper's last years much of the work was done by John Stewart,<sup>4</sup> but Cooper was followed in 1737 by Herbert Beaver, an M.A. of Corpus Christi, who had been appointed beadle in November 1732 and had been admitted as proctor in the consistory court on 1st February 1733/4.<sup>5</sup> He was officially appointed Deputy Register on 21st May 1737.<sup>6</sup> He was a significant choice, for his business-like attack on the chores of his office<sup>7</sup> matched the zeal for efficiency which so characterised the episcopate of the new Bishop, Thomas Secker. We find him supporting the Bishop's cause throughout the twenty years that Secker was at Oxford: only on a few occasions do they seem to have crossed swords, as for

1. Parsons to Fell 29th November 1683. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.650. 41.
2. Wood Life and Times (3rd June 1688). III 267.
3. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.2135. 109.
4. *ibid.* c.2136. 1-19.

When the archdeacon's court office was separated from the consistory court office, George Cooper became Archdeacon's Register and was followed by John Stewart. In December 1737 Cooper asked for all the wills passed in the archdeacon's name "for I frequently want them". In return he would send all belonging to the bishop's court to Beaver.

5. Cooper to ..... 1st December 1737. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.650. 71. Foster.

Hearne Collections 124-129.

MS Oxf. Dioc. c.2136. 18<sup>v</sup>.

Beaver to Secker 15th July and 31st July 1751.

MS Oxf. Dioc. c.653. 42-44<sup>v</sup>.

6. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.2137. 5<sup>v</sup>.

7. Examples of his efficiency occur in the keeping of the Act Books. In each book there is a note of where to look next to subsequent sessions of the court. Most books in Beaver's time were inscribed in his own hand with "This book belongeth to the Registry of the Lord Bishop of Oxford". MS Oxf. Dioc. c.2136. 1. It was he who made scathing remarks about the keeping of records after the Restoration. He was also critical of Cooper; "In regard to abundance of things belonging to my office, I am quite in the dark, Mr. Cooper having left no minutes concerning them..." Beaver to Secker 23rd July 1747. MS. Oxf. Dioc. papers c.652. 116, 116<sup>v</sup>.

instance in 1751 over the charging of double fees.<sup>1</sup> In June 1744 Beaver was able to offer Secker detailed advice on court procedure.<sup>2</sup> In 1761 we find him giving useful advice to Bishop Hume on whether or not surrogates could grant curate's licences.<sup>3</sup> His career was a long one - he was still active in 1766 in spite of poor eyesight and an unsteady hand,<sup>4</sup> but it covered the period of the decline of the ecclesiastical courts which he did not view with equanimity.<sup>5</sup> He was also active in the University as a proctor in the Vice-Chancellor's Court and as Accountant and Steward of Corpus Christi College.<sup>6</sup>

At Hereford the Registers were all, except possibly Griffith Reynolds,<sup>7</sup> non-graduates, but like their opposite numbers in Oxford they too were Notaries Public. Gregory Ballard's contemporary at Hereford was John Staverton, about whom little is known apart from what appears in the official documents. At first he appears as Deputy for the Principal Register, William Lawrence.<sup>8</sup> There are a number of penances, absolutions and excommunications of this period which are a testimony to his conscient-

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1. Beaver to Secker 15th July 1751.  
Secker to Beaver 29th July 1751.  
Beaver to Secker 31st July 1751. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.653. 42-44<sup>v</sup>.  
When planning a gallery for his church in 1755, William Freind asked Secker to overrule Beaver "should he attempt to lay needless obstructions in our way". Even the Vicar-General, Daniel Burton, recognised Beaver's over-meticulous approach to certain matters, in this case, marriage licences.  
Freind to Secker 29th July 1755. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.653. 125.  
Burton to Secker 15th August 1756. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.653. 158.
  2. Beaver to Secker 1st June 1744. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.652. 40-40<sup>v</sup>.
  3. Beaver to Bishop Hume 26th November 1761. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.654. 38.
  4. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.2139. 66<sup>v</sup> and 68.  
Beaver to Secker 31st July 1751. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.653. 44<sup>v</sup>.  
Towards 1760 Herbert Beaver's son, George, often acted as surrogate for Daniel Burton, the Chancellor, and did so in his father's presence, e.g. 5th February 1757 when George was only 27. (MS Oxf. Dioc. c.2139).  
George Beaver was also a graduate of Corpus Christi and obtained the degree of B.D. in 1759. (Foster). He was ordained deacon by George Beauclerk, Bishop of Hereford, on 1st December 1751 when he was only 21, under the canonical age. The H.R.O. has his ordination papers.  
H.R.O. Episc. Reg. 1723-54. 131. H.R.O. Ord. Papers Box 1 1750 bundle.
  5. The dispute between the two jurisdictions and thus between Beaver and Stewart as respective registrars was exacerbated by the decline in business. Potter to Secker 14th Sept. 1753. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.653. 107-8.
  6. Foster.
  7. Reynolds is referred to as LL.B. in September 1683 but does not appear in Foster or Venn. Hereford Episcopal Register 1682/3 -1709. 10<sup>v</sup>.
  8. Hereford Episcopal Register 1635-77. 203.

-iousness,<sup>1</sup> but, as at Oxford, the Register Book for the 1660's is poorly kept and many institutions and ordinations are lost in consequence. His last regular presence at an ordination was on 24th September 1671.<sup>2</sup>

Thomas Gravener is recorded as holding the office in September 1672,<sup>3</sup> but the next Register of consequence was Griffith Reynolds who first officially witnessed an ordination on 25th May 1673.<sup>4</sup> His name is first mentioned in the record of a Ludlow court of 10th February 1663/4, and on 23rd February 1664/5 he took John Staverton's place at Leominster court.<sup>5</sup> As we have already seen, he was an efficient and perhaps ruthless controller of the diocesan bureaucracy and not without his critics. The bishop himself, Croft, had to remonstrate with him on more than one occasion. In July 1679 he found Reynolds too officious over the matters of churchwardens at Yarpole where the population was small. In August of the following year Croft had to write again, for Reynolds had continued to harass the people there; "wherefore once and for all I desire you not to give this needless trouble to people and cause such hatred against the Court". The sidesmen had performed the task well enough without wardens.<sup>6</sup> Earlier Reynolds had had the temerity to cite Boulcot, Croft's own curate, for not officiating while away on the Bishop's own business.<sup>7</sup> On another occasion he drew on himself the full fury of two incumbents, Thomas Broome, Rector of Ross, and Thomas Goode, Rector of Wistanstow, for citing them to appear in court for not exhibiting licences. Both were residentiary canons of Hereford. Broome confirmed that "the Doctor, as reason he had, was much incensed..... As to myself I was never yet a curate..... If I may not preach by virtue of my orders, my Lord Bishop's leave and the Doctor's

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1. See H.R.O. Register's Files.
  2. Hereford Episcopal Register 1635-77. 230.
  3. *ibid.* 235.  
He was witness at the ordination on 3rd March 1671/2. (*ibid.* 233).
  4. *ibid.* 238. He appears to have been a cousin of William Johnson, the Bishop's chaplain, Rector of Whitborne and later Archdeacon of Hereford. Johnson to Reynolds 19th April 1680. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.  
Johnson to Reynolds 4th October 1680. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.  
Johnson to Reynolds 12th May 1680. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.
  5. H.R.O. Act Book 99. (Box 28) 48. (10th February 1663/4).  
H.R.O. Act Book 99. 307. (23rd February 1664/5).
  6. Croft to Reynolds 24th August 1680. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.  
Croft to Reynolds 31st July 1679. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.
  7. Croft to Reynolds 14th June 1676. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.



desire without all this ado, I shall desist and save you the trouble of sending and myself of being haunted by an apparitor". What particularly annoyed Broome was the fact he was with Reynolds on the day he issued the warrant. Furthermore, he had been with the Bishop for three or four weeks previously and at other times he had been waiting on the Register "in all which you were pleased to be silent in this particular and now to put me on the warrant as if you only designed to me to pain trouble and charges".<sup>1</sup>

For a time at least Reynolds was responsible for collecting the procurations for the Archdeacon of Salop, Stephen Philips.<sup>2</sup> When attending the court in various parts of the diocese he would either stay at an inn or with the clergy; for example, in February 1680 he was staying at the Angel, Ludlow,<sup>3</sup> and in the previous autumn he was with Thomas Aubrey, Vicar of Bredwardine.<sup>4</sup> By 1680 Reynolds had become Principal Register and seems to have resigned or more likely died in 1691.<sup>5</sup> During his spell of office he had several deputies including Edward Owen, Giles Sanderson and John Fortune who frequently attended the courts or witnessed documents or ordinations in his absence.<sup>6</sup> Inevitably in a large diocese with peripatetic courts the Register was bound to be away from his office from time to time.

Tamburlaine Hords who filled his place is often mentioned after Easter 1691, though he first appears as Deputy Register in Easter 1693.<sup>7</sup> Little is known about him, though long after he had ceased to be active as Deputy-Register we find him, in 1735, acting as Principal Register to the Dean, and as Registrar for Robert Breton, Archdeacon of Salop in 1739.<sup>8</sup>

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1. Broome to Reynolds 4th February 1677/8. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13. Thomas Broome, a Balliol man, became a Canon of Hereford in 1677 (Foster). Dr. Thomas Goode was Master of Balliol, (1672-8), Canon residentiary of Hereford from 1660, Rector of Wistanstow from 1658 and of Bladon, Oxfordshire from 1672. He died in April 1678 and is buried in Hereford Cathedral. (Foster).
  2. H.R.O. Box. 'Procurations, Fees and Synodals'.
  3. Boraston to Reynolds 7th February 1680/1. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.
  4. Aubrey to Reynolds 20th October 1680. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.
  5. The last mention of Reynolds is for Michaelmas 1691. H.R.O. Act Book 105 (1687-91) 102.
  6. e.g. Owen, 29th May 1681 Hereford Episcopal Register 1672-82 135<sup>v</sup>. Sanderson, Hereford Episcopal Register 1682/3-1709, 53<sup>v</sup> and 56. Fortune, *ibid.* 45.
  7. H.R.O. Act Book 151 (1687-92) 66<sup>v</sup>. H.R.O. Act Book 106 (1692-5) 25<sup>v</sup>. (as Deputy-Register).
  8. H.R.O. Box 85 Dean's Act Book (1735-7) and H.R.O. Box 342 (1737-39) 1739 Bundle.

It is not clear when he gave up at the Episcopal Registry. The names of Charles Pearce and Thomas Maddocks occur in the first decade of the century, but not as Deputy-Registers.<sup>1</sup> By 22nd September 1713 Richard File was Register and witnessed the enthronement of Philip Bisse as Bishop.<sup>2</sup> He seems to have continued until he was succeeded by Thomas Clark who first appeared at an ordination on 1st June 1755.<sup>3</sup> Little else is known of Clark apart from his being appointed Principal Register in 1757 jointly with Edward Pearson.<sup>4</sup> He continued to play an active role until well after our period.

At the base of the diocesan administration were the apparitors and in each parish the churchwardens. Apparitors, otherwise known as beadles, were the messengers of the Registry; they were the agents of the Register by whom the latter at the centre of the diocesan network could make his influence felt, even in the most farflung parishes; in so doing the Register and the apparitors often incurred the great displeasure of the parish clergy. Officially it was their duty to cite and convene defendants into court, to introduce the Process "emitted" by the Judge and to cite witnesses to appear.<sup>5</sup> In fact by the seventeenth century the preparation of the Processes was the duty of the Register's staff, but the apparitors actually served them.<sup>6</sup> One or two notes from the Registry to the apparitors still exist; for instance in September 1678 a note was sent to Thomas Tanner one of the Hereford apparitors to cite Martha Mindon of Woolston near Wistanstow before the chancellor to answer articles concerning "your ill life and conversation".<sup>7</sup> But apparitors were not concerned merely with legal and judicial matters. In November 1679 Thomas Brome, Rector of Ross, asked Reynolds to let him know through the apparitor what was due from the Rectory of Ross for the visitation.<sup>8</sup> In January 1681 Alexander Clogie, Vicar of Wigmore, reported that he had returned the brief with the apparitor "with that little money which we had much ado to collect". He had already satisfied the apparitor's demands over citations.<sup>9</sup> In 1681

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1. H.R.O. Act Book 107 (1701-9) 1 and 59.
  2. Hereford Episcopal Register (1709-23) 25<sup>v</sup>.
  3. Hereford Episcopal Register (1755-71) 2.
  4. *ibid.* 23-24.
  5. Ayliffe Parergon Juris Canonici Anglicani 68-71.
  6. *ibid.* 68.
  7. Baldwyn to Reynolds 15th September 1678. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.
  8. Brome to Reynolds 13th November 1679. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.
  9. Clogie to Reynolds 10th January 1680/1. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.

Robert Stubbs asked the apparitor to visit Tusmore to see if the living there really was vacant.<sup>1</sup> Again, they were expected to deliver briefs to raise contributions for charity.<sup>2</sup>

In spite of the fourteenth century limitation on their numbers they had steadily increased in the sixteenth century so that in Canon 138 of 1603 a strict quota was again stipulated, usually one for each deanery,<sup>3</sup> and they had to perform their duties in person. Naturally they were disliked; civil lawyers for instance who had a very low opinion of the apparitor referred to him as Animal tantum rationale, an even lower beast than the sheriff's officer.<sup>4</sup> Appointments of apparitors, certainly in the Oxford diocese, were made by the Chancellor or the Archdeacon; by 1759 there was an agreement between the two that they should appoint alternately.<sup>5</sup> Before nomination it seems to have been customary, at least in the Hereford diocese, for the apparitor to produce testimonials of good character; for instance, Richard Pryce of Ross was only reappointed apparitor of the Deanery of Ross after a good testimonial from John Newton, Rector of Ross, and Thomas Tyrer, Vicar of Sellacke, and John Spratt.<sup>6</sup>

In spite of this apparitors did indulge in dubious practices. Though Canon 138 expressly forbade informing, they were still doing so at least in the Salisbury diocese after the Restoration.<sup>7</sup> Others accepted bribes. In June 1673 Thomas Buckley, Vicar of Linton, reported to the Register that the court's efficiency was blunted by bribery. John Nourse, the late apparitor, who had recently become churchwarden, and his replacement had both accepted money to excuse non-attendance at church. Though a parishioner, Thomas Packer, had not been to church for three years and had been presented by Buckley frequently, nothing had been done because of the bribes which had reached Nourse's hands.<sup>8</sup> According to the letter of 1681, already mentioned, the apparitor had been bribed to conceal a vacant

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1. Stubbs to Trumbull. H.M.C. Downshire I. 13.
  2. Croft to .... 24th May 1684. MS Rawl. C.983. 67.
  3. Gibson Codex 1038.
  4. Ayliffe. op. cit. 69.
  5. Potter to Burton 20th April 1759. (draft)  
Oxford Dioc. Papers c.266. Episcopal Register (1699-1736). 67.
  6. Hereford Box 444. Letters Testimonial. 8th March (no year).
  7. E.A.O. Whiteman "The Re-Establishment of the Church of England, 1660-1663". R.H.S. Transactions V (1955) 125.
  8. Buckley to Reynolds 2nd June 1673. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.



incumbency at Tusmore, but it seems to have been reported nevertheless.<sup>1</sup> In 1719 John Eve the apparitor for the Leominster Deanery was suspended for offering to excuse David Morgan and his wife their clandestine marriage in payment of ten shillings.<sup>2</sup>

Some were inefficient. For instance, in May 1674, John Broster of Wormbridge complained that in citing his churchwarden, Thomas Husbands, the apparitor had done so not under seal but under a scroll in the apparitor's own hand which was wrong in law, for no apparitor could be a promoter. Broster also complained that he himself had been cited purely through "the malice of the apparitor ..... Therefore in such cases we expect the authority of the court and then we shall yield obedience".<sup>3</sup> Early in 1674 Phineas Jackson too wrote of their inefficiency; there were, he said, many Presbyterians, Independents, Quakers, Atheists and Papists who never came to church; what was needed was "a good surrogate and an honest apparitor."<sup>4</sup> In 1684 an apparitor in one of the Hereford deaneries lost all the charity briefs for the persecuted Huguenots in France, much to Bishop Croft's displeasure and embarrassment.<sup>5</sup> In 1755 William Postans, apparitor for the Burford Deanery, was brought to book for failure to deliver presentments from Ribbesford, thereby causing the wardens to be wrongfully cited; he was dismissed.<sup>6</sup> Four years later the wardens of Bromfield complained that they had suffered similarly because the apparitor had failed to give them notice of visitation.<sup>7</sup>

More often however the complaints are of an excess of zeal on the part of the apparitor. In 1675 the Vicar of Clifford complained to Pascall, apparitor of the deanery, for being overzealous towards the poor of his parish.<sup>8</sup> In July 1677 David Davies of Abberley felt obliged to complain to Reynolds about "your new apparitor" who was "a little too busy and ... too troublesome" among some of the poorer parishioners. This was particularly so in the case of a poor tenant, Thomas Middleton, who was

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1. Stubbs to Trumbull 3rd November 1681. H.M.C. Downshire I 13.
  2. H.R.O. Book 108. 36<sup>v</sup>.
  3. Broster to Reynolds 2nd May 1674. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.
  4. Jackson to Reynolds 2nd February 1673/4. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.
  5. Croft to Bishop of London 24th May 1684. MS Rawl. C.983. 67.
  6. H.R.O. Box 41 (Book of Office 1743-64) entries for 1755.
  7. H.R.O. Box 41 Act Book 1743-64.
  8. Rawlins to Pascall 25th March 1675. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.

harassed to prove the will of his mother who had died "not worth a groat" and had only moved into the diocese just before her death.<sup>1</sup> As we have already seen, one apparitor caused two incumbents Thomas Brome and Thomas Goode considerable fury for wrongly citing them for not exhibiting licences at a visitation.<sup>2</sup>

By 1716 visitation articles in the Hereford diocese asked directly in Article 36 whether to the knowledge of the respondents any apparitor had cited anyone without citation authorised first from the court.<sup>3</sup> It is true that no reply in the affirmative exists, though the churchwardens of Colwall stated cryptically "can't tell"; but it shows the bishop's concern that his officers should not abuse their powers.<sup>4</sup> Likewise Article 34 asked whether any ecclesiastical officers were exacting more than their legal fees and Article 35 whether any officer had been bribed to excuse or dismiss a case unlawfully. To the former the two wardens of Almeley replied that they knew of one who had;<sup>5</sup> the return from Oldbury gave them a good hand; "They are all honest men".<sup>6</sup>

The normal way of dealing with a wayward apparitor was through either the archdeacon or the rural dean or, if necessary, the bishop; but, according to Ayliffe, the apparitor could, if necessary, be committed to the civil court for any falsehood in the execution of his duty.<sup>7</sup>

The office of Apparitor-General seems to have been purely ceremonial, as it was also in the Exeter diocese.<sup>8</sup> In Hereford it certainly existed at the turn of the century, for Humphrey Humphreys appointed William Griffith to it in 1704; he was to receive all fees and emoluments connected with the post.<sup>9</sup> In the Oxford diocese, however, the introduction of the office as late as 1759 seems to have caused something of a storm.<sup>10</sup> The

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1. Davies to Reynolds 14th July 1677. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.
  2. Brome to Reynolds 4th February 1667/8. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.
  3. H.R.O. Box 28. Visitation Return of 1716.
  4. *ibid.*
  5. *ibid.*
  6. *ibid.*
  7. Ayliffe *op. cit.* 70.
  8. M.G. Smith *op. cit.* 173. note 2.
  9. Hereford Episcopal Register (1682/3 - 1709) 195.
  10. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.266. 70 (reversed).

clergy failed to see why they should pay fees to the holder of the office. Herbert Beaver, the Register, zealous as ever to protect the administrative hierarchy, produced a copy of an Apparitor-General's Patent for Bath and Wells in 1588 to show that in one diocese at least the office was known, and "what was practised in one diocese may reasonably be presumed to have been the usage of all the others".<sup>1</sup> The Archdeacon and the Chancellor seem to have taken it in turns to appoint so that the Bishop could have "a proper person to attend him at his visitation".<sup>2</sup>

Though the Bishop himself might bemoan his own lack of control of his officers, there is little doubt that the administrative system in both dioceses was well staffed with men of some ability, experience and conscientiousness, even if some of the minor officials showed an excess of zeal. In the next chapter we shall see how the officers worked through the courts at their disposal.

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1.    ibid.

2.    ibid.



### CHAPTER III

#### THE COURTS AND THEIR ADMINISTRATION

G.V. Bennett has shown the claim that the Restoration ecclesiastical courts never recovered their old strength to be quite groundless; in fact the evidence points the other way. For instance, Restoration common lawyers lent greater assistance to the church courts than previously. Furthermore, the courts dealt with many matters such as matrimonial causes, probate, tithe, bawdy and unseemly conduct, which to-day would be within the purview of the civil courts. Moral offences such as adultery, fornication, bastardy, blasphemy and acting as a physician, midwife or schoolmaster without a church licence all fell under their jurisdiction. Specifically ecclesiastical offences were even more frequent; these included absence from church or working on Sundays, not receiving the Sacrament at Easter and not sending children or servants to be catechised. It was not until after the Declaration of Indulgence of 1687 and the failure of comprehension in 1689 that there was a serious loss of grip by the church courts; from then on there was a decline, variable in rapidity and steepness, until the middle of the eighteenth century.<sup>1</sup>

One of the difficulties in assessing the work of the courts in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is the wide variety of practice from diocese to diocese. Each locality had its own tradition and after Henry VIII had forbidden the teaching of Canon Law in the Universities there was no centralised training ground for ecclesiastical lawyers to provide uniformity of practice. It is true that in the seventeenth and in the first part of the eighteenth centuries a number of handbooks became currently available, but they were based on the local practice of

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1. G.V. Bennett The Tory Crisis in Church and State 1688-1730; The Career of Francis Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester. (Oxford 1975) 7 - 12. G. Holmes (ed) Britain after the Glorious Revolution 1689-1714 (Macmillan 1969) 155-163.

London and the neighbouring dioceses.<sup>1</sup>

The monarch was Supreme Governor of the Church, but, strangely perhaps, the courts were not held in his name but in that of ecclesiastical authority. Edward VI's legislation had enacted that they should be royal, but it was repealed by Mary and the Elizabethan Settlement which followed allowed the status quo to continue. The ancient Canon Law remained in force, provided it did not contravene the law of the land or the King's prerogative. There were two other sources of law administered in the ecclesiastical courts; one was the so-called King's ecclesiastical law which included Parliamentary statutes relating to the use of the Prayer Books, the Articles of Religion and other matters; the other was the legislation of Convocation which comprised the Canons of 1597, 1604 and 1640.<sup>2</sup>

The chief court of each diocese was the Bishop's Consistory, held by the Chancellor in his capacity as Official Principal. Sessions were normally held in the cathedral church of each diocese and the court was competent to deal with every kind of ecclesiastical cause. Appeals from the dioceses in the Province of Canterbury lay to the Court of Arches, the provincial court of the Archbishop, and beyond that

1. M.G. Smith op. cit. 53-55 (for comments)

e.g. J. Godolphin Repertorium Canonicum (2nd ed. London 1680)  
(described by Wheeler as "a confused heap".)

H. Consett The Practice of the Spiritual Courts. (1700)

T. Oughton Ordo Judiciorum. (1728)

J. Ayliffe Parergon Juris Canonici Anglicani. (1726)

Maurice Wheeler, Canon of Lincoln and newly appointed Chancellor, writing to Wake, the Bishop of Lincoln, complained how "niggardly" the writings were: "Till Clark's Praxis was printed at Dublin and after him Consett in English who was a proctor at York nothing of that business was known out of court or even at Doctors' Commons ... there is not .... any uniform regularity of practice."  
Wheeler to Wake 6th May 1706. Wake MSS XXIII. 158.

2. Only those of 1597 and 1604 had real canonical authority and even they had no authority over the laity, for they had not passed through Parliament.



to the Court of Delegates.<sup>1</sup> Besides being a Court of first instance, the Consistory also heard appeals from the archidiaconal courts.

Owing to the geographical extent of so large a diocese, Hereford's Consistory usually met in two centres, in St. Lawrence's Church, Ludlow, for the Archdeaconry of Salop, and either in the Cathedral or, before 1677, in Leominster Church for the southern archdeaconry. The sittings were held every two or three weeks either before the Chancellor himself or before one of his surrogates.<sup>2</sup> In the Oxford diocese the Bishop's court usually met weekly, in the North Aisle, Insula Borealis, of St. Mary's, but only during the Law Terms, in the presence of the Chancellor or his surrogate.<sup>3</sup> Sometimes commutations would be less formally dealt with in the private house of the Chancellor or Registrar. In the Hereford diocese there are several references to such acts taking place in the Registrar's house in Castle Street, Hereford, or at an inn, such as the Angel at Ludlow, in the northern part of the diocese.<sup>4</sup> At Oxford commutations were often carried out in the Registrar's

- 1 The Court of Arches sat in the church of St. Mary-le-Bow. In 1674 Peter Mews, Bishop of Bath and Wells, criticised the Court of Arches for interfering in his diocesan affairs. The Court had apparently privately absolved the leaders of the Presbyterian faction at Chard who had been excommunicated. They had not even made a formal appeal "nor could they, it being a matter of Office." This had given the Presbyterians encouragement. According to Mews, the common talk of the country then was toleration and "the factions are so high upon it that they do challenge justice." But until they had toleration, Mews was determined that they would have "no quarter" from him.  
Mews to Sancroft 12th August 1674. M.S. Tanner 42. 119.  
A later example is the appeal made by Morgan Price, Vicar of Weobley, in 1766. The Bishop's court had ordered him to repair the chancel. On appeal the higher court decided in favour of the Vicar, for the repair of the chancel was not the concern of the Vicar and Churchwardens. The cost was to be borne by Jonathan Peploe Birch as it was "his duty alone". Memo. in H.R.O. Weobley Parish Register II (1682-1731) unfoliated.
- 2 See for example Box 28 Book 99 (1663-5).
- 3 The North aisle of St. Mary's was particularly convenient for, as it was the court of the Chancellor of the University, it had, and still has, the necessary furniture for a consistory. The chancel of St. Mary's was sometimes used for meetings of diocesan clergy, as for instance, in April 1685 to choose representatives for Convocation.  
Wood Life and Times III (1682-95) 137. 9th April 1685.
- 4 For instance Griffith Reynolds stayed at the Angel in Ludlow for the court in July 1678.  
Boraston to Reynolds 1st July 1678. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.



house in Holywell or in the Chancellor's lodgings elsewhere.<sup>1</sup>

As far as Archdeacon's courts<sup>2</sup> were concerned, there was considerable confusion over their authority and indeed over the role of archidiaconal jurisdiction altogether, especially in the first part of the period. In fact in the Hereford diocese the Archdeacon's courts sat concurrently with the consistory under Timothy Baldwin who was both Chancellor and Archdeacon's Official. From a glance at the Act Books it is clear that detecta presented at the Archdeacon's visitation came before Baldwin and were recorded in the same books. This continued under his successor, Charles Baldwin, until 1694 when the two Archdeacons sought to regain their jurisdiction, as we shall see later. Similarly at Oxford the two courts were at first apparently merged. For instance, Thomas Stafford sat as Official of the Archdeacon and Surrogate of the Vicar-General;<sup>3</sup> nevertheless, though the two courts met as one, it is clear that the two jurisdictions were still regarded as separate; though each day's acts were recorded as having been heard before Thomas Stafford in his joint capacity, the list was divided under two heads "Coram Cancell." and "Coram Official."<sup>4</sup> Occasionally a surrogate, such as John Irish in 1716, sat for both the Chancellor and the Official.<sup>5</sup> This overlap which

1. e.g. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.2139. 58<sup>v</sup> 29th October 1752 - voluntary confession.   
 ibid. c.2137. 122 20th May 1740 - absolution at the White Hart, Chipping Norton.   
 ibid. c.4<sup>o</sup> 133 at the house of Gregory Ballard 26th December 1663.
2. The manner of opening and closing a session of the Archdeacon of Hereford's court is inscribed in the cover of one of the Act Books for the period. "Oyez. Oyez. Oyez. All manner of persons that are cited to appear before the Reverend the Archdeacon of Hereford draw near and give their attendance and all others keep silence while this court is in holding."   
 "All manner of persons that have any more to do in this visitation (court) may depart hence and give their attendance on the .... day of ... next to which time this visitation (court) and all these proceedings are now adjourned. God save the King and the judge of this court."   
 Act Book 111. Act Book of the Archdeacon of Hereford (1727-1767) 3.
3. e.g. MS Oxf. Archd. Oxon. c.24. 12<sup>v</sup> - 13. 13th February 1691/2.
4. e.g. ibid. c.24. 35<sup>v</sup>. 18th February 1692.
5. ibid. c.25. 180. 9th June 1716.

existed at least from the Restoration onwards lasted longer at Oxford than at Hereford, for matters did not come to a head there until the 1730's.

In the Hereford diocese confusion between the Chancellor's and Archdeacons' jurisdiction reached a climax in the 1690's. As we have seen above, since the Restoration the Chancellor, Timothy Baldwin, had held one court in his capacity as Bishop's Chancellor and as Official of both Archdeacons. As he in fact presided over both as Chancellor and not as Official, the Archdeacon's jurisdiction in matters of correction was "swallowed up in that of the Bishop's", a situation which was made worse by the fact that the Bishop and the Archdeacons employed the same man as Register. In fact cases from the Archdeacon's visitations are recorded among the Chancellor's Acts up to 1694.<sup>1</sup> Nor was it possible to discover what had happened before the Civil War; "the jurisdiction of the Archdeacons is much confused and cannot be well known, the papers and proceedings formerly being supposed to be lost or destroyed in the war time."<sup>2</sup>

Timothy Baldwin's death in about 1696<sup>3</sup> and the consequent reversion of the Officialty to the Archdeacons provided an occasion for a review of the position. Thomas Bouchier made the first set of enquiries about the case of the Archdeacons of Hereford and Salop soon after Timothy Baldwin's death. The Archdeacons had exercised their jurisdictions and acted on the presentments they received at their visitations. In August 1700

1 H.R.O. Act Books 105 and 106.

2 H.R.O. Box "Procurations, Fees and Synodals". Bundle concerning the Archdeaconry of Salop.

Confusion was not confined to the overlap between the episcopal and archidiaconal jurisdictions. It is clear that Griffith Vaughan, the Archdeacon of Shropshire in the diocese of Lichfield and Coventry had been receiving the procurations of the parishes of Clunbury (7/8), Acton Round (7/2) and Shipton (7/2). On May 13th 1700 he surrendered them to Archdeacon Ottley of Salop in the Hereford diocese.

"Mr. Archdeacon Vaughan's disclaimer to the procurations due for the churches of Acton Round and Shipton." H.R.O. Box as above.

3 Though in the Archdeaconry of Salop file Timothy Baldwin is said to have died in "about the year 1696", it is certain that he was succeeded by Charles Baldwin in April 1691. H.R.O. Act. Book 105. 95.

His Letters Patent are dated 30th April 1691.

Hereford Episcopal Register 1682-1709, 106<sup>v</sup> et seq.



Archdeacon Ottley of Salop asked his Deputy-Register, Tamburlaine Hords, to seek further advice from Dr. George Bramston of Doctors' Commons on matters connected with his jurisdiction. Bramston confirmed the Archdeacon's right to follow up visitation with the holding of courts;<sup>1</sup> "as he has the right of visitation so he has the power to make that visitation useful" by proceeding to purgation in cases of fornication and incontinency, of default in payment of church rates and in other matters.<sup>2</sup> The question of commutation of penances was regarded as important. The Archdeacon referred to a predecessor's patent of 1663,<sup>3</sup> which was confirmed by both the Bishop and the Dean and Chapter, and to the Archdeacon of Hereford's Patent to Baldwin in 1677; both these specifically allowed the Official the right to commute penance. Bramston felt that these two post-Restoration precedents were not enough to confirm the right and asked Hords to find something earlier.<sup>4</sup> In his reply of August 1700 Bramston had confirmed that the Archdeacon at his visitation could call people to answer presentments and admonish them to amend, "for the Chancellor is not to meddle in these crimes and persons" presented to the Archdeacon.<sup>5</sup> But by July 1708 Bramston was confirming that no archdeacon had the power to commute except if he had commuted

- 1 There is plenty of evidence to show that the Archdeacon of Salop was carrying out visitations in the 1680's and afterwards in at least 2 out of every 3 years (i.e. when the bishop was not holding his triennial visitation). The Archdeacon of Hereford was also holding visitations but less frequently in the 1670's and 1680's. H.R.O. Visitation Papers Boxes 373 and 375 and Book of Procurations and Synodals. Archdeaconry of Salop. 1684-1726. Act Books 105, 116, 120, 125.
- 2 Archdeaconry of Salop bundle.
- 3 "One Mr. Cole". Archdeaconry of Salop bundle (as before). Reply of 17th March 1708/9.
- 4 Bramston's reply was "'Tis not an act of jurisdiction which does by law belong to an Archdeacon; yet by prescription he may acquire such an authority and if the Patents of a higher date can be found where the like authority is granted I have not doubt but he may legally exercise it .... If the Patents for about a hundred years do show such an authority was then granted to the Official certainly the Archdeacon had it in him and Sir Timothy Baldwin's not using it will not deprive the present Archdeacon of using it again." Archdeaconry of Salop Bundle. Reply of 17th March 1708/9.
- 5 *ibid.* Reply of 26th August 1700.



"time out of mind. He has as good a right to exercise that power as any other Ordinary whatsoever."<sup>1</sup>

In answer to another reply Bramston also affirmed that the Archdeacon might keep courts when he pleased to call those who had been presented at his visitation, even though it might be after Michaelmas or in the time of the Chancellor's visitation, but "'tis best to keep the courts soon after his visitation is over."<sup>2</sup>

Other queries included how to overcome the difficulties resulting from the reduplication of visitation and whether the bishop could impose an Official on the Archdeacon.

There seems little doubt that in the eighteenth century archdeacons in the Hereford diocese did have and did exercise the jurisdiction confirmed by Bramston. The archdeacon's court was clearly sitting in 1696, for as early as September of that year there is a letter from Michael Stephens to the Rector of Lingen directing him to send to the Archdeacon's court at Hereford an account of what money was charged on his parish for the relief of the poor. From the Archdeacon's court it would be transmitted to the Commissioners of Trade.<sup>3</sup> There are clear indications of regular sessions of the court between 1732 and 1767.<sup>4</sup> In the Hereford Record Office there are many copies of orders for penances issued out of the Archdeacon's court. For instance, on 7th November 1733 the Archdeacon issued John Barnes of Ganarew a penance for fornication.<sup>5</sup>

At Oxford, as we have seen, the dispute came to a head in the 1730's. By November 1736 the issue had reached such a pitch that Thomas Tenison, the Chancellor, and George Rye, the Archdeacon, and his Official, Henry Brooke, took the matter to the arbitration of John Audley and Stephen

1 Archdeacon of Salop bundle. Reply of 1st July 1708.

2 Archdeacon of Salop bundle.

3 H.R.O. Box 341. 1735 bundle.

M. Stephens to Rector of Lingen 15th September 1696. H.M.C. Portland III. 579. Stephens was the incumbent vicar.

4 H.R.O. Box 30 Act Book 111 (1729-67).

5 H.R.O. Act Book 109 (1716-33) 166<sup>v</sup>.

Cotterell, assisted by John Bettsworth, the Official Principal of the Court of the Arches.<sup>1</sup>

Since many of the cases heard by the court developed as a result of the visitation, it was a matter of importance to the arbitrators to define the rights of the visitation as clearly as possible. Chancellor Tenison took his case back to the foundation of the Bishopric in 1546 when the Archdeacon of Oxford had his jurisdiction transferred from the Bishopric of Lincoln to the Bishopric of Oxford.<sup>2</sup> Between 1605 and 1632 the Chancellor and Official had been the same person; further confusion occurred because the same Register was appointed for both roles. Tenison insisted that it was only the previous few Officials who had claimed what was admittedly in the current one's Patent. He maintained he had the sole right to issue marriage licences, faculties, sequestrations and relaxations and to make Easter visitation with fees during the inhibition of the Archdeacon. But the Archdeacon repeated his claim to these and to his right to visit every six months except when legally inhibited by the Bishop during his Primary or Triennial Visitation.<sup>3</sup>

Eventually the arbitrators agreed on a division of visitations so that the Chancellor visited at Easter and the Archdeacon at Michaelmas. Though marriage licences properly speaking were the prerogative of the Bishop and his Chancellor, the arbitrators agreed that as several Chancellors had allowed the Archdeacon to issue them, the practice should continue except when the Bishop's Inhibition was in force during a Primary

- 1 On 21st October 1734 Thomas Tenison is recorded as having sat at Watlington as "substitute to the Reverend the Archdeacon of Oxford". It is just possible that this sort of confusion may have created the dispute which arose two years later. The sessions that followed at Islip, Chipping Norton, Woodstock and Oxford between 29th October and 31st October were all taken by Henry Brooke, the Archdeacon's Official.  
M.S. Oxf. Arch. Oxon. e.16 (Visitation Book 1731-4) 102<sup>v</sup> and 104<sup>v</sup> to 111<sup>v</sup>.
- 2 A record of the case may be found in M.S. Oxf. Dioc. c.266 (Register 1689-1797) 34-43<sup>v</sup>.
- 3 An example of an Inhibition of Peculiars in the Hereford Diocese may be found at Hereford Episcopal Register (1755-71) 10<sup>v</sup>. 15th April 1756

or Triennial Visitation. Apart from other matters, it was also agreed that the Register Books and other muniments should be divided appropriately between the two Registries.<sup>1</sup> Correspondence later in the year confirmed that this much was agreed.<sup>2</sup> From then on the Act Books were kept separately as they had been up to 1677.<sup>3</sup>

This, however, was not the end of the matter. In May 1738 the Archdeacon's Register, John Stewart, was cited to appear before the Chancellor in St. Mary's, "touching his open and manifest contempt of the ecclesiastical laws of the realm and of the episcopal authority of the Bishop of Oxford in acting pending the said Bishop's present Primary Visitation ..... contrary to an Inhibition", because he had signed one or more marriage licences under the seal of the Archdeacon's court.<sup>4</sup> In June the Chancellor went further and cited Henry Brooke, the Archdeacon's Official himself, but a month later John Stewart confessed, and, after being told of the "heinousness of the crime", subscribed to his penance.<sup>5</sup>

Meanwhile as Brooke failed to appear on several occasions, Herbert Beaver who was acting as Promoter in the case demanded excommunication of the Official, but to no avail.<sup>6</sup> In November 1738 the affair ended with Brooke's proctor refusing to admit his guilt, and claiming that the licences had been issued without his 'privity and knowledge' by the Register or Deputy-Register. His request for acceptance of his submission was granted with Beaver still demanding condemnation; the case was dismissed.<sup>7</sup>

1 Oxf. Dioc. c.266 (Register 1689-1797) 34-43<sup>v</sup>.

2 Cooper to (Tenison?) 1st December 1737. MS. Oxf. Dioc. c.650. 71.  
Potter to ..... 3rd December 1737. *ibid* 72.

3 M.S. Oxf. Dioc. c.2137 and M.S. Oxf. Arch. Oxon. c.27.

4 M.S. Oxf. Dioc. c.2137 33<sup>v</sup> - 34. The new Bishop was Secker.

5 *ibid.* 37<sup>v</sup> - 40<sup>v</sup>.

6 For more detail on this see Bodl. MS. Top. c.209. 14-15 and MS. Dioc. c 2137. 43<sup>v</sup>.

7 MS. Dioc. c 2137. 49-50<sup>v</sup>. As we can see much later in 1753, Beaver had little time for Stewart. "Those persons who are not quite upright in their dealings will naturally have recourse to some subterfuge... I have, my Lord, very good reasons to think that many depredations have been made upon your office during your Inhibition." Beaver to Secker 1st September 1753. MS. Oxf. Dioc. c.653. 106.



Trouble brewed again much later, in 1753, when John Stewart again incurred displeasure by ignoring the Bishop's Inhibition. Secker, who was still the bishop, dismissed as false Archdeacon Potter's explanation that Stewart had failed to see notice of it. Anxious to patch up the dispute, Potter put forward his conviction that there had been no breach of the Inhibition, for nothing at all had been issued from the Archdeacon's office since before Henry Brooke's death.<sup>1</sup> The cause of the dispute eventually turned out to be the issue by George Sheppard of Enston of some pre-signed marriage licences from Stewart's office.<sup>2</sup>

Beaver again found cause for complaint in summer 1756. Bilston, the Official's surrogate, had granted a licence already signed by Stewart. Chancellor Burton, who regarded it as "not only a great injury to our office but a high insult on your Lordship's authority"<sup>3</sup> suggested declaring the marriage void, but this was of no avail for it soon became obvious that Bilston and Stewart were not acting under their own authority but under the direction of the Official, who had decided to support them.<sup>4</sup> We have no further details of the affair, but it seems likely that like its predecessors it went to Doctors' Commons.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless it exemplifies yet again not only the confusing overlap of jurisdictions but also the jealousy with which legal officials guarded their perquisites. Archdeacon Potter was probably right in assuming that Beaver's behaviour stemmed from worry over the decline in business in both courts and the consequently increased danger from Stewart's activities.

In some dioceses there was a further differentiation; for instance, M.G. Smith in his work on the Exeter diocese in the late seventeenth century detected a differentiation between the courts of the Chancellor

1 He (Potter) felt it would be "disagreeable.... to be concerned in any disputes betwixt the two Deputy-Registrars".

Potter to Secker 14th September 1753. *ibid.* 107.

2 George Sheppard to Burton 4th December 1753.

MS. Oxf. Dioc. c 653. 110-110<sup>v</sup>.

This issue of pre-signed licences was perhaps not uncommon, for in 1680 we read that John Boraston, Rector of Ribsford in the Hereford Diocese, had 30 licences ready to issue.

Boraston to Reynolds 7th February 1680/1. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.

3 Burton to Secker 15th August 1756. MS. Oxf. Dioc. c.653. 158-159.

4 Burton to Secker 26th August 1756. MS. Oxf. Dioc. c.653. 160.

5 The Vicar concerned, Martin Stapylton of Brightwell, apologised, but felt sure that Beaver would have seen and approved of it beforehand.

Stapylton to Bishop. 16th August 1756. MS. Oxf. Dioc. c.653. 161.

as Official Principal and those in which he acted as Vicar-General. Though the delineation between the two was not rigid, broadly speaking the Consistory court dealt with the Official Principal's business, concerning wills, legacies, marriages and sexual offences; the Court of Principal Registry, the Vicar-General's court, concerned itself with more administrative matters such as keeping registers up to date, granting marriage licences, confirming the allotment of seating and instituting clergy to benefices. The advantage of this system was that the Principal Registry was more immediately responsive to the Bishop's wishes and was comparatively uncluttered by testamentary and instance business.<sup>1</sup> There does not seem to have been a separation like this in either the Oxford or Hereford dioceses.<sup>2</sup>

Action in the Courts was normally initiated at a visitation by presentments made by the churchwardens or sometimes by the incumbents. They were usually answers to Articles of Enquiry sent out by the Registry in advance through the apparitors. As we have already seen in Chapter I, attempts had been made at the Restoration to standardise the format of Articles with some success. Usually there was a series of questions under separate heads on the fabric and furnishings of the church building, the condition of the churchyard, the worthiness of the ministers, the behaviour and regularity of attendance of the parishioners, the parish clerk and the churchwardens themselves. By the beginning of the eighteenth century changes were being introduced. For instance, the Hereford Articles of the two Bishops, Philip Bisse (1713-1721) and Benjamin Hoadly (1721-3), include a section on the conduct of legal officers, on whether there had been any abuses of the system, such as ecclesiastical officers exacting more than the legal fees, any apparitors citing people unlawfully or any officers excusing or dismissing cases as

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1. M.G. Smith. *op. cit.* 121-123.

2. The case of Fettiplace and Thorpe on 18th February 1692 in the Oxford diocese at first sight looks as though it reveals a similar situation, but on closer examination the words merely refer to a change in the Court itself from being that of the Archdeacon's Official to that of the Chancellor at a time when Thomas Stafford sat both as Official and surrogate for the Chancellor. It does not refer to a differentiation within the Bishop's jurisdiction but to a change in the function of the court that was sitting. "Tunc Jordan constituit Wood in procur̄. Tunc Dominus ex consensu procurator hinc inde mutasim (sic) coram a curia Offic. ad curiam Cancell. Tunc Dominus monuit Cooke et Smith ..."  
MS Oxf. Arch. Oxon. c.24. 36.

Presumably 'mutasim' is an alternative for 'mutatim' - mutually.



a result of bribery.<sup>1</sup> By 1738 in the Oxford diocese there were questions relating to the area and population of the parishes and a closer examination of the activities of papists and nonconformists. Articles, at least in the early part of the period, in most cases were answered meticulously and as late as 1738 Secker (Bishop of Oxford 1737-58) was ready to demand a high standard,<sup>2</sup> but by this time Hereford respondents were content with answering "Nothing to present" or its equivalent; 156 of 196 existing returns for the Bishop's Triennial Visitation of 1740 are phrased in this way. Sometimes instead of this they wrote a positive recital of what was in order. All the indications are that the diocesan authorities accepted such brief answers.<sup>3</sup> By 1781 the Hereford articles themselves were very much shorter; the wardens were asked to sign that they had "carefully perused" the Articles and to list what needed presenting.<sup>4</sup>

The Articles were delivered by the apparitors to the Churchwardens or sidesmen as required under Canon 119 of 1603.<sup>5</sup> The replies were normally returned in person by the wardens at the visitation which was held in the biggest or most central church within a cluster of deaneries, as we shall see in another chapter. Offenders whose names appeared in the presentments were cited to attend the appropriate court to answer the accusations made. Between visitations, presentments could also be made through the apparitor, and the accused would have to attend an intervening session of the court.

Frequently those cited could not be found, in which case a decree viis et modis would be issued requesting a search for them to be made.<sup>6</sup>

1. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. Articles of 1716, 1719 and 1722.
2. Lloyd-Jukes (ed) 1738 Visitation Returns 4-5.
3. H.R.O. Visitation Box 53 (Visitation Returns of 1740).
4. H.R.O. Visitation Box 65 (Chancellor's Visitations of 1781).
5. Gibson Codex II 1003.
6. It is quite clear from a study of the Hereford Act Books that the normal procedure would be as follows:- If 'Personally cited' and not appearing, then the case would be 'reserved' and finally the offender would be excommunicated. If the citation was returned 'sought for' the decree viis et modis would be issued. Again excommunication would follow. If the charge was denied by the person cited, the court would order a notice for the churchwardens to appear at the next court. If they in their turn did not appear, the case would be dismissed.

In the Oxford diocese in Beaver's time as Register the apparitor put 'P' against the names of those personally cited and 'S' against those who were only sought. Beaver criticised Secker for continuing or reserving cases whether they had been personally cited or sought. If they had been 'sought', they could not have been reserved or continued. 'Continuation' was continuation of the citation; if they had not been personally cited they could not be 'continued'. Beaver to Secker 1st June 1744. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.652. 40<sup>v</sup>.



The apparitor would have another search himself before fixing the decree either to the offender's last-known residence or to the door of the parish church, so that by all means attempts would be made to notify him of the accusation and citation. Often even this procedure produced no result, for the wrongdoer might have fled the diocese rather than face the ignominy of a court proceeding and possible subsequent public penance. The word 'fugit' appears with some frequency in the Act Books of both dioceses.<sup>1</sup>

Even if the apparitor found the accused and presented him with the citation, he might refuse to attend. The case might then be reserved to the next session and if refusal was persistent then a decree of excommunication would be issued. The accused might deny the accusation at the court in which case the matter would once again be reserved until the churchwardens had a chance to put their point at the next session. On a number of occasions the court would dismiss the case.

Penalties were either admonition or penance. Those admonished were expected to mend their ways under pain of contempt if they failed to do so, when the normal procedure was excommunication. Penance could be either public or private. Public penance, undoubtedly a harrowing experience, was usually enforced for bastardy, illicit cohabitation, and fornication; it took the form of a public admission of guilt before the assembled congregation of the parish on a particular Sunday; the penitent had to be clad in a white sheet with a wand in his hand. For instance, in 1667 Anne Roberts of Clun, convicted of bastardy, had to appear at Clun church and stand in the porch "from the tolling of the second bell till the first lesson be ended, barefooted and barelegged with her hair over her shoulders and having a white sheet over her wearing apparel and holding a white rod in her hand after the manner of a penitent sinner .... and the second lesson being ended she shall be brought into the church and be placed in some eminent place near the minister's reading desk where she shall" remain "all the time of divine service and sermon and immediately after

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1 In 1743 Jane Morgan and James Bayliss of Much Wenlock cited for bastardy were both reported to have fled. H.R.O. Act Book 159. John Vaughan of Ross in 1687 was cited for non-payment of church repair dues but eventually he was recorded as 'Fugit in exercitum'. H.R.O. Act Book 105. 7.

the reading of the Nicene Creed she shall make confession of her faults as followeth". Then followed a formal recital of her wrongdoings.<sup>1</sup> The less serious sin of ante-nuptial fornication and clandestine marriage usually merited a private penance before the incumbents and churchwardens in the vestry of the church. For instance, in November 1669 Henry and Jane Mills of Pensax, convicted of ante-nuptial fornication, had to make confession in their "ordinary wearing apparel" before the minister and churchwardens after the sermon.<sup>2</sup> There is little wonder that some penitents jibbed at the public admission of their guilt and either fled or, if they could afford it, commuted the penalty for a cash payment either in court or at the house or the temporary residence of the Register.<sup>3</sup> If the penance was duly performed, the incumbent returned a certificate to that effect to the Registry who then issued an Absolution.

With regard to commutation there were rules which were supposed to be followed by the officials in granting them, but, as Gibson declared in his Codex, they did not seem to have been enforced much in his day.<sup>4</sup> For instance, there was to be no commutation except "for weighty reasons"; the bishop himself was to be privy to be commutation, according to the Canons of 1640, and the money was to be applied to "pious and charitable uses"; in fact the 1640 Canons stipulate "the relief of the poor and other pious and public uses." Furthermore, commutation was not to be granted a second time to the same person for the same fault.<sup>5</sup>

There is little doubt that the Registries were receiving considerable sums of money in this way. In the Hereford diocese we know that a total of £235.5.8 was received between 1663 and September 1676.<sup>6</sup> During the eight years of Bisse's episcopate (1713-21) commutation money amounted to £108.18.01. Between January 1722 and January 1747 over £340 was received in to the Registry from this source.<sup>7</sup> An account was kept of how the money

1 H.R.O. Visitation Box 1 (absolutions).

2 *ibid.*

3 See page 55 of this thesis.

4 Gibson Codex II 1092 note 5 "I am sensible that none of them are in force at this day".

5 *ibid.*

6 Hereford Episcopal Register 1672-82. 44.

7 These may have been sums relating to cathedral peculiars. Hereford Cathedral Book 2 E VII 509.

was spent, but it is clear that it was not always defrayed for the use of the poor. It is true that in February 1724 £1.1. was given to an apparitor, Henry Powell, "then in distress" and in January 1730 £2.2. was paid to John Johnson, "a poor industrious worker" and father of ten children, who had lately broken his thigh. More frequently, we find disbursements for new furnishings for the courts at Ludlow and Hereford, for a new altar at the Cathedral or for new pews or silver for a parish within the jurisdiction of the Cathedral chapter.<sup>1</sup>

If penance was not done or commuted, then the court would have recourse to excommunication, for this was the only sanction usable against the laity; clergy could be brought to heel by suspension, or if necessary, sequestration of revenues. Excommunication would be used in cases of contempt when the accused failed to appear in answer to a citation<sup>2</sup> or if a convicted person failed to take note of a monition or to perform a penance; there was certainly no power of arrest, fine or distraint. There has been some debate about the potency of these weapons, described by Christopher Hill as "the rusty swords of the Church".<sup>3</sup> There is ample evidence to show that it was much over-used and had thus to some extent fallen into disrepute. For instance, Gibson complained that "the frequent use of excommunication in cases of contumacy for not appearing or disobeying of sentences, though in the smallest matters, and those oft times of a civil nature, is one principal means of bringing a contempt upon it and yet is the only way which a spiritual court can enforce obedience." Bishop Secker would have liked excommunication reserved for crimes.<sup>4</sup> It is possible that it could still be effective against

1 Hereford Cathedral Book 2 E VII 518, 521, 516, 522.

2 In the Oxford diocese at least the usual practice was for the defendant to be called three times and if he did not appear the judge would declare him contumacious. Even then the tendency was to reserve excommunication until the next sitting.  
eg. MS. Oxf. Dioc. c.2137 seriatim.

3 C. Hill Society and Puritanism 354.

4 Gibson Codex I 1095n.

Secker Works (London 1804) IV 138. (Charge of 1753).

Blackburne, later Archbishop of York, admitted to Wake in 1718 that excommunication was quite useless.

Blackburne to Wake 23rd August 1718. Wake MSS. XXI 27.



the well-to-do up to the end of the period, because the excommunicate's exclusion from the Sacrament effectively meant under existing legislation that he could not qualify for public office; but even this is dubious for an ultimate deterrent such as this would rarely be used.<sup>1</sup> An excommunicate could not be buried in a churchyard, though there do seem to have been loopholes. For instance, in February 1674/5 Richard Elton asked for a special licence for the burial of an excommunicate in his parish. The Archdeacon, William Johnson, who was also Bishop's Chaplain, passed the matter on to Griffith Reynolds, the Register, as he could find no reference in the Book of Common Prayer to allow it, but in this case "there is somewhat to be said for this man if the bearer speaks truth. I consent to what is regular, then if you grant a licence I affix my fiat which may be done when I see you."<sup>2</sup>

- 1 For instance, the law said that Roman Catholic recusants were ostracised. In fact well-to-do Catholics were rarely touched, though one would expect them to suffer most from the penal laws. Information on other matters against the gentry sometimes was lodged with the court. For instance, the authorities were informed that Andrew Vaughan and his wife "received a strange gentlewoman who is full of money and great with child and will not give any account who she is and whether she has a husband or not." The anonymous informer declared that "such things are punishable by law and ought to be looked after".  
H.R.O. Visitation Box 18. A scrap of paper amongst the 1672 presentments.  
Bishop Croft, partly it is true because of public opinion, acted against Lady Scudamore who was accused of adultery, but it was difficult for him, partly because of Lord Scudamore's importance in the county and partly because of his near relationship with him. He hoped to see her personally, but she escaped out of the county. Croft asked the Archbishop to be relieved of the case by having it removed to the Court of the Arches. Nevertheless he felt bound in conscience to express the view that "it was great injustice and partiality to punish such crimes in mean persons where the offence was scarce any scandal and to pass over great ones where the scandal was so notorious".  
Croft to Archbishop of Canterbury 11th August 1682. MS. Tanner 147. 107.  
2nd September 1682. *ibid.* 109.  
20th December 1682. *ibid.* 105.
- 2 Elton to Johnson 21st February 1674. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.  
On 28th April 1683 a licence was granted for the burial of an excommunicate, Edward Woollacott, at Eardisley.  
H.R.O. Subscription Book (1682-1710). IV. 3.  
On 7th December 1691 John Barker, excommunicate of Chetton, was buried in the churchyard. The necessary affidavit was brought. Chetton Parish Register (1538-1722).  
On 23rd January 1726 Adam Hunt of Williamscot who died under excommunication was also buried. Wardington Parish Register (1726-68) ii.

More importantly perhaps, the excommunicate could make no will nor could he bring any civil action for recovery of goods. No doubt too in some places there was an attempt to exclude him from normal social intercourse;<sup>1</sup> in 1677 Thomas Wigley of Bromfield was presented for buying and selling and "having frequent discourse with excommunicated persons"; though the case was dismissed, it shows something of the attitude at least of some churchwardens in the early part of the period towards them.<sup>2</sup> Quite apart from the secular disadvantages there is no doubt that some felt keenly the spiritual ostracism that excommunication implied. M.G. Smith quotes two such cases in Devon; both William Mayo, a priest, and Samuel Clover, a scrapboiler of Crediton, were much concerned at the thought of dying without being reconciled to the Church.<sup>3</sup> In the 1670's Thomas Prosser told Reynolds how he had had to refuse the husband of an excommunicate thanksgiving for the safe delivery of a child.<sup>4</sup>

The procedure for excommunication was straightforward. By tradition and the Canons of 1640 it could only be pronounced by the Bishop or other person in Holy Orders; in causes of correction it had to be by the Bishop himself or another ecclesiastical judge in orders, but in cases of contumacy it could be pronounced by "some grave minister beneficed in the diocese, being a Master of Arts at least and appointed by the Bishop." His name had to be inscribed on the Instrument issued under seal of the Court. For a time after 1571 lay judges had been granted authority for this purpose in instance cases, but this had been taken away again in 1640.<sup>5</sup> The incumbent read the Instrument of Excommunication to the congregation.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Excommunicates were not to have social intercourse by law. This was stipulated by Boniface, John Stratford and Article 33 of the 39 Articles. Gibson 1095.
  2. H.R.O. Act Book 149. 103.
  3. M.G. Smith op. cit. 64.
  4. Prosser to Reynolds 11th October (1676). H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.
  5. Gibson op. cit. 1095 and 1095n.
  6. The excommunication would be delivered to the incumbent by the apparitor. In March 1691/2 William Morgan of Presteigne asked the Register for leave to delay reading them in church until after Easter. He had received four excommunications. Richard Jones had left the parish two years previously to be a soldier in Ireland and had died there. Two of the others were mistaken. Meredith Jones had paid his church loan 3 or 4 years before and Hall, the churchwarden, had forgotten to stop the suit. Legg's case had been discharged by the Chancellor. Morgan to Reynolds 15th March 1691. H.R.O. Box 331. 1694 (sic) bundle.

Over-use had thrown excommunication into disrepute. The excommunicate had 40 days in which to seek absolution and to pay the necessary contumacy fees (Canon 65 of 1603).<sup>1</sup> The decree for absolution would be issued from the court. Like the excommunication this had to be read out to the whole congregation. An example was the one for William Watkins in March 1664/5 issued by Chancellor Baldwin and undersigned by the Register, Staverton. After the absolution and restitution to the church had been declared "in plena congregationis" the Vicar, Charles Godwin, certified to this effect at the foot of the document and returned it to the Registry.<sup>2</sup> Exceptionally absolution seems to have been carried out in private; Mary Ballard had been excommunicated for non-appearance on a testamentary matter; she and her father went to the court where "she was absolved by a minister in a private room apart from the company and laid (sic) his hand on her shoulder (not bidding her to kneel)". In Boraston's view she was "recta in curia, in curia recta".<sup>3</sup>

If the excommunicate was not absolved in the required period of 40 days he was to be denounced every six months. Consett complained that many such people deliberately waited up to 39 days in order to delay proceedings and he suggested that the ecclesiastical judge could and indeed should proceed against the recalcitrant to give good reason why his excommunication was standing so long.<sup>4</sup> If more than 40 days had elapsed, the court could take more positive action. Application could be made to the ecclesiastical judge, originally responsible for the excommunication, for letters significatory (significavit) under the seal of the civil judge who thus decreed that the excommunicate "may be signified to the King's Majesty in Order to the taking of the Body". The Significavit addressed to the King would be delivered to the Lord Chancellor. The Court of Chancery would then issue the writ De Excommunicatio Capiendo directed to the sheriff of the appropriate county requiring him to apprehend the excommunicate and have him imprisoned until

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1. Gibson Codex 1101.

2. H.R.O. Box 1.

3. Boraston to Reynolds 29th April 1678. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.

4. Consett op. cit. 39-42 for the following description of the procedure.



such time as he had satisfied the Church for his contempt.<sup>1</sup> The procedure was long and there is not much evidence to suggest that it was followed very frequently,<sup>2</sup> though there is a case in 1691 when James Robbins of Stoke Lacy was cited to show why he should not be 'signified'.<sup>3</sup>

The threat of a writ was often enough to bring the recalcitrant to heel. For instance, when William Baddaley of St. Martin's, Oxford, first cited in 1663, had the writ issued against him after he had "a long time" stood under the sentence of excommunication, he appeared at court on 10th December 1664, apologised for his contempt and asked for absolution. He was absolved on 27th December 1664.<sup>4</sup> Likewise in 1662 John Higgins of Oxford who had originally been cited for his non-attendance at church had been excommunicated when he failed to appear. It was the issue of the writ de excommunicatio capiendo that brought him to petition for absolution. He was absolved, warned to frequent church and to receive the sacrament the following Easter.<sup>5</sup>

One improvement suggested under Elizabeth I was that the Court should first pronounce these people contumacious; if they did not appear and submit within 40 days then a writ De Contumace Capiendo would be issued which would have had the same effect as the De Excommunicatio Capiendo writ. The benefit would have been that the actual process of excommunication would have been more sparingly used and thus would have fallen into less disrepute.<sup>6</sup> As M.G. Smith has pointed out, such a procedure would have been frowned upon by many of the bishops in this period as it would have implied too great a dependence on secular authority; it might well have been exploited by the common lawyers to the detriment of the Church courts.<sup>7</sup> Another solution, to give the ecclesiastical courts the power of arrest, like that of the Vice-Chancellor, might have given them the teeth they needed.<sup>8</sup>

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1. Ecclesiastical Courts Commission (1883) XXIV Historical Appendix XII 231-3 has in full 'An Act for the due execution of the writ De Excommunicatio Capiendo'. 5 Eliz. Cap. XXIII.
  2. As Emmison discovered in his study of ecclesiastical courts in the sixteenth century, this procedure was adopted only rarely in Elizabethan times. F.G. Emmison Elizabethan Life: Morals and the Church Courts. 304.
  3. H.R.O. Act Book 105. 95<sup>v</sup>.
  4. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.4. 115<sup>v</sup>, 245.
  5. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.4. 60<sup>v</sup>, 61<sup>v</sup>.
  6. Gibson Codex II 1095n.
  7. M.G. Smith op. cit. 65-66. A writ like this was finally authorised by the Ecclesiastical Courts Act of 1813.
  8. *ibid.* 67.

It is clear that many were concerned at the effect of excommunication and the excessive zeal of the courts on their flocks. The Hereford files reveal a number of petitions on behalf of excommunicates whose sentences seem to have lacked justice. For instance, in 1674, Edmund Skinner, Rector of Cradley, wrote on behalf of one of his parishioners, Margaret George, "who stands excommunicated for not appearing at a certain day appointed by the ecclesiastical court". A friend of his, Martin Sandys, a barrister, held that the court was mistaken and he resented the action of the apparitor and of the officials. "It is my earnest request that she may be restored to us again and that the informer be forced to bear her charges and pay the costs into the court for the times require more encouraging of church comers than to forbid them."<sup>1</sup> John Boraston, Rector at Ribsford, was a frequent petitioner. In 1667 he asked for William and Mary Tucker of his parish to have free absolution; they had been excommunicated for not appearing to answer a presentment on non-attendance at Easter communion and later for incontinency before marriage. Boraston claimed that they had been unable to make an appearance because of their poverty; "he liveth in a coppice-wood in a poor half-built cabbin of turffes and all he hath to live by is what he can get by his labour at the waterworks".<sup>2</sup> Similarly a petition from James Bernard, the Rector of Dore, on behalf of Humphrey Henry Williams asked for relief. He too had been cited for not attending Easter communion and had then been excommunicated for non-appearance at court a long while before the petition. He now wanted to be absolved and restored but "through weakness and sickness is not able to stir out of his house, being very poor withal and no person daring to assist him with relief. I think you might do a very Christian and pious work to use the means that he may be absolved and received again into the bosom of the Church."<sup>3</sup> In 1670 Thomas Holt of Knighton-on-Teme requested absolution for Elizabeth Lane "a fit object of your pity and to be freely absolved; because of her excommunication she has lately fallen

- 1 Seymour to (Sandys?) n.d. H.R.O. Visitation Box 324.  
Foster,
- 2 Petition of Boraston and others 7th October 1667. Hereford Vis. Box 324.
- 3 Petition of James Bernard 5th January 1667/8. H.R.O. Vis. Box 324.

into a strange distemper and slighted (sic) by her husband and so become one of the poor of the parish."<sup>1</sup> Sometimes the excommunicate would petition for himself. William Apperley wrote to Reynolds in 1673 claiming that he was too poor to "fetch of myself of this excommunication."<sup>2</sup> In 1678 a petition was made by William Owen, incumbent of Pontesbury, on behalf of Sambrook who had been excommunicated for not receiving the sacrament at Easter; it was claimed that he was "a decrepit wretch above fourscore years old and lives at a great distance". The court was lenient and allowed commutation.<sup>3</sup>

Nevertheless, there is little doubt that many in the church were concerned at the effect of commutations and easy absolutions on the authority of the church courts. For instance, as we have already seen, Bishop Mews of Bath and Wells was complaining in 1674 that several Presbyterians of Chard whom he had excommunicated had obtained easy absolution from the Court of the Arches and had been absolved privately.<sup>4</sup> Likewise in 1738 Thomas Toovey, Vicar of Watlington, complained that there was little regard in the spiritual courts to presentments for bastardy because of the easy commutations. "This I really think has been some encouragement to vice and I am sure a great occasion of contempt and disdain of the spiritual courts and authority."<sup>5</sup>

1. Petition of Thomas Holt 11th April 1670. H.R.O. Visitation Box 324.
2. Apperley to Reynolds (1673) H.R.O. Visitation Box 324.
3. Petition by Owen 17th March 1678. H.R.O. Visitation Box 324.  
Bishop Croft (Hereford 1662-1691) tended to show leniency where his officials did not. For instance, in 1665/6 he responded to a petition from Jane Croome of Monkland who had been teaching without a licence. He ordered her to be discharged without costs; "I do order that this poor woman be not molested for her teaching poor children to read." A few years later he issued a licence forthwith to John Blackway who had been teaching without licence and added "I do farther require that no honest poor man or woman be molested in this kind for it was never intended that such teaching should require a licence." Petition of Croome and Order of Croft 3rd March 1665/6.  
Order of Croft 24th September 1674. H.R.O. Visitation Box 324.
4. "This hath so much encouraged the rest of the faction that they now plainly say they care not for the proceedings here and indeed they need not if absolution from above is so easily obtained." Mews to (Sheldon) 12th August 1674. MS Tanner 42. 119.
5. Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. 165.



An accurate and meaningful statistical survey of the cases heard in the courts is difficult to make. Different registrars at different periods used varying methods of recording the activities of the courts. Sometimes they noted every time each case came up for hearing, even if it was reserved for a future sitting;<sup>1</sup> sometimes and rather more frequently they recorded the first time a particular case was heard and then future action on it was inscribed under the original entry;<sup>2</sup> yet again, in some of the Act Books the names of the offenders and the action of the court appear without any mention of the offence. Nevertheless, it is possible to detect a marked decline in the activity of the courts in the century covered by our period. For instance, on one day, 10th February 1663/4, at the Consistory Court in the Archdeaconry of Salop 83 cases (48 for absence from church) came up for hearing, whereas the total heard by the Chancellor for the whole year in 1746 in the same archdeaconry was only 32, though it is true that the normal figure in the 1740's and 1750's was between 70 and 80.

In the Oxford diocese the figures tell much the same story. On one day in 1663 (17th January 1662/3) 57 cases were set down for hearing, though in fact many of these were "reserved" because the accused failed to attend. In 1743 there were only 18 cases recorded for the whole year and these included voluntary confessions at the house of the Register. By 1755 there were only 9 and in 1758 3.

Certainly at Oxford worries over the situation show themselves in some of the correspondence and in the official records. In May 1744 Register Beaver reported that "the Chancellor's Courts about this time were entirely dropped and all the causes both of office and instance discontinued" except those recorded "in the minute book of acts" and in "the Register Book of Faculties."<sup>3</sup> In September 1753 Archdeacon Potter reported to Secker Beaver's growing concern about the decline in cases and the consequent loss of revenue.<sup>4</sup> Then by July 1758 according

1 As in H.R.O. Box 28 Act Book 99 (1663-5).

2 As for instance H.R.O. Box 29 Book 105 (1687-91).

3 MS. Oxf. Dioc. c.2138 (Court Book 1739-82) 20.

4 Potter to Secker 14th September 1753. MS. Oxf. Dioc. c.653. 107.

to Beaver the Chancellor had ceased to hold court at all with any frequency.<sup>1</sup>

This significant and steep decline in court activity deserves some explanation, especially as there is little doubt that after the Restoration in 1660 the courts had been revived with their full and ancient authority. Dr. G.V. Bennett has shown that the Declaration of Indulgence of 1687 and the consequent misunderstanding of the Toleration Act of 1689 had much to do with the decline.<sup>2</sup> Certainly in the Hereford diocese the earlier Caroline Declaration of 1672 apparently had a marked, though temporary, impact on the number of cases. On 15th March 1671/2, the day the Declaration was made, the court for the Hereford Archdeaconry, sitting at Leominster, had 80 persons cited to appear; a fortnight later it had 55 and in the four subsequent sessions up to 26th July it had on average just over 42 a time.<sup>3</sup> This was in spite of a slackening in the frequency of the sittings. Likewise in the Shropshire Archdeaconry there was a distinct drop. There were 52 cases on 12th March a few days before the Declaration and then a decline to 44 (25 of which came from previous sittings) on 26th March, 23 on 16th April, 12 on 23rd July and then only one on August 20th.<sup>4</sup> Then after a summer of declining business there was a sudden burst of activity on September 3rd.<sup>5</sup> The court at Ludlow seemed to ignore the Declaration which in fact remained in force until 7th March 1673. Of the 96 cases on that day two were papists and of those cited for absence from church one couple, Roger Andrews and his wife of Broseley, were clearly dissenters and were also cited for "seducing others from church". Another William Ball was accused of assisting Roger Andrews by "railing at the minister and depraving the Book of Common Prayer".<sup>6</sup> Most of the cases on that day were from Ludlow itself and concerned absence from the Easter sacrament several months before. The following sitting dealt with only eight cases after which there was a spell

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1. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.2139. 64. This book ends with a series of courts held under the Register's son, George Beaver, acting as surrogate in the official presence of his father. *ibid.* 64<sup>v</sup> - 66<sup>v</sup>.
  2. Britain After The Glorious Revolution Chapter 7 by G.V. Bennett, especially 156-159. Bennett's views are strongly restated in his biography of Francis Atterbury 9. P. Hair agrees that it was with the grant of toleration in the late 1680's that the irremediable decline of the courts began. This was furthered by the enlightened toleration of the clergy in the mid-eighteenth century. P. Hair (ed.) Before the Bawdy Court (London 1972) 23.
  3. H.R.O. Act Book 100 (1665-72) 192<sup>v</sup> - 213<sup>v</sup>.
  4. H.R.O. Act Book 148. 214-233<sup>v</sup>.
  5. *ibid.* 234.
  6. H.R.O. Act Book 148. 235.

before the increase in activity began again.<sup>1</sup>

The Oxford figures are more difficult to assess, partly because for some reason the act books for this period are poorly and untidily recorded.

The Declaration of 1672 had suspended the penal laws, but the King had expressly stated that the Church of England was to be "preserved and to remain entire in its doctrine, discipline and government as now it stands established by law."<sup>2</sup> James II's Declaration of 14th April 1687 did not have this safeguard; "all and all manner of penal laws in matters ecclesiastical for not coming to church or not receiving the sacrament or for any other nonconformity be immediately suspended."<sup>3</sup> According to Bennett, from summer 1687 a whole class of business in the Church courts concerning Church attendance fell away and the number of moral cases against the laity diminished noticeably.<sup>4</sup> In the Hereford diocese the effect was rapid. There was not a single case for non-attendance at the Easter court of 1687 out of a total of 259 cases; this was a mere ten days after the Declaration.<sup>5</sup> Likewise in the Exeter diocese few were brought before the courts after Spring 1687 for not attending church. There also disappeared citations for not receiving the Easter sacrament, not sending children to be baptised or catechised and for ill-behaviour in the church or churchyard.<sup>6</sup>

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1. H.R.O. Act Books 148 and 149. There was not so much litigation against papists and non-churchgoers in Salop as in Hereford and therefore there was less sign of a change after the Declaration of 1672. Nevertheless, there was a marked decline in all litigation; the whole system seemed to have been knocked sideways. In the Hereford Archdeaconry on 29th March, a fortnight after publication of the Declaration, no papists or quakers were cited, though they had been regularly cited before; in August 1671 there had been 31 and 4 respectively and on 15th March 1671/2 13 and 2. H.R.O. Act Book 100. 159-213.
  2. Nevertheless the situation was fluid enough for one to be cited for not receiving the Sacrament at Easter in 1672 when Richard Byrd of Stanton-upon-Arrow was excommunicated for this, in spite of his appearance and confession, and for affirming that "he did question and doubt whether the Church here was God's Church or not". *ibid.* 198.
  3. English Historical Documents VIII 387.
  4. *ibid.* 396.
  5. Bennett in Britain after the Glorious Revolution 159.
  6. H.R.O. Box 29 Book 105.
  6. M.G. Smith *op. cit.* 89.



The Toleration Act of 1689 specifically stated that the law regarding church attendance was still in force and those who did not attend a licensed dissenting chapel were expected to attend their parish church. But enforcement of this was easier said than done. For one thing the meaning of the Act was always in doubt and at the parish level there is evidence of churchwardens sometimes, and the majority of lay people ~~more~~ *often*, interpreting the Act quite differently from the government. They saw it as a continuation of the status quo expressed in the Declaration of Indulgence. For instance, according to Bennett the churchwardens of Ditton, Surrey, who were brought to book for not presenting absentees replied confidently "liberty of conscience being allowed by supreme authority, we have nothing of neglect or defect to present."<sup>1</sup> The misunderstanding over the legal position may even be reflected in the Hereford Visitation Articles of 1716. Article 32 refers to dissenting teachers "qualified according to the Act of Indulgence"; the respondents at Pencombe and at Almeley repeat this formula.<sup>2</sup>

Once it was admitted that parishioners could go to worship elsewhere than to the parish church it was difficult to check total absentees. As the Archdeacon of Norwich complained, the Toleration Act had not so much given people liberty of conscience as destroyed any control over church-going. "Although the act allows no such liberty, the people will understand it so"; whatever anyone said, churchwardens would not present for church absence "though they go nowhere else but to the alehouse, for this liberty they will have".<sup>3</sup> In the Hereford archdeaconry there was a drop, though at first not as significant as one might have expected (370 cases in 1687, 219 in 1688, 230 in 1689\*, 195 in 1690, 240 in 1691 and then a sharp drop in late 1695 to 92)<sup>4</sup> but all this is subject to the difficulties imposed by haphazard recording on the part of the Registrar. Once again, the Oxford figures are difficult to assess because of poor recording in the Act Books. Nevertheless

1. Bennett in Britain after the Glorious Revolution 162.
2. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. But almost certainly the term 'Act of Indulgence', used here, refers to the Toleration Act.
3. Bennett op. cit. 162-3.
4. H.R.O. Act Books 105, 106, 107.

\* 1689 excludes a count of many Anabaptists.

overall figures for Oxford between 1660 and 1760 show a similar sign of decline. In Oxford between 10th January 1662/3 and April 11th 1663, a period of three months, 478 cases were recorded. The average for each of the 14 sittings was 34.4. As far as we can determine, in the crucial years of the Declaration of Indulgence and the Toleration Act the figures were 161 (1687), 180 (1688) and 260 (1689); the position remains unclear because the Office and Instance cases have been mixed in the records, but there does not seem to have been a dropping away immediately after the Declaration. Rather this occurred within the next decade. In the three months from 16th January 1691/2 to 30th April 1692 there were 191 cases, an average of 13.7 for each of the 14 sessions, compared with 34.4 in the same period in 1662/3. By 1701 the average was 8.87. In 1743 there were 18 cases recorded in the whole year and by 1758 only three for the whole year.

More interesting perhaps is the change in the nature of the cases in the same period, but in this there is some variation between the two dioceses. Certainly at first non-attendance at church was a matter of major concern to the courts and yet after 1687 it was hardly apparent at all as a citable offence in the Hereford diocese, though this is less true in the Oxford diocese. In the Salop archdeaconry on one day, 10th February 1663, of a total of 83 cases 57.8% (48) were for absence from church, 14.4% (12) for moral offences, one for non-payment of rates and 3.6% (3) were testamentary. At Easter 1686 only 39 were presented for non-attendance. Even after the Declaration of Indulgence of 1687 and of the Toleration Act two years later, non-attendance featured, but in decreasing numbers. At the end of the period, of the 733 cases recorded at the Bishop's Triennial and Chancellor's Visitations between 1743 and 1760 in the Shropshire Archdeaconry alone only 0.6% (5) were for non-attendance; in one year in this jurisdiction out of 71 cases 66.2% (47) were for sexual offences, 14% (10) for non-payment of rates and 16.9% (12) for churchwardens not fulfilling their duties. Between 1743 and 1760 in the Hereford Archdeaconry only 3.8% (28 out of 732) of the cases were for absence from church.

In the Oxford Act Books it is impossible to analyse types of offence in any meaningful way because offences are not mentioned except where evidence or accusation is quoted verbatim and the record is in any case

untidy and haphazard, but it is possible to detect a decline, though less steep, in this type of offence. There was still citation for non-attendance at church or at the sacrament in 1686.<sup>1</sup> Non-attendance remained a cited offence in the Oxford courts in the 1730's; for instance, in the Michaelmas Law Term 1738 12 out of the 62 cases were for this offence. Between 12th November 1737 and December 1743 in Oxford there was a total of 176 cases cited against laymen. Of these 55% (97) were for sexual offences, 10% (18 - all before 1739) for non-attendance, 5.6% for faculties for pews and galleries, 17% for non-payment of dues and 10% were testamentary. Of the 92 cases recorded between 1743 and 1758 in the episcopal act book at Oxford 62 were connected with moral offences, 12 for non-payment of dues and none at all for absence from church, sabbath-breaking or misbehaviour during services.

Though the categories of offence changed in the period, courts often showed sympathy and understanding throughout the century. For instance, in 1668 Mary Merry of Marston was presented for non-attendance at the Easter sacrament. Her claim that she was the only servant of her mistress who was then sick and needed her presence was accepted by the court and the case was dismissed.<sup>2</sup> As late as 1750 four men from Abdon and their wives who had been presented for non-attendance were dealt with lightly; one couple was dismissed and the others were admonished.<sup>3</sup> John Bedford of Moccas who in May 1756 was cited for non-attendance "nor frequenting any other place of religious worship" was admonished to bring a certificate of attendance to the next sitting.<sup>4</sup>

Some may have been accused of a sin of omission; others were arraigned for positively breaking the sabbath either, like Richard Froome of Wigmore, by "selling ale and strong waters",<sup>5</sup> like William Pinches of Ludlow for selling "ale or cider",<sup>6</sup> or for pursuing their professional

1. For instance, in Hilary Term three men from St. Peter-le-Bailey, Oxford, were cited for not receiving the sacrament at Easter. Several others from St. Mary's parish were also brought to court for the same offence. Widow Overton was sick at Easter and went at Whitsun instead; Richard Crowther said he was at Gloucester at the time. But the Court were not unreasonable. Henry Harrold of Lillingston Lovell was ordered to receive the sacrament at Christmas (ad participandum Eucharisticum in Festum Nativit. Domin.). MS Oxf. Dioc. c.14. 8<sup>v</sup>, 10.

2. MS Oxf. Arch. Oxon. c.17. 158<sup>v</sup>. She had been at Whitsun instead.

3. H.R.O. Act Book 110 (Office 1734-62).

4. *ibid.*

5. H.R.O. Act Book 105. 21.

6. H.R.O. Act Book 159 (1753). On 26th January 1666 William Clark of Broughton Poggs was cited for selling ale and cider on the Lord's day. His excuse that three travellers "very dry and almost spent for want of drink" asked for drink was accepted and the case was dismissed after admonition. They had stayed for about 1 hour. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.5. 177<sup>v</sup>. H.R.O. Act Book 159 (1753) - William Pinches.



occupation on the Lord's Day.<sup>1</sup> Yet others played games; skittles, tennis, football, ninepins and fives are all mentioned.<sup>2</sup> Some fished<sup>3</sup> or caught rabbits "with netts and other ways"<sup>4</sup> and so incurred a summons. William Tringham, Vicar of Goodrich, complained that Thomas Thomas "plays on the harp, leads away the young sort to dance upon the sabbath days in the afternoons and by relation he hath more with him than I have at church."<sup>5</sup>

In the matter of sabbath observance the clergy seemed more tolerant than the churchwardens and the apparitors. For instance, in August 1665 John Barbour of Clifton defended Joan Pitter "an aged widow of 70, sickly very poor and of good Christian life . . . . for she may not be able to come to church (as she saith) at Easter."<sup>6</sup> Again, as we have already seen, in March 1678/9 William Owen of Pontesbury acknowledged the churchwardens' duty to present "an old poor man Sambrook of Ritton who stands excommunicate for not receiving the Sacrament last Easter", but he asked the Register for leniency for the old man was "a decrepit wretch above fourscore years old" living "in the utmost verge of the parish".<sup>7</sup> The Vicar of Birley, Richard Corfield, asked Reynolds, the Register to "do what kindness you can" for a poor woman whose husband out of malice had been presented for grinding upon the sabbath.<sup>8</sup> Boraston, after personally examining an accusation that Humphrey Edwards had been playing ninepins on Sunday, found that he

1. John Cole, a butcher, and Thomas Waring, a barber, both of Ledbury (1747). H.R.O. Act Book 110. At Ross in 1716 it was reported that "barbers do usually trim on the Lord's Day in the morning." H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. Replies to 1716 Visitation Articles. In May 1662 John Coggs of St. Giles, Oxford, admitted to working publicly at prayer time on St. Philip and St. James' Day. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.3. 20.
2. ( i ) skittles (1691) - Henry Jones of Llanrothal. H.R.O. Book 105. 96.  
( ii ) tennis (1691) - William Powell of New Radnor. *ibid.* 97.  
(iii) ninepins - Humphrey Edwards of Ribsford.  
Boraston to Reynolds 7th February 1680. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.  
( iv ) ball (1687) - Mayo of Marcle Magna. H.R.O. Act Book 105. 9.  
( v ) fives - John Haynes and John Martin of Norton Canon.  
H.R.O. Visitation Box 53.
3. Henry Jones of Llanrothal (see note 2 above).
4. James Callow and two others of Bromyard (1687). H.R.O. Act. Book 105. 31.
5. Tringham to Reynolds 27th August 1674. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.
6. H.R.O. Book 99. 412<sup>v</sup>. (paper attached to page).
7. Petition by Owen 17th March 1678. H.R.O. Visitation Box 324.
8. Corfield to Reynolds (1680). H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.

had not played at all for three or four years; "his parents are honest persons and himself a laborious thrifty young man and goodcomers to church."<sup>1</sup>

In addition to offences involving lack of religious observance there were those relating to a failure to respect God himself. In this category falls the offence of causing a disturbance in Church and this is found at all stages between 1660 and 1760. It is clear that sometimes the commotion was caused by those not of Anglican persuasion who found the liturgy and the ceremonies of the Established Church repugnant. In 1663, for instance, Richard Partridge of Bromfield and two others entered violently into the church and moved the communion table out of the chancel into a corner of the church and cast "matts and other trumpery upon it in contempt and scorn". It turned out that they had been acting under the orders of Sir Matthew Herbert "an excommunicate person"; the trouble with Sir Matthew was not confined to this episode, for on Sunday, 14th February, a certain Thomas Lawrence unbolted the church door in service-time and let into the church Sir Matthew "an excommunicate person to the great disturbance of the Minister and the congregation."<sup>2</sup> On 17th May 1680 at Leominster during the beating of the bounds James Lloyd a glover "did upbraid the people as they were singing the psalm and said this is a holy procession whosoever the devil doth carry the cross."<sup>3</sup> Later, in 1719, Thomas Robert, also of Leominster, was cited for saying "God damn the common prayer; he always had fought against it and ever would."<sup>4</sup>

Frequently among the complaints for misbehaviour are examples that reflect the boorishness of eighteenth century rural life. In 1668, for example, Thomas Adney of Pontesbury was cited into court for making a disturbance in church at service-time "by being carried upon a ladder through the churchyard and to the church door whereby most of the people in the church left the prayers and ran out of the church at the noise." In spite of

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1. Boraston to Reynolds 7th February 1680/1. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.

2. H.R.O. Act Book No 99 (1663) 83<sup>v</sup>.

3. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.

4. H.R.O. Book 109. 53<sup>v</sup>.

He was excommunicated for not attending the court.

protestations of innocence he was made to do public penance, though not in the normal white habit.<sup>1</sup> In 1687 Meredith of Huntington in the Weobley deanery was presented for "pushing and shouldering a man during Divine Service."<sup>2</sup> In another case in October 1680 Elizabeth Lucy was kept out of her rightful pew at Ledbury church by some parishioners who "also laid pitch on the place of the seat where she was to sit which cloaved to her new gown in several places."<sup>3</sup> In 1690 "disturbance and laughter" was recorded at the church at Colwall.<sup>4</sup> Again at the end of the period in 1746 the minister at Chetton presented one of the wardens, Thomas Pardoe, for striking Richard Beech in church on the Lord's Day.<sup>5</sup>

Fighting in the churchyard was not uncommon. In 1687 two men were cited for fighting and shedding blood in Winforton churchyard;<sup>6</sup> in 1750 Thomas Yates and John Pritchard of Eyton were cited for a similar offence.<sup>7</sup> Again Samuel Bury of Rochford was brought to court in 1744 for wrestling in Eastham churchyard on the Sabbath, but when he appeared to answer the charge he accused the churchwarden of calling him back into the churchyard to fight another parishioner. The judge delayed the action a month and seems to have found that this was indeed the case.<sup>8</sup>

But disturbances sometimes took place outside the hours of Divine Service. In 1746 Thomas Jones, a weaver of Madeley, was presented for "ringing, jangling and overthrowing the bells without leave of the minister and churchwardens."<sup>9</sup> Some years later in 1757 Richard Kendrick and three others of Bosbury were accused of "notoriously breaking into the steeple of the church of Bosbury and ringing, drinking and disturbing the neighbourhood." The court was lenient and merely admonished them "never to be guilty of the like offence again."<sup>10</sup>

1. H.R.O. Act Book 148. 101. 23rd March 1668.
2. H.R.O. Act Book 105 (1687-91) 9<sup>v</sup>.
3. James Bayliss to Reynolds 26th October 1680. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.
4. H.R.O. Act Book 105. 88.
5. H.R.O. Box 41, Book 159 (1743-64) unfoliated.
6. H.R.O. Box 29, Book 105 (1687-91). 40<sup>v</sup>.
7. H.R.O. Box 30, Act Book 110 (1734-62) unfoliated.
8. H.R.O. Box 41, Act Book 159 unfoliated.
9. He failed to appear and was excommunicated. H.R.O. Box 41, Office Book 159 (1743-64) unfoliated.
10. H.R.O. Box 30 Act Book 110 unfoliated.



Nor was the disorder confined to rural areas. On 5th November 1699 Thomas Bayley was said to have been in the cathedral organ-loft at Hereford during evensong and did "light or cause to be lighted a squibb or rockett made and composed of gunpowder or some other combustibile matter and did throw ... the same into the body of the said choir amongst the congregation then and there assembled .... and thereby also occasioned a great disorder in the said choir to the great dishonour of Almighty God, the obstruction of his public worship and the evil example of good Christians."<sup>1</sup>

Sexual offences loomed large and formed a substantial part of the total business of the courts; as church attendance ceased to be an important matter, so sexual matters in some dioceses became the most significant single section in the Act Books by the middle of the eighteenth century. Certainly by 1750 sexual offences still took the highest place on the Oxford cause lists and still did so at the end of our period in 1760, but in the Hereford diocese there is a perceptible decline in sexual offences except at triennial visitations and an increasing proportion of purely administrative and testamentary cases, the former often concerning churchwardens who had fallen short. This is no doubt parallel with the situation found by Warne in the Exeter diocese where in the early and mid-eighteenth century bastardy and fornication were the commonest offences, but in the second half there was a decreasing number of cases concerning people's morals. "Increasingly the courts' time came to be taken up with business which had only a remote connection with the primary reason for their existence, namely the government of souls."<sup>2</sup>

The offences ranged from cohabitation through fornication to bastardy, "having a base child". Cohabitation was frequently cited. In 1687 John Pickering of Pencombe was cited for "owning and cohabiting with two wives" the one being Mary Bennett, the other Elizabeth Bayley.<sup>3</sup> In the same year Margaret Howells of Leominster, cited for having a bastard child "by one King a dragoon" could not be found and had a viis et modis issued against her.<sup>4</sup> Elizabeth Pitt of Pencombe, cited in 1687 "for living

1. H.R.O. Court Papers Box 10 (462) 7th December 1699.  
There is no record of this case in the Act Books; the one for 1700 is missing.
2. A. Warne Church and Society in Eighteenth Century Devon (David and Charles 1969) 84.
3. H.R.O. Box 29. Act Book 105, 21<sup>v</sup>.
4. H.R.O. Box 29. Act Book 105, 37.

incontinently with Mr. Robert Green and continuing obstinate under excommunication" similarly was missing and had the same writ issued against her.<sup>1</sup> In 1689 Thomas Pritchard of Dorston was cited for "cohabiting and bedding with his wife's daughter by whom he hath had four incestuous bastards".<sup>2</sup> John Roberts of Aconbury who in 1691 had his wife, Elizabeth, and Thomas Hodges cited for adultery found the action rebounding on him. Though he swore to having caught them in the very act, the two defendants were merely admonished and a month later Roberts himself was excommunicated.<sup>3</sup>

In 1745 Jeremiah Turner and Mary Watts of Weobley were presented for unlawfully cohabiting. Turner agreed that they had lived together, though Mary Watts had then gone away. He vehemently denied that the cohabitation was unlawful for Watts was his servant. The judge remained sceptical and admonished him "never to receive the said Watts into his house nor ever be in her company but in the church or the market or other place of public resort." The case was then dismissed.<sup>4</sup>

Sometimes the court was hard put to it to know how to deal with recalcitrants in these matters. When Alice Lloyd and James Alcox of Wistanstow were cited in 1678 for incontinency and cohabitation, the incumbent, Thomas Brome, wrote to the Register to ask for some mitigation of fees, for it was unlikely that Lloyd would be able to pay. Though she was very poor, "a great deal worse than nothing, .... I heartily wish she had some corporal punishment", for she had lived for so long under a fame. She had many children and Brome feared that they would all "come on the parish".<sup>5</sup>

For those who were ordered by the Court to perform public penance before their fellow-parishioners, the ordeal proved too much and often they were not to be found in the parish. Of 12 women presented for bastardy at Ludlow in 1753, one denied and had her case dismissed, one was excommunicated for contumacy and all the rest were not to be found

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1. H.R.O. Box 29 Act Book 105. 27.

2. H.R.O. Act Book 105. 62.

3. *ibid.* 100<sup>v</sup>.

4. H.R.O. Act Book 110 unfoliated.

5. Brome to Reynolds 1st July 1678. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.

in spite of the issue of a viis et modis against them.<sup>1</sup>

Closely connected with bastardy was the offence of "ante-nuptial fornication" for which the less traumatic private penance was considered sufficient; as we have already seen, this meant that offenders merely appeared before the minister and wardens in the vestry to make their confession in their ordinary daily clothes instead of the white apparel required of the public penitent. An accusation of ante-nuptial fornication often revealed clandestine marriage. For instance, in the summer of 1678 the Rector of Rock, Sares Boylston, reported that Francis Carpenter and his wife had in fact been secretly married in Worcester in September 1676, some time before the date of the alleged fornication; Carpenter, it appears, was afraid of losing his place under Lord Folliott. Boylston's plea was supported by the evidence that the child, born at Michaelmas 1677, which had been the cause of the original presentment, was in fact conceived in wedlock.<sup>2</sup> In another case Daniel Pilsworth, Vicar of Kington, pleaded for Willet and his wife who had been found guilty of ante-nuptial fornication. "The offence is grievous, but, as I am informed, it had not been so, had it not been for the woman's mother who was so excessively violent against the marriage that she durst not adventure it but the devil it seems was so powerful that he tempted her to worse and prevailed."<sup>3</sup> The celebration of clandestine marriage would in itself bring the displeasure of the authorities on the person responsible. For instance, in May 1671 Thomas Rollbore, Rector of Creete in the Burford Deanery, was presented for marrying "gentlemen and gentlewomen in the rectorial house we do not know by what licence or authority."<sup>4</sup> In 1678 William Allen, curate of Michaelchurch Ecksley, was brought to court before the Bishop of St. David's at Brecon for a similar offence. He was

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1. H.R.O. Act Book 149 unfoliated.

On the other hand in 1752 Mary Clayton of Clun voluntarily confessed of "having been delivered of a bastard child begotten on her body by John Hatfield of the same parish". She performed her public penance and was thence dismissed. *ibid.*

2. Boylston to Reynolds. 1st July 1678. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13. This was Thomas Folliott (1613-97), the second Baron, who had served under Ormonde in Ireland. The Complete Peerage V. 543-4.

3. Pilsworth to Wotton 2nd November 1678. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.

4. H.R.O. Visitation Box 18. Presentments for 1671.



ordered to do public penance in both Hereford Cathedral and in his own church with the apparitor in attendance. At first he tried to avoid the penance by producing a forged certificate, but this was discovered and in August he was ordered to do it again.<sup>1</sup>

Another class of offence concerned churchwardens who were themselves frequently cited before the courts. Often the offence was in not taking the oath required at the beginning of their term of office. In 1759, for instance, no less than 15 churchwardens had failed to do so.<sup>2</sup> Sometimes they were presented by the incumbent or the apparitor for making an inadequate presentment or for making no presentment at all. Even in such cases the failure to conform to the procedure could be the result of a misunderstanding. In 1679-80 John Page, Rector of Colwall, felt obliged to ask for leniency towards one of his churchwardens; he would, he said, have presented long before if the apparitor had "brought it to us. I made it and the fault is mine."<sup>3</sup> Again in 1759 the wardens of Bromfield excused themselves on the grounds that the apparitor had failed to give them adequate time.<sup>4</sup> Sometimes the presentment made by the warden had been insufficient. In 1759 Joseph Dean "late churchwarden of Lower Sapey" was cited for not presenting several persons and things in the parish which should have been; the authorities were unlucky in this instance for the return to the citation was that Dean was already dead.<sup>5</sup>

Other churchwardens were presented for not fulfilling their task of providing suitable furnishings to the church or vestments for the clergy. The wardens of Discoyd in 1687 were ordered to provide a new surplice, the old one being "not large enough."<sup>6</sup> Two years later

1 Hereford Episcopal Register 1672-82. 86-7. Clandestine marriages seemed to have been regularly performed at Trinity Minories, St. James, Duke's Place, and at St. Botolph, Aldgate; so much was this the case that a special order was made threatening suspension to any clergy who conducted these marriages there. Hereford Register (1682/3 - 1709) 62.

2 H.R.O. Box 30 Book 110 (Office 1734-1762) unfoliated.

3 Page to Reynolds n.d. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.

4 H.R.O. Box 41, Book 159 unfoliated.

5 Especially he had failed to present Katherine Somers for bastardy. H.R.O. Box 41 Book 159 unfoliated. Daniel Renaud, Rector of Whitchurch, had a special set of answers to Articles provided for churchwardens. H.R.O. Renaud's Notebook A/98/1. 73.

6 H.R.O. Act Book 105. 23.

Richard Holder of Coddington was presented for providing a pint of communion wine on Good Friday "which was neither pure neither was it fit for that purpose by reason it was mingled with perry or cider so that the communicants knew not what to make of it."<sup>1</sup> Again, in 1690 Edward Pritchard, churchwarden of Colwall, was accused of providing "dead ill-tasted sherry wine altogether unfit for the sacrament"; he was admonished.<sup>2</sup> Sometimes a presentment under this heading resulted from a feud between the incumbent and his wardens. On one occasion when Thomas Buckley, incumbent of Linton, was faced with a congregation of 20 Whitsun communicants but without wine which the churchwarden failed to provide, he was forced to use "some metheglin I had by chance at home".<sup>3</sup> In 1755 the wardens of Abdon had presented their parson, John Collier, for neglect of duty;<sup>4</sup> in the following year they found themselves cited by him for not paying the clerk his wages, for not providing a decent surplice, the existing one being rotten, rent and very indecent, for negligent care of the church and for not attending duly themselves. The court was sceptical and on 22nd September 1756 the case was dismissed without fees.<sup>5</sup>

Presentments as we have already seen were frequently false, and this was no exception in the case of the churchwardens. In 1678 Edward Osland, Rector of Puddleston, requested that his churchwarden should be made to amend his presentment and "to provide a new service, a joined bier, and an hearse and to put our bells in order and pray let him be severely checked for his false presentment." Perhaps wisely,

1 *ibid.* 55.

2 H.R.O. Box 29 Book 105 (1687-91) 88.

Pritchard's defence was that he bought a quart of it from the Sun Tavern, Hereford, for two shillings and "that it was unknown to him if it were not good wine."

3 Buckley to Reynolds 2nd June 1673. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.

At Bladen, in 1738, it was the churchwardens who complained that the bread and wine were of the worst "the most stale or coarse or musty and the latter the most sour or vapid that can be got". Lloyd Jukes *op. cit.* 19.

4 H.R.O. Box 41 Book 159 unfoliated.

5 *ibid.*

Osland in a postscript asked the Register not to let the warden know "who stirred you up to call him to court."<sup>1</sup> Bishop Croft himself protested against an accusation falsely levelled against his own curate Boulcot for not officiating at Yarpole "when he is not obliged to officiate on any day but by my appointment . . . . I do mean to send for the persons that prosecute him and show them their foolery in it."<sup>2</sup> The rest of the courts' time was taken up with such matters as cases of defamation, failure to pay Easter dues, testamentary matters and cases relating to the granting of faculties and licences.<sup>3</sup>

Thus for the first 27 years of the period the courts seem to have enjoyed their ancient customary powers which had been restored to them in 1660. But the bungling activities of successive governments, in the form of the Declaration of Indulgence of 1687 and the Toleration Act of 1689, dealt them a shattering blow. The decline, at least in Oxford, was not immediate but a gradual one which did not reach calamitous proportions until the middle of the eighteenth century. The courts were clearly unpopular, even sometimes with bishops and parish clergy, but the machinery plied on relentlessly under the watchful eye of the Register and his henchmen in each diocese, until even they were forced to realise that it was no longer possible to retain the old level of litigation. In 1760 absence from church, except occasionally in Oxford, was not a citable offence; moral offences were less significant, though it was not until after our period that these dropped out altogether. Legally speaking at least, the Church had by 1760 lost its grip on the daily lives of the people of Oxfordshire, Herefordshire and Shropshire.

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1. Osland to Reynolds 12th November 1678. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.
  2. Croft to Reynolds 14th June 1676. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.
  3. Licences were granted not only to curates, teachers, midwives but also to butchers. See Appendix V.



CHAPTER IV

THE PARISH CLERGY

Before discussing the religious life of the parishes we must first investigate the selection of the local leaders, the incumbents, and their education and background, for it was on them that church life at the grass roots depended.

The system of patronage in both dioceses meant that bishops had little influence on the choice of incumbents. By the middle of the eighteenth century the Bishop of Hereford only presented to 15.4% of livings in the southern archdeaconry and only 1.7% in the Shropshire part of his diocese. Similarly the Bishop of Oxford could claim no more than 3.4%. Only through lapse, when the regular patron failed to present the living within six months, could the bishop extend his choice to other parts of the diocese. During the period of this study the bishops increased their patronage of parishes in their diocese very little;<sup>1</sup> there were a few changes; for instance, in the 1660's the advowson of Coddington in the Hereford diocese passed from the Lingen family to the Bishop,<sup>2</sup> but, overall, change was negligible. The Bishop of Hereford's livings were mainly in the Frome Deanery where he held ten of his total of 29;<sup>3</sup> in Shropshire he had only two, both in the Wenlock Deanery.<sup>4</sup>

Crown patronage, normally operated by the Lord Chancellor,<sup>5</sup> represented 9% of the livings in the Hereford Archdeaconry, 6% in the

1. Miss McClatchey has shown that the bishop did not increase his patronage in the Oxford diocese until the 19th century, especially after 1835.  
D. McClatchey Oxfordshire Clergy 1777-1869 (Oxford 1960) 10.
2. Hereford Episcopal Register 1635-77. 186 and 224.  
A.T. Bannister op. cit. 31. This has the patron of Coddington in 1661 as James Neale, which is incorrect.
3. Bromyard (three portions), Bosbury, Coddington, Eastnor, Ullingswick, Whitborne, Cradley.
4. Holgate and Tugford. Information for advowsons in the Hereford diocese has been obtained from the episcopal registers and from J. Ecton Thesaurus Rerum Ecclesiasticarum (1742). The calculations of advowsons take into account livings where there was more than one patron. If a patron had a half-interest in a living it has been counted.
5. Presentations made by Lord Chancellor Jeffreys in James II's reign may be found in Bodl. MS Eng. Hist. c.304. 99 et seq.

Salop archdeaconry and 6.7% in the Oxford diocese. In the Exeter diocese the proportion was 9.7% and in Warwickshire 15.8%.<sup>1</sup> As in the case of the bishop, the Crown from time to time appointed to other livings through lapse.

The largest single patron in the Oxford diocese was the Dean and Chapter of Christ Church who controlled the patronage of 8.4% of the livings. Its opposite number in the Hereford diocese, the Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral, was the second biggest single patron there after the bishop himself: in the southern archdeaconry the Dean controlled the Deanery of Hereford as a peculiar<sup>2</sup> and most of the livings there were in the hands of the Dean alone or of the Dean and Chapter. In the Hereford archdeaconry as a whole the capitular authorities held 14% of the advowsons of which the Dean himself held 4%; in the northern archdeaconry the cathedral held two livings or 1.7% of the total. Ecclesiastical dignitaries outside the diocese were not unimportant, for they controlled presentations to 9% of the livings in the Oxford diocese and 3.7% in Hereford.<sup>3</sup> In Oxfordshire the Bishop of London had the patronage of Launton; the Bishop of Lincoln was responsible for two Oxfordshire parishes apart from the Lincoln peculiars of Thame and Banbury;<sup>4</sup> the Bishop of Rochester had one, Mixbury. In the Hereford diocese the Bishop of Gloucester held two advowsons in the southern deanery of Archenfield.<sup>5</sup> Extra-diocesan capitular authorities also had influence. For instance, the Dean and Canons of Windsor presented to two livings in the Hereford diocese and three in Oxford;<sup>7</sup> the cathedral of Worcester had one living, Old Radnor, in Hereford and the chapter of Gloucester had Chipping Norton in Oxford.

1. Crown patronage in the Exeter diocese by 1782 was 9.74% (38 of 390). The Bishop had 8%, Exeter Cathedral 10.25% and private patronage 65%. Warne op. cit. 31.  
Warwickshire fell partly in the Worcester diocese and partly in that of Coventry and Lichfield. The Diocesan Bishops only had four livings and private patronage 57%.  
J.L. Salter "Warwickshire Clergy 1660-1714" (Unpublished Birmingham Ph.D. thesis 1975) 33.
2. Ecton op. cit. 211.
3. Divided unequally between 5.7% in the Hereford Archdeaconry and 1.7% in the Salop Archdeaconry.
4. Middleton Stoney (~~Bicester~~ Deanery) and Easington (Aston Deanery).
5. Much Birch and the chapelry of Kilpeck.
6. St. Martin's, Hereford, and Monkland.
7. Haseley, Deddington and Shiplake.

Patronage belonging to Oxford and Cambridge Colleges was, as one might expect, of more importance in the Oxford diocese than in Hereford. In the Oxford diocese 29.2% of the patronage was collegiate, if we include St. John's, Cambridge, and Eton College,<sup>1</sup> whereas there were only four such advowsons in the whole of the Hereford diocese; Christchurch had Stanton-on-Wye and Wentnor; Corpus Christi, Oxford, had Pembridge by the end of the period and All Souls' had Alberbury.

The most significant influence on presentations was the lay patronage of the nobility and gentry which represented as much as 43.25% in Oxfordshire and 69.35% in the Hereford diocese as a whole, with the proportion rising to 84.5% in the Archdeaconry of Salop. Usually the patrons were members of the local nobility or gentry; at one time or another the Foleys had six (five in Hereford and one in Salop), the Harleys eight (five and three) and the Scudamores four.<sup>2</sup> The Crofts, whose family included the bishop of that name, had three, all in the deanery of Leominster.<sup>3</sup> There were on the other hand other nobility further away who could present; these included the Duke of Beaufort who held two in the Hereford Archdeaconry, Lord Weymouth who held two in the Salop archdeaconry and the Duke of Kent who held one in the Archenfield deanery.<sup>4</sup> The greatest incidence of noble

1. In our period Oxford University and the Colleges had 347 in the country as a whole and Cambridge 298. At Oxford Christchurch headed the list with 85 and at Cambridge Trinity had 61. St. John's, Cambridge, held advowsons at Souldern and Northstoke in the Oxford diocese but none in Hereford. Eton, a collegiate body, held Cogges, Minster Lovell, Astall, Cottisford, Bloxham, Mapledurham in the Oxford diocese. Bodl. MS Clar. Dep. c.414. 181 & 239, 165 & 175. The incumbents of Mapledurham during the period were all Fellows of Eton.
2. The Foley family had St. Peter's Hereford, Stoke Edith (the family seat), Tarrington (after 1672), Dormington (after 1685), Mordiford, Shelsley Walsh.  
The Harleys had Cusop, Kenterchurch, Aylton, Titley, Wigmore (until 1711), Bucknell, Brampton Bryan and Leintwardine. Wigmore seems to have passed to the Bishop by 1711. Wigmore Castle which was formerly the caput baroniae of the Mortimers was bought by Thomas Harley of Brampton in 1601/2 for £2,600; hence the Harley's tenure of the advowson. Complete Peerage X, 264 note.  
The Scudamores had Sollershope (only in 1661), Brobury (after 1681), Dore and Holme Lacy.
3. Croft, Yarpole and Stretford.
4. The Duke of Beaufort had Dinedor (until 1742) and Monmouth. Lord Weymouth had Stretton-in-Dale and Minsterley (after its creation). The Duke of Kent had Whitchurch (in part).



patronage was in the deanery of Ludlow; of 17 livings three were held by the Earl of Craven, two by Lord Herbert of Chirbury, one by the Earl of Bradford and one by Lord Stafford.<sup>1</sup> In the Oxford diocese the Marlboroughs held two, the Parker family (Earl of Macclesfield) three, the Duke of Shrewsbury and Lord Saye and Sele each one.<sup>2</sup> A patron like Robert Harley saw to it that his protégés gained preferment. For instance, he presented Robert Comyn with the Vicarage of Wigmore in 1699 and with Brampton Bryan, the Harley's family seat, in 1702. In 1713 the new bishop, Philip Bisse, a friend and supporter of Harley in the House of Lords, appointed Comyn to the archdeaconry of Salop, while the Crown presented him to the Rectory of Pentesbury II; Harley, as Earl of Oxford, was at this time Lord Treasurer. Later still, in 1720, Oxford appointed Comyn to the Rectory of Presteigne in exchange for Brampton Bryan.<sup>3</sup> In June 1727 one of the Registers, Tamburlaine Herds, was patron of Willersley in the Weobley Deanery.<sup>4</sup> There is some indication of advowsons changing hands but not significantly. For instance, Wenlock Magna moved from the Haywards to the Berties; Peterchurch moved from the Parry family to Lord Chandos.

Recusancy among patrons was a matter of concern to the authorities. In the Hereford diocese the Monningtons who held the advowson of Sarnesfield at least until 1710 were recusants; for instance, Elisabeth who presented to the living in 1663 appears in the recusant lists of 1685;<sup>5</sup> similarly Mary Monnington who presented to the living in 1710 appears in the list of 1717.<sup>6</sup> It is clear that the operation of the

- 
1. Earl of Craven - Onibury, Stanton Lacy, Wistanstow.  
Lord Herbert of Chirbury (and Herbert family) Bromfield, Cold Weston.  
Earl of Bradford - Hope Baggott (with Lord Newport).  
Earl of Stafford - Culmington.
  2. Marlborough - Woodstock and Noke.  
Parkers - Bix, Sherborne, Stoke Talmage.  
Shrewsbury - Heythrop (in part).  
Saye and Sele - Broughton.
  3. Bannister op. cit. seriatim.  
W.M. Marshall George Hooper 1640-1727. Bishop of Bath and Wells  
(Dorset 1976) 162. n. 135.
  4. Bannister op. cit. 72.
  5. Bannister op. cit. 33.  
Hereford Episcopal Register 1682-1709. 47.
  6. Bannister op. cit. 62.  
H.R.O. Q/SR/Pe/2. Quarter Sessions Register of Papists' Estates. 2<sup>v</sup>.

advowson was taken out of the family's hands, for in 1732 the patron was Robert Price, a Justice of the King's Bench, with Sir John Morgan Bart. and in 1766 Oxford University presented to the living.<sup>1</sup> Some of the Scudamores were recusants, but the patronage of the livings of Holme Lacy, Brobury and Dore seems to have been safely in the hands of the Protestant heads of the family.<sup>2</sup> The Earl of Stafford, who was patron of Culmington in the Ludlow Deanery in 1710 and again in 1742, was named as a recusant in 1719.<sup>3</sup> In the Oxford diocese there was a complaint in 1681 that Richard Fermor, a convicted recusant and patron of Tusmore, a sinecure living without a church, had kept it vacant under the pretence that it was united with King's Sutton.<sup>4</sup> In May 1710 Hearne incorrectly reported that Oxford University claimed the right of presentation to Heythrop, because the other patron was a papist.<sup>5</sup> In fact Hearne was wrong, for Heythrop was securely in the hands of Timothy Goodwin who had been instituted in June 1704 and remained incumbent until his elevation to the bishopric of Kilmore and Ardagh in 1714.<sup>6</sup> Probably Hearne was confusing Heythrop with Hardwick of which the recusant, James Fermor, was patron; Fermor had presented the living to Thomas Clarkson on the death of the previous incumbent; he had been instituted on 19th December 1709.<sup>7</sup> Hearne commented that the University's candidate, Hughes, was in an insecure position, because

1. Bannister op. cit. 76 and 98.  
According to Ecton "Mr. Monnington" was still officially patron in 1742. Ecton op. cit. 221.
2. In May 1685 Milbourne, George and Rowland Scudamore were named as Recusants. Hereford Episcopal Register 1682-1709 47.  
In 1717 Henry Scudamore of Pembridge Castle and George Scudamore of Skenfrith were recorded. H.R.O. Q/SR Pe/2. 12<sup>v</sup> and 14<sup>v</sup>.
3. Bannister op. cit. 61.  
Ecton op. cit. 228.  
Bodl. MS Clar. Dep. c.415. 58.  
Lord Stafford was still officially patron in 1742.
4. Stubbs to Trumbull 8th November 1681. H.M.C. Downshire I 13.
5. Hearne's Collections III (O.H.S. XIII (1888) 5-6.
6. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.266. 10 and 32.  
Foster.
7. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.266. 22.

the patron had not been convicted and might have brought an action against Hughes for wrongful incumbency. By the time Thomas Clarkson died in 1738 the advowson had been sold to John Sutton of Charlbury, but Secker let the new incumbent, George Shepheard, know of his suspicion that the living was still in the hands of recusant patrons; Shepheard had to produce the Bill of Sale of 1736 before Secker was satisfied.<sup>1</sup>

Petitions by third parties on behalf of candidates for Crown livings were sometimes successful. Christopher Tyrer petitioned the Lord Chancellor for Hope Mansell and was subsequently instituted.<sup>2</sup> Again in September 1680 William Gregory of How Caple found his advowson for Kenchesteer had lapsed following the death of the previous incumbent, William Langford; he nevertheless wrote to Thynne, the Lord Chancellor's Secretary, on behalf of Charles Mansfield "whose friends have just been able to maintain him at the University till he took his degree of M.A. but are unable to do anything towards his preferment". Mansfield was successful.<sup>3</sup> Likewise a request from Sir Edward Harley of Brampton Castle in October 1681 for the Chancellor to consider Richard Sankie for Downton, a Crown living in the Clun Deanery, even before the death of the previous incumbent, met with success. "The person for whom I and my brother who hath an estate there desire it is Mr. Richard Sankie, a very fit worthy man who will content himself in a small place . . . . Your expenses God-willing I will satisfy." Sankie of Pembroke College, Oxford, and a native of Shropshire was instituted on 19th December 1681.<sup>4</sup>

On the other hand even a bishop could be unsuccessful in getting his nominee presented. In November 1682 Bishop Herbert Croft asked Thynne to confer New Radnor on Thomas Baillies "a well-deserving person both for learning and good life who now lives in these parts."<sup>5</sup>

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1. MS Oxf. Dioc. b.21. 5.  
Shepheard to Secker 19th December 1738. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.651. 26.  
Sutton to Secker 20th January 1738/9. *ibid.* 27.
  2. H.R.O. Visitation Book 23. Tyrer was Rector at the 1680 visitation.  
Tyrer to Finch n.d. Thynne MSS. 37. 38.
  3. Gregory to Thynne 8th September 1680. Thynne MSS. 37. 77.  
Bannister *op. cit.* 49.
  4. Edward Harley to Thynne 25th October 1681. Thynne MSS. 37. 169.  
Bannister *op. cit.* 45. Foster.
  5. Croft to Thynne 18th November 1682. Thynne MSS. 37. 200.



The living was given to John Hergest who was instituted in December 1682; he was a graduate of Christ Church and Vicar of St. John's Brecknock.<sup>1</sup> An attempt by William Cade in 1677 to obtain the living of St. Peter's -in-the-East in Oxford was unsuccessful. He claimed that the advowson for the benefice which belonged to Merton College, had lapsed as the living was so poor that no-one had accepted it for 20 years. Cade declared that he was deterred by large arrears of tenths but had heard that the Lord Chancellor was very kind to young men in such cases.<sup>2</sup> Such pleading apparently had no effect, for by 1680 Nathaniel Wright was the incumbent.<sup>3</sup> In 1737 during the interregnum between Potter and Secker at Canterbury, the Lord Chancellor, Hardwick, operated the Crown's presentation by offering the Rectory of Newington with <sup>Britwell Prio</sup>~~Brightwell~~ to John Billingsley, his brother in law, who had previously been a dissenting minister.<sup>4</sup>

A century before our period, in the Elizabethan era, the parish clergy were mostly drawn from the lower ranks of society; Macaulay's words that the parochial clergy in the sixteenth century were "on the whole a plebeian class" has been largely substantiated, at least in the Oxford and Worcester dioceses, by Dr. D.M. Barratt.<sup>5</sup> She has shown that in 1640 on the eve of the Civil War the situation had changed considerably. At the visitation of the Oxford diocese in 1640 she found that of 58 graduate incumbents only 46.6% (27) came from the plebeian class, 29.3% (17) came from the gentry, knights and baronets,

1 Bannister op. cit. 46. Foster.

2 Cade to Thynne 8th June 1677. Thynne MSS 37. 22.

3 H.R.O. Visitation Book 23 (1680).

4 Ecton op. cit. 474.

Newington "a living of great value" was a peculiar in the gift of the Archbishop. Archbishop Tenison had previously presented it to Potter who, as Archbishop himself, continued to hold it in commendam with the see of Canterbury.

Oxf. MS. Clar. Dep. c.415. 192.

5 D.M. Barratt "The Condition of the Parish Clergy between the Reformation and 1660 with special reference to the Dioceses of Oxford, Worcester and Gloucester". Unpublished Oxford D. Phil. thesis (June 1949) 27.

22.4% (13) were the sons of clergy and only one was of noble stock.<sup>1</sup> She found a similar pattern in Worcester.

As one might expect, the Civil War and the ensuing Puritan Interregnum seem to have reversed the trend, for in 1680, twenty years after the Restoration when the Church should almost have reached an equilibrium again after the traumatic events of the 1640's and 1650's, we find that in both the dioceses concerned in this study well over 50% of the parish clergy came from less privileged backgrounds. In the Oxford diocese 55% (64) of 116 graduate incumbents came from the poorer ranks of society and only 26% (30) came from the gentry.<sup>2</sup> In the Hereford diocese incumbents from non-privileged backgrounds represented a far higher proportion. In the Hereford Archdeaconry 60% (36) of 60 incumbents were described either as sons of plebeian fathers, paupers or as servitors, whereas only 8.33% (5) came from the gentry. In the northern archdeaconry of Salop. the picture is much the same with 67.3% (35 of 52) from the lower groups and 7.69% from the gentry.

Eighty years later at the end of our period the trend of the early seventeenth century, the raising of the social milieu of the clergy, had continued and there is a noticeable change, though this is much more the case in the Hereford diocese than in Oxfordshire. In 1759-60 only 34.6% of the Oxfordshire clergy come from poorer backgrounds; the figure for the whole Hereford diocese is roughly similar - 36.88% (though this is made up of two rather dissimilar figures for the two archdeaconries - 42.26% for Hereford, 26.98% for Salop.) Incumbents from the gentry represented 40.6% in Oxfordshire, 38.14% in the Hereford archdeaconry and 46.03% in the Salop archdeaconry. The nobility were unrepresented in the figures for 1680, but at the end of the period Lord Banbury was Vicar of Burford and

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1 *ibid.* 18. Earlier figures were:- 1600: plebeian class 65.4%, gentry etc. 19.2%, sons of clergy 15.4%.  
1620: plebeian class 53.7%, gentry 33.3%, sons of clergy 20.4%.

2 These calculations and those that follow are based on work done on the visitation books for 1680 and 1759 in the Hereford diocese and 1680 and 1760 in the Oxford diocese, together with reference to Foster and Venn.  
In the period 1660-1714 over all, 52.9% of Warwickshire clergy were of plebeian origin. Salter *op. cit.* 57.

Blackburton<sup>1</sup> in the Oxford diocese<sup>1</sup> and John Harley, son of Edward, Earl of Oxford, was Rector of Presteigne and curate of Discoed; John Harley later became Bishop of Hereford from 1787 to 1788.<sup>2</sup>

In both centuries there are cases of men of plebeian background breaking through to the front ranks of the clergy. A notable priest from seventeenth century Herefordshire was Thomas Traherne, the poet and mystic; he was the son of a Hereford shoemaker, went to Brasenose, Oxford, and was Rector of Credenhill in the Weobley Deanery from 1657 to 1674. Benjamin Prychard, also of plebeian class, became Rector of Croft in 1676, Rector of Ledbury in 1678, Vicar of Sutton St. Nicholas in 1678 and then Canon Residentiary of Hereford in 1685. Eighty years later Thomas Russell, a man of poor family in Buckinghamshire, became Vicar of Lugwardine, Canon of Hereford in 1752 and Master of the Hospital in Ledbury.<sup>3</sup>

It is clear therefore that there was a swing away from a more plebeian clergy in favour of those with more privileged backgrounds. In the eighty years 1680 to 1760 the increase in clergy drawn from the gentry in Oxfordshire was in the region of 13.4%, but in Herefordshire it was much more marked at 29.81% and in the archdeaconry of Salop. at 38.34% in favour of those of landed origins. The difference in swing between the two dioceses may be attributed mainly to the fact that in 1680 more of the Oxford clergy were already from gentle backgrounds, whereas by the mid-eighteenth century the figures for all three areas are much more uniform. Significantly there was still a large number of clergy from the poorer ranks of society; it cannot be said that the Church was the preserve of the gentry.<sup>4</sup>

1. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.137.

There is some doubt about the validity of Banbury's claim to the title. His grandfather, Nicholas Knollys (d.1674) claimed the title but it was not recognised officially.

The Complete Peerage I 402-406.

At his institution to the vicarage of Burford, however, on 20th October 1747 the record shows his title of Earl of Banbury.

MS Oxf. Dioc. b.21. 27<sup>v</sup>.

2. H.R.O. Visitation Book 36.

3. Foster.

4. All the calculations concerning the parish clergy are subject to inaccuracy partly because there is difficulty in tracing some of the incumbents and secondly because not all were graduates; the lack of details about some matriculands may mean that they did come from a poor background. The situation is not completely clear.



There is very little change in the proportion of incumbents who were sons of the clergy.<sup>1</sup> In the Oxford diocese in 1680 they formed 19% of the sample and in 1760 19.5%; in the Hereford archdeaconry they were 23.33% in 1680 and 22.68% in 1759; in the archdeaconry of Salop the figures were not much different - 25% in 1680 and 25.39% in 1759. There are a number of cases of sons succeeding their fathers. Soon after the Restoration Christopher Tyrer followed his father, James, at Hope Mansel. At Llangarren in the same period Thomas Wootton was followed by his son, William. Between 1700 and 1720 Gilbert Whittle followed his father, Matthias, as curate of Ludford.

Another marked contrast between the two dioceses is to be found in the geographical origin of the incumbents.<sup>2</sup> Amongst the Oxfordshire incumbents only 18.7% (14 out of 75) were the sons of Oxfordshire men. The proportion had changed little eighty years later when the relative figure was 19.14% (27 out of 141). By contrast 48.96% (47 of 96) of the clergy of the Hereford diocese came from within the diocese in 1680; in 1759 the proportion was 54.2% (90 of 166).<sup>3</sup> The Hereford figures for 1680 compare with those of Warwickshire between 1660 and 1714 where 44.7% of those in Crown livings and 42.8% of those in private livings came from within the county. On the other hand only 20.4% of those under ecclesiastical patronage were Warwickshire men. The Warwickshire trend for incumbents increasingly to come from outside the county is not matched in either of the Hereford or the Oxford dioceses.<sup>4</sup>

The comparatively low figures for Oxfordshire may again be explained by the proximity of the University with its network of livings held by College fellows who themselves came from all parts of the nation but especially from the South and West. This, however, can only be part of the explanation because only 52 of the livings were in the gift of colleges

1. I.M. Green has found that the proportion of graduate sons of the clergy increased from 1% in the 1570's to 17% in the 1630's. At St. John's, Cambridge, the proportion moved from 18% in the 1630's to 28% in the 1690's. In Warwickshire the proportion of sons of the clergy rose from 21% before 1662 to 32.4% in 1714. Salter op. cit. 58.
2. Again the sample is limited to those whose geographical origins are recorded in Foster.
3. In the Hereford archdeaconry as one might expect 18% (10) of those recorded came from the city of Hereford itself in 1680 and 14% (14) in 1759. What is perhaps more interesting to note is that in 1680 three came from the very small village of Marden; of these two were brothers James and John Hathway. They are described in Foster as "pleb", though the father seems to have been cleric of Marden.
4. Salter op. cit. 45-48.

and therefore likely to be attached to college fellowships. In fact at any one time there does not seem to have been more than 30 incumbent-fellows in the diocese. The full answer must lie elsewhere, perhaps in the more central position of the Oxford diocese, its closer access to London and perhaps it was more prestigious. It may be that the stronger home ties in the more remote border counties were also a factor.

Some incumbents came from outside England. Alexander Clogie, for instance, who was Rector of Wigmore, Herefordshire, for 51 years from 1647 to 1698 was born in Scotland.<sup>1</sup> He was ordained deacon in 1637 and priest in 1638 by William Bedell, Bishop of Kilmore and Ardagh and became his chaplain. After holding two livings in Ireland, he was caught up in the rebellion of 1641 and imprisoned with the bishop. In 1643 he came to England as "chaplain with the horse". In 1647 he was instituted to the living of Wigmore where he remained for the rest of his life. From his letters it is clear that he was in close contact with Sir Edward Harley, his patron, a Puritan who at the Restoration conformed to the Church.<sup>2</sup> In 1679 he carried a letter from Sir Edward to his wife, presumably at Brampton.<sup>3</sup> Though Clogie himself like Harley had conformed to the Commonwealth regime, he was prepared like his patron to accede to the wishes of the Restoration establishment; he assented to the Articles at the St. Bartholomew subscriptions of 1662; he may have been a little late in doing so, for his name appears on a separate sheet with some of those who subscribed after August 23rd, but there is no specific date against his name.<sup>4</sup> He also seems to have known General Monck's son, the second Duke of Albemarle, well enough to have been used as a messenger of his to Bishop Herbert Croft in the 1670's. Apparently Albemarle had written a letter on Clogie's behalf at that time. In January 1681 Clogie was very keen to have the letter back, as for some reason it would stand him "in singular stead at this time"; he added

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1. H.R.O. Visitation Book 23 (1674-80) - Wigmore. D.N.B. suggests that he graduated from Trinity College, Dublin, but there is no evidence for this. ex. info. Trinity College, Dublin.
  2. M. Ashley Robert Harley (London 1970) 21.
  3. Clogie to (Register) 13th June 1679. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.
  4. H.R.O. Subscription Box 5. 1662 Roll.

cryptically that if the Registrar had been good enough to oblige him in this, it would also have pleased "some of higher account with you, abundantly to recompense you in greater affairs." In the event the Register failed to find the letter.<sup>1</sup> Clogie was a writer and included in his works a life of William Bedell.<sup>2</sup>

One incumbent who came from abroad, Daniel Renaud, Rector of Whitchurch in Herefordshire from 1728 to 1772,<sup>3</sup> was Swiss in origin and was born in Neufchatel on 19th May 1697 and was "baptis'd by Mons<sup>r</sup>. Ostervald". He arrived in London in April 1710, some years after the death of his father and mother. His younger brother, Abraham, continued to live in Switzerland, but visited him at Oxford in the summer of 1721; much later in 1760 Abraham's son visited Daniel at Whitchurch.

In 1712 Daniel went to Rugby School. From there he went to Brasenose, Oxford, in October 1716. He graduated as B.A. in 1720 and M.A. in 1723 and was naturalised in the following year a fortnight before his ordination as deacon. In January 1725/6 he became priest and curate in Leicestershire. He was instituted to Whitchurch in April 1728, but did not settle there until 29th May 1730. As we shall see later, his meticulously kept notebook and his sermons still survive. From the former we know something of his family. His wife was a Leicestershire woman, born on the same day as himself. He had two sons and three daughters, all of whom we learn had measles at home in 1738 except Mary who was at school in Newland. David, his eldest son, went to school in Hereford in 1741 when he was 10½, had smallpox there in September 1742 and left in November 1745. Three years later he was Scholar of Brasenose and was eventually ordained deacon by James Beauclerk at Trinity 1753 with a curate's title to his father at Whitchurch. He was Vicar of Dewsall, Herefordshire, in 1767 and then moved to Hampshire. The clerical tradition continued, for David's son and two grandsons were eventually all in orders. Daniel himself died in 1772 after holding the Rectory of Whitchurch for 43 years.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Clogie to (Registrar) 10th January 1680/1. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.
  2. D.N.B.
  3. Foster.
  4. Renaud's Notebook. H.R.O. A 98/1 86-88.  
Bannister op. cit. 73.  
Hereford Episcopal Register 1723-54. 149<sup>v</sup>.  
H.R.O. Ordination Papers Box 1. 1753 bundle.  
Foster.



If we turn to academic standards, we notice a distinct change in the number of graduate incumbents in the century after the Restoration. Dr. D.M. Barratt discovered a steady rise in the number in the century following the Reformation.<sup>1</sup> For instance, whereas only 38% of Oxford incumbents had been graduates in 1560 there were as many as 96% in 1640 with a drop back to 88% in 1652.<sup>2</sup> The Interregnum certainly hit the educational standard of the clergy, for in 1680, in spite of the fact that some 30 Oxfordshire parishes were normally manned by college fellows, there were only 65.7% graduates among the incumbents at that date; the figure was better in 1760, but not greatly, when compared with the situation before the Civil War; there were still only 88.3% incumbents who were graduates.<sup>3</sup> Apart from the Oxford Deanery itself with 100% graduates in 1760 the deaneries with the highest proportion of graduate-manning were Witney (85.7% in 1680 and 95% in 1760) and Woodstock (81% and 91.3%). It is strange that the Hereford diocese could boast a greater proportion of parishes run by graduates, but this is clearly the case. At least 72.6% of beneficed clergy were graduates in 1680 and eighty years later the figure had risen to 93.13%. If we break this down into the two arch-deaconries, we find that the proportion in the Hereford archdeaconry rose from 65.3% in 1680 to 94.85% in 1759; the Salop jurisdiction changed less significantly from 82.14% to 90.7%. It is perhaps with some caution that we should approach this problem, for, as I.M. Green has shown, ordinands often used the university training as a means of reaching the standard required by the bishops in their ordination examination.<sup>4</sup> There are a few incumbents who appear in the University or College records who nevertheless are not of graduate status. For instance, James Granger, Vicar of Shiplake in 1760, had been at Christ Church, but had no degree, and Richard Dutton, Rector of Rowsham in 1680, had been to Balliol.<sup>5</sup>

If we analyse the types of degree held by the parish clergy we find at the later date a larger proportion of higher degrees especially in the Oxford diocese.<sup>6</sup> In 1680 26 of the known 115 Oxfordshire graduate

1. D.M. Barratt op. cit. 48.

2. *ibid.* Appendix to Chapter II 86.

In Worcester the relative figures were 29%, 84% and 69%.

3. These figures take into account the parishes held in plurality by graduates. See later at page 103 et seq.

Salter found a similar trend in Warwickshire. Salter op. cit. 51-2.

4. ex. info. I.M. Green.

5. Foster.

6. In spite of the massive decline in the number of Oxford higher degrees taken altogether. L. Stone The University in Society I 38.

incumbents had a degree higher than M.A.; of these eight were D.D.'s and two, William Levinz, President of St. John's, Regius Professor of Greek and Rector of Handborough, and Ralph Bathurst, President of Trinity, Dean of Wells and Rector of Garsington were Doctors of Medicine.<sup>1</sup> In 1760 48 of the 143 graduate incumbents were men with higher degrees - 22 had D.D.'s and four had D.C.L.'s.<sup>2</sup> In the Hereford archdeaconry the figures run from four higher degrees, including 2 D.D.'s in 1680 to 13, including three D.D.'s and three D.C.L.'s, in 1759. In the Shropshire part of the diocese in 1680 there were only four incumbents with higher degrees and seven in 1759.

In the Hereford diocese there is an interesting pattern of college milieu from which the parochial clergy emanated.<sup>3</sup> In seventeenth century Herefordshire Brasenose was the most popular - 24.3% (17 of 70) of the parishes with Oxford graduates had Brasenose men; 15.8% had been to Christ Church. By 1759 the Brasenose proportion had dropped to 15.4%, while Balliol's proportion had risen from 10% to 13.1%. In general there was a wider spread of college backgrounds as the years passed. By contrast Shropshire had only a few Brasenose men (two parishes in 1680 and three in 1759); Christ Church maintained a steady 16% to 18%. Very noticeable is the great increase of Balliol incumbents in the northern archdeaconry from 11% in 1680 to 25% in 1759; Pembroke men increased from 3.7% to 13.6%. Significantly there is a steady decline in the number of parishes with men from the Oxford halls; the figures, falling from 22.9% to 5.5% in the Hereford archdeaconry and 31% to 3.4% in Salop, tell their own story. Presumably this is yet another indication of the

1. Foster.

2. The calculations are based, as before, on the visitation returns of the two dioceses. Higher degrees could be obtained by those with wealth or influence in the eighteenth century. See page 234 of this thesis.

3. Brasenose took between 40% and 60% of its students from Lancashire and Cheshire at this time. Stone op. cit. I 79.

The proportion of Cambridge first degree graduates was small in both dioceses, when compared with the lists of Oxford men. As far as we can tell, there were in 1680 only 5.9% (11 out of the 186) Cambridge graduates in the Hereford diocese and only 7.8% (9 out of 115) in the Oxford diocese. By 1759 there was little change in the Hereford diocese; there were 7.52% (17 out of a total of 226 graduates) Cambridge men. In the Oxford diocese the proportion of Cambridge men in fact dropped to 4.89% (7 out of 143). The Cambridge college with the most alumni in the two dioceses was St. John's. In the Hereford diocese they had one in 1680 and seven in 1759. In Oxfordshire they had three in 1680 and three in 1760.



declining number of ordinands from poorer backgrounds, but it also reflects a decline in the halls themselves, which was noticeable in the period.<sup>1</sup>

A notable feature of eighteenth century church life was the existence of pluralism. Certainly it is true that in the Oxford and Hereford dioceses this feature of church life increased during the period. In Oxfordshire in 1680 there were only nine pluralists holding 18 livings; by 1760 this number had more than doubled with 22 pluralists in 48 parishes. Similarly in the Hereford diocese in 1680 there were 31 pluralists and 61 in 1759.<sup>2</sup> The motivation behind this increase was almost certainly the poverty of many of the parishes. Parishes like Glympton (£6), and Alkerton (£6) in the Oxford diocese and Dilwyn (£6) and Brompton in the Hereford diocese could hardly be an attractive proposition, though Queen Anne's Bounty would have provided some relief. It has been suggested that in some places pluralism in fact only helped to make some of the richer livings even richer; for instance, the Bishop of Ely did little to enrich the poorer livings in his patronage but instead provided more for those who had adequate stipends. Warne in his study<sup>3</sup> of the Exeter diocese found that this was not the case and there is little evidence of it in the two dioceses of this study. Instead we find that on the whole pluralists each held at least one very poor benefice. For instance, in 1759 John Hoskyns Abrahall held Marcle Parva, worth £40 with Peterstow worth £7.10s;<sup>4</sup> Sir John D'Oyley, Bart. held Cuxham and Ibstone to make a net income of £59. In neither diocese was there plurality worth more than £100 and very few over £75. Thomas Skeeler, Vice-Principal of St. Alban Hall, Oxford, held Lewknor (£46),

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*ceased to exist*

1. Five of the nine halls ~~were~~ between 1580 and 1760. This was in part due to the catastrophic numerical decline in the total student body after 1670. Matriculations fell from 460 a year in the 1660's to 200 a year in the 1750's.  
L. Stone op. cit. I 46, 37.
2. The increase was greater in the Salop. archdeaconry where five pluralists in 1680 rose to 21 in 43 parishes in 1759. In the southern archdeaconry 23 in 1680 increased to 35 in 75 parishes by 1759. Of 656 Warwickshire incumbents and perpetual curates between 1660 and 1714 12.1% were pluralists. Of these 40% held two livings so close as to be adjacent. Salter op. cit. I 135.
3. Warne op. cit. 40-41 (quoting Historical Journal V no 2 1962. 188-90).
4. John Hoskyns appears to have added Abrahall to his name after leaving Oxford.  
Foster.



Thamesmore (£15) and Enstent (£36), which totalled £97. In the Hereford diocese Edward Crank held Whitney (£40) and Clifford (£37), John Faile held Willey (£44) and Beckbury (£49) both in the Wenlock Deanery, but even these figures were unusual.<sup>1</sup> If we compare this with the pluralities in the Exeter diocese where there were 14 over £300, one of which was worth £550, the pluralist situation in these two dioceses is trivial, though we must remember that several incumbents probably held livings outside the dioceses as well; some held dignities which brought in considerably more wealth.

The necessary consequence of pluralism was, of course, non-residence which for many has seemed the main scandal of the church at the time. In fact when one looks at the visitation returns the incidence of non-residence is not great. If we look at the returns<sup>2</sup> for the years 1716, 1719 and 1722 in the Hereford diocese we find that of 269 parishes<sup>3</sup> who returned answers to questions about non-residence, as many as 149 (55.4%) replied that their incumbents were resident and the vast majority of these were continually resident; another 25.7% (69) replied that the priest lived within 4 miles of the parish, often within a mile, as there was no parsonage building in the parish itself. A further 6% had a curate resident in the parish or nearby. The remaining 35 failed to say whether there was a curate available or not; several of these had good reason for non-residence. For instance, Richard Lloyd, Vicar of Sellack, was Headmaster of Shrewsbury Free School.<sup>4</sup> In this he was fulfilling a perfectly normal role within the total ministry of the Church, though, of course, the parishioners still had good reason to grumble. Thomas Cholmondley, the new Vicar of Weston Beggard in 1716, had another reasonable excuse; he was also one of the Vicars of the College at Hereford Cathedral and had to reside there.<sup>5</sup> In the Oxford diocese the story was much the same,

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1 Ecton Thesaurus Rerum Ecclesiasticarum (1742).  
Foster.

Venn.

2 H.R.O. Visitation Box 28.

3 a 93.4% sample.

4 H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. 1716 Visitation Returns.

5 *ibid.*

though the figures are for twenty years later, in 1738. Of 155 who answered about non-residence 51% (79) resided in the parish, most of them constantly; another 16.8% (26) lived very near and 19.4% (30) had curates. The schoolmaster of Woodstock Free School claimed his work was reason enough for his absence from South Newington eight miles away.<sup>1</sup> Likewise, John Kipling, the Vicar of Brize Norton was non-resident, because he was Master of Thame School, but he supplied a curate.<sup>2</sup>

There will be more on the administration of parishes in the next chapter; it is nevertheless worth noting here that on the whole the parish clergy whose personal records, diaries or notebooks remain, seem to have been men of conscience and good private life. It is true that in some cases the notebooks are predominantly records of tithes and administration of glebe; the notebook of Robert Goodwin, Vicar of Cleobury Mortimer (1656-94), for instance, is principally concerned with this and with family matters and gives little indication of the private spirituality of the man.<sup>3</sup> Likewise the Incumbent's Notebook of Heyford-at-Bridge (1731-80) is concerned mainly with tithe, glebe, numbers of communicants and offertory payments, and thus it gives little insight into the inner lives of William Bradley and Thomas Leigh, the two Rectors of the period.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand Daniel Renaud's notebook and writings disclose not only a man of good business acumen with regard to property, but a conscientious composer of sermons and catechetical lectures for his confirmands, a man of real dedication to his calling.<sup>5</sup> Though Thomas Wilson, son of the famous Bishop of Sodor and Man, was not an Oxfordshire incumbent at the time of his diary (1731-7), he was active in the

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1. Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. 139.

2. *ibid* 27. By 1759 the curate of Brize Norton was doubling the job with being usher at Witney School three miles away. 1759 Visitation Notebook. Bodleian MS Oxf. Dioc. d.759. 67.

3. "Extracts from the Notebook of a Shropshire Vicar 1656 to 1691". Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society Series 3, Volume 5 (1905) 191-217.

Goodwin died in 1694. Bannister op. cit. 54.

John Edwards, Vicar of Kington in 1674, kept Friday as a time of fasting; he asked to attend the Registry on another day.

Edwards to Reynolds n.d. (1674) H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.

4. Bodleian MS Top. Oxon. f50.

5. H.R.O. A 98/1 Renaud's Notebook.

F 63 Renaud's Sermons and Lectures.

Oxford area.<sup>1</sup> It is true that he enjoyed the life of the Oxford senior common rooms; nevertheless, in his writings too there are signs of an inner dedication to his task. On his 29th birthday, 24th August 1732, for instance, he confided a prayer to his diary; "I pray God grant I may make better use of my time for the future and dedicate what remaineth of my life to his honour and glory".<sup>2</sup> Four months later on 19th December, the day of his ordination as priest in Christ Church, Oxford, he prayed God that he would enable him to perform the solemn vows he had laid himself under; "that I may rather study to be good than great, looking upon that state to be dreadfully dangerous, to be pitied rather than admired."<sup>3</sup>

The diary of James Newton, Rector of Newnham Courtenay in the Oxford diocese, begins just outside our period in 1761.<sup>4</sup> Though he seemed to spend a fair amount of time in Bath each year and was not averse to following pretty women and visiting them, he was nevertheless regular in his daily offices of Morning and Evening Prayer, the duty of every Anglican parson. In Bath and London he usually attended both services each day.<sup>5</sup> On his journey back from Bath on 5th May 1761 he stopped at Tetbury but on the 7th he arrived at Cirencester in time for "M.P."<sup>6</sup> He often recorded visiting the sick and praying with the dying.<sup>7</sup> On 6th June he visited Spring Gardens, Bath, where he was delighted with the water but, he reflected, "may my greatest delight consist in the service of God." On his return to his parish on 9th June 1761 he recorded his thanks to God for his return; "It is my delight to lead a holy and religious life. God grant that I may continue in the right way till Death".<sup>8</sup> He too took trouble with his preaching; on Christmas Day 1761 he confessed himself "pretty much puzzled in adjusting my sermon before I went to Church."<sup>9</sup> He

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1. Keble College MSS - The Diary of Thomas Wilson.
  2. The Diaries of Thomas Wilson D.D. 1731-7 and 1750. L.S. Linnell (ed). (SPCK 1964) 66.
  3. Keble College MSS version 16-17.
  4. The Diary of James Newton (1761-2). Bodleian MS. Eng. misc. e.251.
  5. *ibid.* 2<sup>v</sup> - 4<sup>v</sup>.
  6. *ibid.* 6 - 6<sup>v</sup>. 'M.P' is short for Morning Prayer.
  7. For instance, he prayed at the bedside of Dame Wells on the 7th and 8th April 1761. *ibid.* 1 and 1<sup>v</sup>.
  8. *ibid.* 14, 12 - 12<sup>v</sup>.
  9. *ibid.* 68<sup>v</sup>.



showed real care for Miss Frogly who was to be married; "See the ups and downs in life, her father is dead, her mother keeps out of the way and is likely reduced to very low circumstances." He was invited to visit her to discuss marriage.<sup>1</sup> On his birthday, 29th October 1761, he declared that it was his desire "to please my God and to do the whole of my duty and, through his assistance and my own best endeavours, I trust I shall ever be in readiness for my final departure from this world". It was not, he said, his aim to live free from troubles and disappointments but "it is my desire to be resigned to the will of God in all things". Unless one is oversceptical about a diarist's writing, this clearly shows a trust in God and an intention to set himself a high standard of personal life.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, during the century under study, there are cases of dereliction of duty, idleness, sometimes accusations of immorality. For instance, in 1687 William Tringham, Vicar of Goodrich, was accused of refusing to visit and pray with the sick, refusing to administer the sacrament to the dying when he was sent for and also for refusing to bury the dead according to the Prayer Book, "the corpse having been thrown into the earth without Christian burial".<sup>3</sup> Tringham was old and in 1690, when he was 77, the parishioners asked for a curate, as the vicar through difficulty "of hearing and lowness of voice and imperfection of speaking" was incapable of discharging his duties.<sup>4</sup> It was not until 1696, after Tringham's death, that a successor, John Page, was instituted.<sup>5</sup> At the end of the period in 1756 John Faile, incumbent of Barrow, was presented for neglecting his duty on Sundays and Holydays; he eventually had to go before Bishop James Beauclerk on 21st June 1757; we do not know the outcome of his appearance.<sup>6</sup> In 1687 Thomas Peers, Rector of Cardeston, was accused of frequently being so drunk on Sunday mornings that he was either absent or spilt the consecrated communion wine and then "proceeded to tipple and drink as long as you would stand or sit" to the "profanation of the Body and Blood of Christ". The case was dismissed.<sup>7</sup> In 1757

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1. *ibid.* 53-53<sup>v</sup>.

2. *ibid.* 54-55.

3. H.R.O. Box 29. Act Book 105 (1687-91) 35<sup>v</sup>.

4. *ibid.* 76.

D.N.B.

5. Bannister *op. cit.* 55.

6. H.R.O. Box 41. Act Book 159 (1743-64) unfoliated.

7. H.R.O. Court Papers Box 6.

H.R.O. Act Book 151. 13<sup>v</sup>.

Martha Jones of Culmington stated that John Nicholls Rector of the parish was the father of her bastard child. Nicholls appeared in court and denied the charge; the case was dismissed.<sup>1</sup>

Most of the clergy offences occurring in the act books concern either non-appearance at visitations or failure to keep their parsonage houses in repair; few by comparison reflect a failure to perform their canonical duties and fewer still reflect a failure to keep a standard of morality consonant with their position.

Pluralism and consequent non-residence provided a need for clerical assistance in the parishes. Curates (or sub-curates of perpetual curacies) certainly became more numerous as the period progressed. In the Hereford diocese they doubled in number from 26 to 54 between 1665 and 1701 and again between 1701 and 1743 rising to 123 in 1759. This is not only a reflection of increasing pluralism but also of the growing number of men seeking ordination without benefices in which to work.

The curate was not the only assistant to the incumbent; for instance, at Cleobury Mortimer in 1677 William Osland was admitted as lay deacon.<sup>2</sup> An important one was the parish clerk. His functions were various; he was employed to perform the responses and to give a loud "Amen" at the end of the prayers and sermon; he announced the metrical psalm and the anthem if there was one and was responsible for giving out the psalm note on his adjustable pitch-pipe.<sup>3</sup> Apart from this in many country areas he was responsible for the cleanliness of the church building. From the visitation returns of the period it is clear that, where they were appointed, on the whole they did their job well, as at Llanrothall in 1716 where the church was free from cobwebs "and very clean from all annoyances", or at Aymestrey in 1719 where "the church particularly is in decent order"; at Monmouth in 1716 the churchwardens claimed that the church had "not been kept so clean these forty years, as it is by the present sexton Charles Baker".<sup>4</sup>

But at other places there was no clerk, as at Eyton in 1719. At Kinsham in the same year the warden performed the clerk's duties and

1. H.R.O. Box 41. Act Book 159 (1743-64) unfoliated.
2. H.R.O. Subscription Book (1661-87) 34<sup>v</sup>.
3. P.A. Scholes (ed.) The Oxford Companion to Music (Oxford 10th edition 1970) 759.
4. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. Visitation Returns for 1716 and 1719.

at Willersley one of the Rector's servants did the work and kept the church clean.<sup>1</sup> Some clerks were incapacitated, but nevertheless performed their duties. The clerk at Middleton Scriven in 1663 could not read "but he hath a son who can read and doth answer unto our Minister in such things as by the book of Common Prayer is required."<sup>2</sup> The clerk at Byford in 1716 was old, his eyesight was failing but the parish was satisfied; it was true that the church was not clean but this was because timber and other materials for repair were in the church.<sup>3</sup> At Clun in 1719 the parish clerk did "indifferent well, being about 80 years of age"<sup>4</sup> and at Neenton in 1716 the clerk was very aged but the parish was well content; the church was clean.<sup>5</sup>

Some parishes, however, were discontented. At Rock in 1671 Thomas Powles was cited for "not being sufficient in writing and singing, ..... for not keeping the church devoutly and handsomely free from dust and cobwebs and other annoyances ....."<sup>6</sup> In 1738 at the University church of St. Mary's in Oxford there were other problems.<sup>7</sup> Until sixty years previously the parish clerk there had fulfilled a number of tasks; he had posted names of preachers in the colleges, attended preachers at the church, opened pews and laid cushions for dons and nobles. Since then the Vice-Chancellor had been accustomed to appoint a university clerk as well with the consequence that the parish clerk's salary dropped from £100 to £8, though he was still expected to keep the place clean, even if it was primarily used by the university. Salary was also a problem at Lucton in 1719.<sup>8</sup> The wardens of Ratlinghope in 1719 cited the clerk for not performing his office as he was supposed to do but "was accused of making use of the parish wine and keeping it to his own use when provided for the sacrament."<sup>9</sup>

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1. *ibid.*
  2. H.R.O. Visitation Box 18 - Visitation Returns for 1663.
  3. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28 - Visitation Returns for 1716.
  4. *ibid.* Returns for 1719.
  5. *ibid.*
  6. H.R.O. Visitation Box 18 - Returns for 1671.
  7. Lloyd-Jukes *op. cit.* 120.
  8. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. Returns for 1716.
  9. *ibid.*



Some clerks taught in school; for instance, John Blackway, parish clerk of Frome Bishop "a very poor man with a great charge of children fell out of a tree, broke a rib and left arm and so could not do his work so being a very good English scholar taught small children, though without a licence".<sup>1</sup> Similarly the clerk at Walford for forty years, Robert Smith, not only performed his duties "to the good liking" of the parish, but "hath all the time made it his business to become instrumental in teaching the poor youth of the parish to read and many of them to write."<sup>2</sup>

During the century following the Restoration we have in both dioceses a picture of the parish clergy whose patrons were still largely gentry and who were themselves increasingly drawn from that class, but by no means always so even as late as 1760; they were, moreover, a clergy increasingly of graduate status and with an increasing proportion of higher degrees. Here the similarity in background ends, for about half the Hereford diocesan clergy were natives of the diocese, whereas less than a fifth of the Oxfordshire clergy were indigenious. Pluralism was on the increase in both dioceses, but, if we are to believe the visitation returns, it led only to a limited amount of non-residence especially if we allow for clergy who lived within four miles of their livings. Such was the quality of the local clergy; we now turn to church life at the parish level where we shall try to see what true impact the Church could have on ordinary people, which should be the aim of the whole paraphernalia of courts, officers, patronage and the clergy.

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1 H.R.O. Visitation Box 324. no date.

2 *ibid.* no date.

CHAPTER V

PARISH LIFE

The religious life of the parish consisted of a weekly round of services, morning and evening prayer and, much less frequently, celebrations of Holy Communion. Catechism, baptism, marriages and burials were other specifically religious activities of the parish priest in his cure. It was here that the impact of the Church on the lives of the people should really have been felt, if the Church was fully alive.

On Sundays the normal pattern of worship in both dioceses, whether in countryside or town, was morning and evening prayer with one sermon. The Hereford Visitation Articles of 1716 specifically asked if this norm was being kept;<sup>1</sup> unsatisfactory replies to similar enquiries made at Secker's Primary Visitation of the Oxford diocese in 1738 provoked the Bishop into writing personal letters to the incumbents concerned, asking them to justify their omission.<sup>2</sup> The times varied and there seems to have been no standard custom; but the morning service was usually at about 10 or 11, occasionally as early as 9 as at Upper Sapey or from 8 to 9 as at Welsh Newton.<sup>3</sup> Evensong was usually said at 2.30 or 3, sometimes at 4, according to the time of year and the amount of daylight. In the Archdeaconry of Hereford in the period 1716 to 1722 68.2% parishes (105 of 154) had two services a Sunday, and a further 4.54% (7) had two services at least in the summer.<sup>4</sup> 26.6% (41)<sup>5</sup> had only one service each Sunday. The Archdeaconry of Salop could produce a rather better record. Of the 108 returns, extant for the Archdeaconry, over 83% (90)<sup>6</sup> record the standard pattern of two services with a further 1.85% (2) doing the same in the summer; over 15% (17) had only one service

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1. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28.
  2. Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. 4-5.
  3. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. 1716 Visitation.
  4. 7 of the 161 however only had a sermon once a fortnight.
  5. of which 8 (5.18%) had a sermon once a fortnight.
  6. Two of these (1.85%) only had one sermon a fortnight.

a Sunday.<sup>1</sup> Twenty years later in the Oxford diocese just over 85% (146 out of 171 returns) parishes and chapelries for which there is information available had services twice a Sunday throughout the year, and a further 1.75% (3) had two services on summer Sundays.<sup>2</sup> This compares very favourably with the York diocese in 1743 where only 46% (383 of 836 parishes) had a similar pattern or the London diocese in 1742 where only just over 50% (236 of 466) had two services a Sunday.<sup>3</sup>

Though it was customary in some places to hold two services at morning and evening in the summer only, some incumbents and churchwardens felt obliged to show that they were improving the situation. For instance, the return for Hentland in 1716 reports that the present "Minister reads evening prayers nine weeks longer in the year than his predecessors did for they did not read evening prayer till Palm Sunday and left off at Michaelmas."<sup>4</sup> On the other hand one can at times detect an edgy defensiveness in some of the replies; Thomas Whittell, curate of Eyton, and his wardens felt obliged to explain that prayers and sermon were only performed at the chapelry there four times a year and Communion twice, "according to the will of Bishop Croft who obliged the minister of Yarpole to perform the same yearly."<sup>5</sup> Some appealed to ancient custom, as Dr. Warne found at Halwill in Devon.<sup>6</sup> The churchwardens of Moccas, reporting that they had morning prayer and sermon at 9 every Sunday, declared that this "is as much as hath been done in our church many years." Similarly at Willersley, a chapelry of Eardisley, prayers were said once a month, on the third Sunday throughout the year, "by ancient constitution and custom." At other places it was customary to have prayers twice only on Sacrament Sundays as at Mansel Lacy.<sup>7</sup>

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1 3 had only one sermon a fortnight.

2 Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. seriatim.

3 Sykes. Church and State 238.

4 H.R.O. Visitation Box. 28. 1716 Visitation Returns.

5 ibid.

6 Warne op. cit. 44.

7 H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. 1716 Visitation Returns.



But, as might be expected, it was chapelries or parishes held in plurality which most frequently had the single service Sundays. At Willey they had prayers twice and sermon once except on the second Sunday in the month when the Minister "reads prayers and preaches at Barrow".<sup>1</sup> The wardens of Middleton said their parson found it difficult, as he had to serve his other parish, Brimfield, "at a great distance."<sup>2</sup> Sybton Cawood, a chapelry in the Deanery of Clun, had only one service a Sunday.<sup>3</sup> Likewise Philip Davies, warden of Preen in the Deanery of Wenlock, reported "We have sarvis bot onse a farnite and then a sarmon about to a cloke the afturnun" (sic).<sup>4</sup> In 1738 at Heythrop in the Oxford diocese where they could not "make up a tolerable congregation without the assistance of stragglers from neighbouring parishes who will not come till the afternoon", they only had one service.<sup>5</sup> When Bishop Secker demanded a morning service there, James Martin, the Rector replied that the parishioners of Little Rollright, where he was curate to Thomas Heywood,<sup>6</sup> respected him so much for his service there that they had newly adorned the pulpit. "But to be torn away from them and sent on a Sunday morning to Heathrop to read to the church walls; (wch. I am sure would be the case, the Clerk only excepted) this, my Lord, is to me a melancholy consideration..... Nor will reading to the walls be the worst of the case. I am already forced to be obliged to the Papist at Heathrop for a stable. If I am sent thither in a morning I must either fast (which will put me into a fever) or be obliged to a papist likewise for a dinner". He would then be looked upon as "countenancing Popery".<sup>7</sup> Twenty-one years later there was still

1. *ibid.* Secker was keen that part of the Sabbath should be spent in private exercises of piety, meditation on what the congregation had heard at Church. Secker Works IV 94. Charge of 1741.
2. *ibid.* 1716 Visitation Returns.  
Brimfield and Middleton were both chapelries of Leominster.
3. *ibid.*
4. *ibid.* 1719 Visitation Returns.
5. Lloyd-Jukes *op. cit.* 82.
6. Both James Martin and Thomas Heywood lived in Chipping Norton. Bishop John Hume in 1759 described James Martin as "an odd man". Bishop Hume's Notebook MS Oxf. Dioc. d.759. 52.
7. Martin to Secker 24th August 1738. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.651. 7.  
The papist was presumably one of the Shrewsbury family, though the Earl, a minor, was abroad being educated. Heythrop and Chipping Norton were centres of recusancy. At Chipping Norton there were seven papist families in 1738. One of the Stonor family, James Talbot Stonor (1676-1756), was their bishop and related to the Earl of Shrewsbury.  
Lloyd-Jukes *op. cit.* 45.

only one service on Sundays.<sup>1</sup>

Miss McClatchey has shown that in the second half of the eighteenth century there was a distinct decline in services - only 67% of the Oxfordshire parishes had double duty in 1783, 60% in 1818-25.<sup>2</sup> Dr. Warne has cast doubt on whether double attendance on Sundays was ever really the rule in the Exeter diocese. Claiming that the normal pre-Reformation practice had been single attendance for centuries, he states that the "twice every Lord's Day" norm only arrived with the sabbatarianism of Protestantism. By 1821 Bishops of Exeter had accepted that one service and one sermon was the normal practice except in towns and market villages of some size.<sup>3</sup> When we consider the pattern in the dioceses of Exeter, York and London it is remarkable that in Oxford and Hereford such a high proportion of churches maintained double duty.

The services must have been long and often tedious. In most parish churches, except in the big towns, the psalms were usually read by the minister and the clerk and congregation verse by verse. Only in some parishes were the canticles chanted.<sup>4</sup> Hymnsinging was a feature of 'enthusiasm' at the end of the century. In Devon large parish churches had organs early in the century. At Ludlow in the Hereford diocese there was a new organ in 1671 and another, a Snetzler, was built in 1764.<sup>5</sup> Smaller churches probably used a bass viol, but there is little evidence on this point in the dioceses of this study, though Bicester had a bassoon in 1744 which was replaced by an organ later in the century.<sup>6</sup> Secker was one bishop

1. 1759 Visitation Returns. MS Oxf. Dioc. d.556. 33-4.  
Secker could see no reason why the small size of the congregation should be an excuse for holding only one service on Sunday; in fact it was particularly important if there were papist families in the parish. Martin a few weeks later had the temerity to reply to Secker "Homo sum, humani a me nihil alienum puto .... Remember you are a man, said the servant to King Philip by his order".  
Secker to Martin (draft) 8th August 1738. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.651. 4.  
Martin to Secker 24th August 1738. *ibid.* 7.
2. McClatchey *op. cit.* 80-2. By 1838 the figure had risen to 81.2% and by 1860 to 95.7%. In 1738 the figure was 85%. See page 112.
3. Warne *op. cit.* 44.
4. P.A. Scholes (ed.) The Oxford Companion to Music (Oxford 10th ed. 1970) 37.
5. Chappell P.A. Ludlow Parish Church. A History and a Record (n.d.)
6. Visited and seen. 29th March 1977.

who seems to have been alive to the dreariness of parish worship. He encouraged the singing of the psalms where possible and deplored the recent decline in parish music. He wanted regular choir practices and ordered his clergy to keep a watch on the rehearsals that "they be managed with all possible decency and never continued till candlelight if they consist of both sexes".<sup>1</sup> Even so, surpliced choirs were unknown in parish churches. The musicians and singers were usually in the singing gallery at the west end. At St. Clodock for instance the west gallery has a space on the south side of the gallery for them.<sup>2</sup> Secker was also privately prepared to agree that some alteration of the liturgy, such as the reduction of the state prayers would have been an improvement, but the control of Parliament made a change difficult. He is reported to have agreed that the services were too long, "tacking together three services originally designed for different days or different hours and assemblies."<sup>3</sup> The length of the services in cold weather kept people away from church "where the damp and chillness of frost inconvenience their health. Prayers should not last longer than most people can be supposed to remain fervent."<sup>4</sup> Secker's common-sense view, here expressed privately, does not seem to have been stated publicly, though he did show his keenness to have the clergy trained to communicate the Gospel to show that religion is not the concern of the clergy alone but the common concern of all. "Private devotion", he said, "must be practised, family worship revived and the service of God in the Church regularly and seriously attended upon .... Piety is indeed seated in the heart, but to give it no vent in outward expression is to stifle and extinguish it."<sup>5</sup>

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1. Secker Works IV 90-1. Charge of 1741.
  2. Addleshaw, G.W.O. and Etchells, F. The Architectural Setting of Anglican Worship (London 1948) 98 and 98n.
  3. H.M.C. Egmont Diary. III. 317.
  4. ibid. 317.
  5. Secker Works IV 70-1. Charge of 1738.



As we have already seen, at least one weekly sermon was expected in each of the dioceses during the period. The Hereford Visitation returns of 1716-22 reveal that ~~only~~ very few even of the chapelries did not have a sermon each Sunday. In the Hereford Archdeaconry just under 10% (15 of 154) had a sermon only once a fortnight; in one particular area, the Archenfield Deanery, as many as 8 out of the 31 churches had only one a fortnight. In the Shropshire Archdeaconry only 4% had less than one a week. On the other hand seven churches in the diocese had two a Sunday regularly; these included not only towns of some importance like Leominster, but small villages like Wigmore and Wistanstow and the chapelry of Knighton.<sup>1</sup> In the Oxford diocese, besides the two Oxford city churches of St. Martin's and St. Ebbe's, there were 8 others which had two sermons each Sunday; two of these, Broughton Poggs and Bicester, only had two in the summer.<sup>2</sup> As with regularity and frequency of services incumbents felt obliged to defend themselves over their preaching record. John Tucker of Cornwell in Oxfordshire, who never preached on sacrament days, rather lamely replied to Secker's predictable enquiry on the matter that his people complained of his tediousness at sermon, though "perhaps rarely exceeding half an hour." Accordingly he shortened his discourses and omitted sermon on sacrament days, "lest it should be an hindrance".<sup>3</sup>

We have several manuscript books of sermons by Daniel Renaud, the Swiss-born Rector of Whitchurch in Herefordshire. The books contain a total of about 175 sermons, carefully indexed and written out in a neat and beautiful hand.<sup>4</sup> Renaud was a

1 These statistics are extracted from the Visitation Returns for 1716, 1719 and 1722.

2 Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. seriatim.

3 Tucker to Secker 8th September 1738. MS. Oxf. Dioc. c.651. 20.

4 H.R.O. Box F.63 (Sermons) 1-16.

There is also a copy of Edward Welshman's The Thirty-Nine Articles published in 1724 and annotated by Renaud, often in Greek. It was probably used by him as an undergraduate at Brasenose. His comments are useful for an idea how an eighteenth century parson interpreted the essentials of the faith. His manuscript book of catechetical lectures is referred to later. F 63/17 and 18.

Some sermons in a larger hand are probably the work of his son, David. F 63/19-27.

methodical man and this is exemplified not only by the meticulous accounts of his glebe and tithes,<sup>1</sup> but also by the clear analytical record of the exact dates of his sermons over the period of 1762 to 1768. One book<sup>2</sup> consists of seven "occasional sermons" written for various special days, the feasts of St. Mark, St. Matthew, St. Luke, a Fast Day, Inauguration Day, the Feast Day and Advent Sunday.

Inauguration Day probably was the anniversary of the accession of George III; the Feast Day was presumably that of the church at Whitchurch dedicated to St. Dubritius.<sup>3</sup> In his sermon for St. Luke's Day<sup>4</sup> he used the text "The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few." This address is of interest for it shows that Renaud was under no illusion about some of the weaknesses that were apparent in the Church. He had no doubt about the nature of his vocation; "When the ministers of the gospel are here called labourers this shows us the nature of our calling. That it is by no means a profession of ease, idleness but of constant and painful care. When these again are said to be labourers in the harvest, this is still a greater reproach to them that are slothful, since at such times and upon that emergency even the laziest are content to work or are thought inexcusable if they do not."<sup>5</sup> He speaks of the great harvest and the few labourers of the early days of Christianity and compares it with the situation in his day. "There is no scarcity of Christian pastors, no famine of the word to be complained of. The doctrines of the Church are constantly expounded, the motives to a holy life urged, the sacraments regularly administered ..... but still men are not in love with the glorious privileges and promises of holiness."<sup>6</sup>

Renaud's sermons were not very long by the standards of the day; they probably lasted about 25 to 35 minutes. They are forceful, direct and clearly structured; early in the sermon he would point

1. H.R.O. A 98/1 Renaud's Notebook.

2. H.R.O. F 63/6.

3. St. Dubritius' feast day was 14th November. In fact, according to Renaud's own analysis, he seems to have preached the sermon on 28th September 1766.

The text for Inauguration Day was "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's".

F 63/6. 25.

4. H.R.O. F 63/6. 12, 17.

5. *ibid.* 15.

6. *ibid.* 16.

out his aim and define the points he was to make;<sup>1</sup> he then expanded these ideas and ended with an exhortation. His sermons would probably have well suited the congregations of Whitchurch and Ganarew.

The rubric at the end of the Holy Communion service in the 1662 Prayer Book states that "every parishioner shall communicate at the least three times a year of which Easter to be one."<sup>2</sup> The frequency of celebrations of the Eucharist is one test either of the intensity of belief amongst the laity or at least the keenness of the incumbent. Again, a study of numbers of communicants at Easter in a given area in proportion to the population may help to establish the depth of commitment to the faith.<sup>3</sup>

Compared with modern times, frequency of celebrations was much lower. According to Professor Sykes, the general standard in country parishes was four sacrament Sundays a year - on the three great festivals and in the Autumn after the gathering of the harvest. This was not for want of persuasion and cajoling on the part of the authorities.<sup>4</sup> For instance, in 1683/4 Archbishop Sancroft asked Bishop Peter Mews to make

1. For instance, he introduced his Advent Sunday sermon based on the text "It is high time to awake out of sleep" with "I shall ..... endeavour to explain, first the duty contained in the text which is purity of life and heart, secondly, the arguments made use of to enforce it. I shall at present say only so much as results from the explanation of those figurative expressions by which the apostle has recommended this purity of life...."

H.R.O. P63/6. 37-40.

2. The Book of Common Prayer.

3. Professor J.V. McManners has found in his work on the French Church that a study of Christian names, delays in baptism and, in particular, the degree of abstinence from conception in time of Lent as measured by the December and January baptismal records, all are helpful in establishing the degree of commitment to the faith. Nevertheless in a Protestant country with a different religious ethos and a different tradition this is not of much help. An analysis of the baptismal records of three parishes reveals no such pattern. (North Leigh 1672-77, 1720-27 and 1755-60 and Mary Magdalen Oxford 1662-66 and 1751-57 in the Oxford diocese and Ross 1671-81 in the Hereford diocese).

ex. info. J.V. McManners.

Parish Registers: North Leigh - Bodleian MS DD Par. North Leigh c.1.

Mary Magdalen, Oxford. MS DD Par. Mary Magd. c.2 & b.1.

Ross - H.R.O. Ross Parish Register (1671-1723).

For a more detailed survey of sociological method in ecclesiastical history see C.I. Langlois 'Des Études D'Histoire Ecclésiastique Locale à la Sociologie Religieuse Historique' in Rev. d'histoire de l'Eglise de France LXII (1976) 329-41.

4. Sykes Church and State 250.



sure that there was a weekly celebration in Wells Cathedral; this was arranged after some initial prevarication.<sup>1</sup> A recommendation was also made to Henry Compton, Bishop of London, for a weekly communion.<sup>2</sup> In the following century Bishop Secker of Oxford was encouraging his clergy to increase the frequency of Communion; "if afterwards you can advance from a quarterly communion to a monthly one I make no doubt you will."<sup>3</sup>

In the Oxford diocese in 1738 22.05% (30 of the 136 parishes with relevant records) had the minimum of three celebrations a year, most, 38.9% (53), had four. 22.79% (31) are recorded as having six or more, 12.5% (17) of the latter had a communion service at least once a month - a higher proportion than forty years later in 1778.<sup>4</sup> An analysis of the Hereford diocese in the period 1716 to 1722 tells a similar story. In the diocese as a whole 24.46% (69 out of the 278 parishes) had three a year; 38.48% (107) had four; 23% (64) had six or more, of which 7.19% (20) had a monthly communion. Though the record of the Hereford diocese is taken twenty years earlier and, though one would expect a greater frequency in a diocese with Oxford at its heart, there is a remarkable similarity between the two sets of figures. The overall percentage for three or four communions a year was 60% in Oxford and 63.9% in Hereford. The figures for six communions or more was 22.79% in Oxford

1. Mews to Sancroft 2nd January 1683/4. MS Tanner 34. 233.

2. MS Rawlinson G.983. 46-46<sup>v</sup>.

3. Quoted by D. McClatchey op. cit. 86.

This request was not so successful as McClatchey has supposed; the situation was worse in 1778 than in 1738. She claims that it was effective in that 4% (6) of 156 parishes had monthly communion in 1778, 26% (40) parishes had three celebrations a year and 55% (86) had four a year. In fact in 1738 at the time of Secker's Primary Visitation only 61% had as few as three or four celebrations compared with 81% in 1778. A random search through the visitation returns of 1759 reveals much the same statistic as in 1738. McClatchey observed that by 1838 only five parishes had three a year, but the majority still had four. It was not until 1866 that monthly celebration seems to have been the norm; only ten parishes had four celebrations a year and indeed weekly celebrations were held in twelve.

McClatchey op. cit. 86-7.

4. Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. seriatim (1738 visitation).  
MS Oxf. Dioc. d.555-7 (1759 visitation).

and 23% in Hereford. Monthly communions took place in 12.5% of Oxfordshire parishes and 7.19% of Hereford ones. This is roughly similar to the York figures for monthly communions in 1743 which was 8.6%. The Exeter figure as late as 1788 was still only 10%.<sup>1</sup> There are some further matters of interest; the Oxford Deanery which represented the City of Oxford with Wolvercote had, as one would expect, a high proportion of monthly communions - 58% (7 of the 12 parishes) had a monthly communion.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately the Hereford Deanery was not visited in the 1716, 1719 and 1722 visitations, as it was a peculiar of the Dean of Hereford,<sup>3</sup> but Monmouth and Ross, towns of reasonable size, are recorded as having a monthly communion; monthly communion was the rule in four parishes or chapelries in the Leominster Deanery, three in the Ludlow Deanery and three in the Wenlock Deanery.<sup>4</sup> Occasionally in some parishes there was a communion every six weeks, as at Mainstow in the Clun Deanery and Stretton-in-Dale in the Wenlock Deanery, whereas Stoke Edith in the Weston Deanery conveniently recorded celebrations "as often as is required".

A further look at the Hereford diocese shows a discrepancy between the figures of the two archdeaconries, as we have already seen in the analysis of Sunday prayers and sermon and in the educational standard of the clergy. As with prayers, Shropshire took the lead in regularity of performance. Though there is little to choose between the two with regard to the monthly celebrations, Shropshire can record 31.7% of the churches holding communion services six or more times a year as against 17.25% in the Hereford Archdeaconry. The Shropshire figure is 9% better than in the Oxford diocese twenty years later.

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1. Figures from Archbishop Herring's Visitation Returns of 1743 quoted by N. Sykes Church and State 250-1. Warne op. cit. 45.
  2. Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. seriatim.
  3. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28.
  4. Leominster Leominster, Pembridge, Presteigne, Old Radnor. Ludlow Bromfield, Stanton Lacy, Stoke St. Milborough (the last monthly until November. Ludlow itself had six a year). Wenlock Acton Round, Much Wenlock, Madeley.

Numbers of communicants are another useful guide to the effectiveness of the Church and the depth of the faith of the people, though even here one must be careful not to mistake a folk habit or social pressure for depth of inner conviction.<sup>1</sup> Certainly some incumbents such as John Mather of Lewknor made their confirmation candidates promise to attend church frequently and especially Holy Communion.<sup>2</sup> Communion was also regarded by some as important for the dying; for instance, Thomas Coles of Wistanstow in December 1680 delayed his visit to see Griffith Reynolds, the Registrar, at Ludlow because of the "sickness of a person in my parish to whom if she lives so long I must tomorrow administer the sacrament."<sup>3</sup>

At the time of Secker's Primary visitation in 1738 18.31% (24 out of 131) parishes in the Oxford diocese could claim to have more than one communicant per house - eight of these had an average of more than 1.5 communicants per household; nearly 33% (43) had between 0.5 and 0.75 communicants per household.<sup>4</sup> Sixteen parishes had less than 0.25 communicants per household. The highest figure is, perhaps expectedly, St. Mary's, the University Church in Oxford, where there were as many as 2.33 communicants per household. If one assumes there were about five inhabitants in each house one should be able to reach a fairly true rate of attendance of the total population. For instance, in St. Mary's, Oxford, nearly half (46.6%) the total population were communicants. In well over half the parishes, 59% (77 out of 131), as few as between 5% and 15% made their communions regularly.<sup>5</sup> High Churchmen expected priests to receive communion weekly, but in late seventeenth century Christ Church, even among the residents, it was "a rarity to see above ten communicants, for the most part not above half that number or none at all."<sup>6</sup>

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1 G.V. Bennett Francis Atterbury 12.

2 Mather to Secker 18th July 1754. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.653. f 119<sup>v</sup>-120.

3 Coles to Reynolds 6th December 1680. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.

4 Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. seriatim.

In response to articles 1 and 7 the 1738 visitation returns give the number of households in each parish and also the number of communicants. It is upon these two figures that the numbers of communicants per household is based. See Appendix IV.

5 Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. seriatim.

6 M.S. Rawlinson C.983. 46-46<sup>v</sup>.

Warne found that in Devon numbers were low especially in comparison with the figures for York in 1743 which were often startlingly high. Warne op. cit. 45.



Secker in his Charge of 1741 commented on the 1738 Oxford visitation returns. He noted that the number of communicants was small, in some places very small. It seemed to him that some wrongly believed that communion was for those advanced in the Christian life and thus was "a very dangerous thing for common persons to venture upon". More stupid observers commented that communicants were no better for attending. Secker believed that in the first three centuries the Eucharist was celebrated weekly and in some places almost daily, but a decline had set in during the sixth century. This was followed by a further decline to one communion a year in the later Middle Ages. The Church of England's insistence on three communions a year was he felt minimal. There must be more frequent communion.<sup>1</sup>

Joseph Goodwin, Vicar of Shipton, was well aware of the smallness of his communicant numbers. The sacrament, he said, was administered at Leafield chapel and the people of Ramsden four miles away received it at Wilcot half a mile from them. He had apparently tried to remedy the situation by public and private persuasion and "by sending to several families those I esteem the best and plainest books upon the subject" but to no avail.<sup>2</sup>

Unfortunately similar figures are not available for the Hereford diocese in the period, but we have detailed and accurate Easter figures for the parish of Ludlow between 1725 and 1734.<sup>3</sup> The Rector kept a scrupulous account of numbers of communicants at the nine various celebrations between Palm Sunday and the Third Sunday after Easter. For instance, at the nine services held over this period in 1725 there was a total of 806 communicants with a total of 148 at the two communions on Easter Day. The records not only include the offerings made at each service, the amount of wine consumed but also the number of young people admitted to communion for the first

1 Secker Works IV 87-8. Charge of 1741.

2 Goodwin to Secker 1st September 1738.  
MS Oxf. Dioc. c.651. 12.

3 Ludlow Easter Book. Salop R.O. 2881/1/78 unfoliated.  
Warne discovered considerable discrepancy in communicant rates. Parishes with non-resident parsons, such as Slapton with 200 families and only 32 communicants, or Churchstow, with 43 families and only 3 or 4 communicants, had a poor showing. On the other hand parishes like Broadhempston served by a curate had 80 communicants out of 60 families.  
Warne op. cit. 45-6.

time. Unfortunately there is no visitation return for the period but it is clear from records that not only was communion frequent over the Easter period, but also that it was celebrated at least monthly on the first Sunday in the month. An unusual factor is that the largest number of communicants did not receive communion on Easter Day, the day enjoined by the rubric. The two following Sundays, Low Easter and Easter II, normally recorded far more; in fact in 1726 Easter II had twice as many communicants as Easter Day itself (326 to 152). If during the decade 1725 to 1734 we take the whole season each year from Palm Sunday to the Third Sunday after Easter, the proportion for Easter Day fluctuated between 15.83% in 1726 and 21.11% in 1727, for Low Sunday from 20.48% (1731) to 29.1% (1729) and Easter II from the abnormally low figure of 24.7% in 1734 to 33.95% (1726); 30% was the average. Easter III correlated fairly closely with Easter Day, with the two pre-Easter celebrations on Palm Sunday and Good Friday much lower at about 5% and 2% respectively.<sup>1</sup> First Communions number from the unusually low figure of three in 1734 to 31 in 1726. In five of the years there were 15 or more first communicants - the average for the nine years (1725-1733) was 16.33.

The Rector's Book for Lower Heyford in Oxfordshire gives us an even more definitive record of communicants' attendance.<sup>2</sup> Both Thomas Leigh and his successor, William Bradley, kept a record of the names of those attending their celebrations. Thomas Leigh only celebrated three times a year and we have a record of communicants' names between 1731 and 1736; Bradley celebrated four times a year between 1755 and 1760 and again we have lists of names.<sup>3</sup> This gives

1. Ludlow Easter Book.
2. Heyford Incumbent's Book, Bodl. MS Top. Oxon. f50 seriatim. Unfortunately the Diary of Robert Goodwin, Vicar of Cleobury Mortimer, gives us little idea of the religious life of his parish. James Newton's Diary shows that he was a dedicated and sincere priest in his personal life, he was regular in his prayers and sacramental life, but again it tells us very little of the life of N<sup>o</sup>ntham Courtenay. Bodl. MS Eng. misc. e.251 f6<sup>v</sup>. At Heythrop in 1759 the incumbent reported that he could not get Joseph Cox and his wife to receive the sacrament; when others were going up to the altar they constantly turned their backs on it. Bodl. MS Oxf. Dioc. d.556. 34<sup>v</sup>
3. Thomas Leigh was Fellow of Corpus Christi, Oxford, and Rector of Lower Heyford ~~Book~~ from 1728 to 1744 and also second portioner of Tredington, ~~Worcestershire~~ *Worcestershire*, from 1731 until his death in January 1743/4. William Bradley was a graduate of Corpus Christi.

us a clear picture of the regularity of individuals in the parish. There is a definite sign of decline in attendance over the period. In 1732 and 1733 there were totals of 56 and 79 communicants at the three celebrations - an average of 18.6 and 26.3 respectively for each year. In 1738 Leigh reported that he had "generally upwards of 20"; the lowest number he remembered was 14, the highest 31.<sup>1</sup> By 1755 there were only 44 communicants in the year, though the rite was celebrated four times - the yearly average per celebration during the period 1755 to 1760 varied between 10.25 and 13.25. It is unlikely that this reduction in average numbers of communicants can be accredited to a decline in population; in fact, the number of houses rose from 53 to 54 between 1738 and 1759.<sup>2</sup> Instead it corroborates a general and earlier decline noted by Bennett.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, after the end of our period there seems to have been a marked return to greater individual frequency of attendance at the sacrament in Heyford; for instance, between Whitsun 1779 and Easter 1780 there were 102 communicants, an average of 25.5 per celebration.<sup>4</sup>

Very few of the parishioners of Lower Heyford kept to the rubric of communicating three times a year. In the period 1732 to 1736 inclusive only three of them did so each year and one of these Dame Pitton was often given the poor offering.<sup>5</sup> In the later period 1755-60, again only three made their communions three times a year. The rubric further says that Easter must be one of the days. Again the parishioners fell short; only five made their Easter communions regularly at all the five Easters, 2 on 4 Easters and another 7 on 3 of the 5 Easters. In the six years from 1755-1760 only two attended at all six Easters, 11 attended three or more. Some of the most regular attenders were those who could expect to receive the poor offering made at the offertory; for instance, Dame Pitton whom we have already noted, communicated as often as records were kept

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1 Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. 80.

2 *ibid.* 79.

MS Oxf. Dioc. d.556. 29.

3 G.V. Bennett Francis Atterbury 12.

4 Heyford Incumbent's Book 249-250.

5 One did so in 4 of the 5 years; three in 3 of the 5 years and 5 in 2 of the 5 years.

MS. Top. Ox. f50. Lower Heyford Rector's Book.



over the five years. J. Savin who was there in three of the five years was another.<sup>1</sup>

J.W. Legg, writing in the early part of this century, warns against judging frequency or infrequency of individual communion as a criterion of piety. Mediaeval custom had been to communicate once a year; moreover, he makes the dubious claim that Puritans customarily did not communicate at all. Queen Anne herself only received once a month; Dr. Johnson, pious though he was, made his communion once a year at Easter. Monthly communion seems to have been the rule in eighteenth century Catholic France.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand the early Oxford Methodists bound themselves to weekly communion and there is evidence in the Pious Country Parishioner of monthly communions in most large towns in 1732; "Nay, in many churches every Lord's Day".<sup>3</sup>

As we have already seen in an earlier chapter, many parishioners had a rude country attitude to church attendance. Some parish customs often associated with the principal feast days of the church could also get out of hand. For instance, in about 1686 Stephen Fenton, Rector of Glympton, noted that there was formerly a custom in his parish for all housekeepers "and which is worse the judicious rabble" to go to the rectory after the sacrament on Easter Day to demand bread and cheese, "drink themselves full of ale" and to eat meat and pigeon pie. This had been stopped by his predecessor who had commuted it by ceasing to ask for the Easter offering.<sup>4</sup> A Christmas entertainment at Heyford Warren was stopped in 1671.<sup>5</sup> At Kencott it had been usual for the Rector to provide a dinner on St. Stephen's Day, the day after Christmas; it consisted of a "loin and rib, two rumps and two udders of beef, two legs of mutton with bread and convenient garden-stuffs, four plum puddings and

1. MS Top. Ox. f50. 266 et seq.

2. J.W. Legg English Church Life from the Restoration to the Tractarian Movement (London 1914) 35-6.

On the other hand Bishop Peploe of Chester in 1743 opposed frequent communion as popish and enjoined the practice of communion three times a year.

Chetham Society (1857) Vol. II Pt. II 357.

3. J.W. Legg op. cit. 30 and 33.

The Pious Country Parishioner (London 6th ed. 1732) 147.

There were also daily celebrations at St. Giles' Cripplegate with a band of daily communicants in 1694.

T. Hearne Remarks and Collections (O.H.S. 1885) Vol. I 188.

4. Glympton Parish Register 1667-1828.

Bodl. MS D.D. Par. Glympton d.2 23.

5. MS Oxf. Archd. c.32. 120.

a barrel of ale".<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless at Kidlington the Vicar, James Edgcumbe, was still having problems with a Christmas custom as late as 1738. Apparently money had been endowed for a Christmas breakfast of oxmeat, bread and ale originally to refresh those who had come one or two miles for the Midnight High Mass. The midnight service had long since been dropped, but the village still used to get up at midnight, run about the parish "in a tumultuous manner" till 4 or 5 and then go to the vicarage for breakfast "not in the most decent manner". By the time of Divine Service half the parish was unfit to attend. Edgcumbe had preached against it and more serious members of the parish were worried, but the only answer was to divert the charity to better purpose. As it was, the bread was not given to the poor but indiscriminately and the beer was all consumed on Christmas morning "and it is of no service but to make half the parish drunk before Church time." There was in consequence no celebration of communion on that day.<sup>2</sup>

Later still in 1759 Lampert of Barford St. Michael asked Bishop Hume for permission to stop the custom of eating and drinking in the church after service "which turns notorious". The cost of this had been borne by the rent of Whitebread Close, given by two maiden sisters for this purpose. When he tried to stop the practice two years earlier the rentpayer refused to pay his rent until the custom was revived.<sup>3</sup>

Entry to the Church was through baptism, the other major sacrament enjoined by the Prayer Book. The rubrics stipulated that baptism was to be carried out within two weeks of birth. Clergy were to tell their people "to defer not baptism of their children longer than the first or second Sunday after birth".<sup>4</sup> It was the duty of the parish clergy to search out any who were unbaptised to ensure the safety of their immortal souls. In fact, James Davies, curate of Lyonshall, was reported to the Register in December 1750 for not baptising an infant "notwithstanding he is a

1. Underwood to Secker 13th July 1747.

MS Oxf. Dioc. c.652. 114.

2. Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. 90-92. 1738 Visitation.

Edgcumbe was also Rector of Exeter College, Oxford.

3. 1759 Visitation Returns. MS Oxf. Dioc. d.555. 35<sup>v</sup> - 36.

Bishop Hume's Notebook (1759).

MS Oxf. Dioc. d.759. 11.

4. The Book of Common Prayer.

In fact the Waterstock parish register also notes that births had to be registered within five days on penalty of a fine of 40/-.

Bodl. Parish Register Waterstock C.1 (1580-1736).

parishioner born and the poor infant died"; he had also refused to church the mother.<sup>1</sup> At Wigmore on the 18th November 1705 Robert Comyn, the Vicar, baptised a baby found in the church porch and gave him the name Alian Wigmore.<sup>2</sup> The rubrics stipulated that the ceremony had to be carried out in public in church except in cases of emergency "or where need shall compel" the parson to carry it out in a private house.<sup>3</sup> This could be the case when the infant was in danger of death, but in the remoter parts of the Hereford diocese the parson often felt it to be excuse enough if the weather was cold and the distance of the home from the church would endanger the child's health. For instance, at Dorston baptism was sometimes held publicly in houses "the places being sometimes two miles distant from the church", or at Mainstow in the Clun deanery if the weather was cold.<sup>4</sup> If this happened, the incumbent would normally see that there was a public act of reception of the child into the church at a later date, as at Collington<sup>5</sup> and Cardington.<sup>6</sup>

Quakers and Anabaptists who reached adult life without baptism sometimes sought baptism as adults. When this happened, a week's notice had to be given to the Bishop and the candidate had to undergo an examination. In May 1742 William Freind, Rector of Witney, applied to Secker for leave to baptise a Quaker woman of 25 or 26 whom he wanted to present for confirmation the following week. He had examined her and found her well instructed in the faith, "far better than is usual amongst persons of her station in life." He was sure that her motive for conversion was sincere and disinterested "since she is likely to become a very great sufferer amongst her friends."<sup>7</sup> Thomas Toovey, Rector of Swyncomb, asked leave to baptise an anabaptist of 21 or 23.<sup>8</sup> Privately Secker showed tolerance to Anabaptists who

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1. Herbert to Croft 19th December 1750. (H.R.O. Visitation Box 345 1750 bundle).
  2. H.R.O. Wigmore parish register.
  3. Book of Common Prayer. The Hereford Visitation Articles specifically asked if baptism was carried out publicly. This was not asked in Secker's Visitation of the Oxford diocese in 1738, but he did ask if there were any unbaptised people frequenting worship. Lloyd-Jukes op. cit.
  4. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. 1716 Visitation.
  5. *ibid.*
  6. H.R.O. Visitation Box 337B. 1719 Visitation.
  7. Freind to Secker Whitsunday 1742. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.651. 118.
  8. Toovey to Secker 25th October 1744. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.652. 60.



"may defer the baptism of their children till grown up, if they please, and yet come to our sacraments". Yet he felt it right for the Church still to insist on infant baptism.<sup>1</sup>

Catechism of the young and of servants was a duty expected of the incumbent of every parish.<sup>2</sup> During the Interregnum the practice had largely ceased, but after the Restoration it was once again a matter of obligation. Most visitation articles had a section enquiring into its frequency. For instance, the 1716 Hereford visitation asked how often the children were catechised.<sup>3</sup> The Articles at Secker's Primary Visitation at Oxford in 1738 were more specific and detailed: "How often and at what times do you catechise in your church? Do your parishioners duly send their children and servants who have not learned their catechism to be instructed by you? And do you either expand it yourself or make use of some printed exposition and what is it?"<sup>4</sup> This was repeated again at the Primary Visitation of John Hume in 1759,<sup>5</sup> so we may safely assume that it was the standard questionnaire used also at the intervening Triennial Visitations in the Oxford diocese.

During the 1716-22 period in the Hereford diocese the most common time for catechising was Lent: of those recorded, over 55% held it during Lent and 5.5% of the total continued it through into the summer. About 15% of the incumbents in each archdeaconry catechised either in the fifty days between Easter and Whitsun or in the summer. Another 10% in each archdeaconry had a weekly catechism throughout the year.<sup>6</sup>

In the Oxford diocese twenty years later the practice of holding catechism in Lent was more widespread. Nearly 70% of parishes had a Lenten catechism; of these 4.5% continued through to Whitsun.

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1. H.M.C. Egmont Diary III 316. 23rd October 1746.
  2. The 59th Canon - every incumbent was to examine the young and ignorant for half an hour every Sunday.  
Catechism of servants was typical of the paternalism shown towards dependants in the eighteenth century.
  3. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. Article 17.
  4. Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. 5.
  5. MS Oxf. Dioc. papers d.555.
  6. H.R.O. Visitation Boxes for 1716, 1719 and 1722.

A few (7%) held it in the summer only. Even fewer held a weekly catechism throughout the year - 4.5% in Oxford as opposed to 10% in Hereford. In 1759 Thomas Long, Rector of Finmere, reported that he catechised not only every Sunday but every other day of the week except in Harvest. The children came to him in the church "on notice by a bell".<sup>1</sup> Secker referred to the frequency of catechising in his Charge of 1741: "I thank God there are very few places in the diocese and I hope there will soon be none where catechising is omitted." He felt that a few weeks a year was not enough. Apart from the normal catechising season he wanted concentrated patches of one or two weeks at other times.<sup>2</sup>

In each diocese some incumbents left the task to the schoolmaster, who might be either the curate or at least a parson.<sup>3</sup> At Ross in 1716 the catechism was divided into two classes. The children of the charity school were catechised after the second lesson at evensong in Lent and other times. Apprentices, servants and children were instructed after evening prayer in the chancel, where a special catechising desk had been built.<sup>4</sup>

In some parishes the returns show that catechising was either seldom performed or, if it was, few attended. This seems to have been the case in about 10% of the parishes in both dioceses. Within the Hereford diocese the Hereford Archdeaconry, with 20% of its parishes and chapelries falling into this category, seems far less punctilious than Salop with only 8% failing to hold regular annual catechism. Sometimes this was because the place was too small; at Willersley Richard Higgins "the only householder" sent his children to Eárdisley. At Dormington and Wacton the villages were too small. At Llanrothal the vicar, Walter Powell, reported that there were "no children to catechise but his own, all the rest being Roman Catholics". Robert Phillips, Vicar of Kinlett,

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1. MS Oxf. Dioc. d. 555. 215.

2. T. Secker Works IV 82. Charge of 1741.

3. For instance in the Oxford diocese Nwcham Courtenay, Whitchurch, Swinbrooke, Hanborough, and in the Hereford diocese Barrow in the Wenlock deanery.

4. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. Visitation of 1716.

had a different problem; he abandoned his usual practice of catechism and thought it convenient to preach in the afternoon instead "on purpose to keep his parishioners from going to dissenter meetings."<sup>1</sup> The challenge from this quarter could certainly be real; in the Oxford diocese Bernard Dowdeswell, the Rector of Westwell, blamed the lack of attendance at his own catechism on the local dissenter teaching school of Lydia Strange.<sup>2</sup> When Secker asked Charles Huggins of Chinnor why no candidates were presented for confirmation he explained that he had sent his clerk round to warn parents that it was their duty to present their children for catechism and confirmation, but he had had no response; nevertheless he had a number of poor children who were taught to read and say the catechism at his own expense.<sup>3</sup> As far as catechism of servants was concerned, there are frequent reports of non-attendance; no doubt they felt, as the servants in Emmington parish did, that they were "too big for it".<sup>4</sup>

Methods of catechising varied. A large number of clergy preferred to use their own initiative rather than use one of several printed expositions of the catechism then available. For instance, Samuel Milward, the Rector of Moore in Clun Deanery, at first converted the heads of his sermons to questions and answers, wrote them in print and sent them every Monday morning to parents to teach their children which he then examined the succeeding Sunday evening before the sermon "and so proceeded the year round."<sup>5</sup> After this on certain Saturdays he went from home to home to follow up. In the Oxford diocese, in 1738, at least 26 incumbents expressly stated that they or their curates used their own powers of exposition.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless Bishop Secker was surprised to find that some parishes did not have expositions. He suggested that if

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1 H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. 1716 visitation.

2 Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. 168.

3 Huggins to Secker 14th September 1738. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.651. 21.

4 Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. 58.

5 H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. 1716 Visitation.

6 Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. seriatim.



children could not read they should learn by heart; he claimed that at the Reformation illiteracy was much higher and the catechism had to be learnt by rote. He also suggested methodical dissertations and for children short questions.<sup>1</sup> As early as June 1682 Richard Parr of Ibstone had persuaded younger people to learn the catechism before admission to the sacrament. He was not quite sure whether Bishop Fell wanted 'the younger sort' to learn it and render account of it or whether the clergy were to expound it and not let the young people read it for themselves.<sup>2</sup> In 1738 at Newton Purcell in the Bicester Deanery Shuckburgh Cotton read lectures on the catechism and made talks from Lewis' exposition, required those that were able to learn it to repeat it publicly in the church and the rest to read it, after giving them books for that purpose.<sup>3</sup> Jonathan Lord of Cottesford found the few inhabitants of his parish illiterate, but did his best to help by choosing catechetical subjects most suitable for them and by "publicly instructing them in the principles of their religion."<sup>4</sup> At Cropredy Jonathan Rosse expected his catechumens to learn Lewis by heart.<sup>5</sup> Though Francis Yarborough, the incumbent of Over Worton, complained of the infrequency of the children's attendance, he expounded the catechism himself and distributed printed expositions for their private use.<sup>6</sup> John Hunter of South Weston found his previous practice of lecturing from a collection of expositions was too like preaching and "not so edifying in an unlearned congregation". Accordingly he took to asking the children questions and then enlarged on the answers which was in his view more instructive for them and for the rest of the congregation "who cannot so well attend to or comprehend the reasonings of a set speech."<sup>7</sup> Stephen

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1 T. Secker Works IV: 82-5. Charge of 1741.

2 Parr to Fell 10th June 1682. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.430. 24.

3 Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. 107.

4 Lord to Secker 22nd August 1738. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.651. 9.

5 Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. 49.

6 Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. 179.

7 *ibid.* 140.

Richardson of Godington complained that only one boy in his parish could read and "I have called him to me in the evenings to read and have desired him to learn his catechism." He also gave every Protestant family catechical books and told the children that he would give them a sixpenny piece as soon as they could learn them. But even so it was uphill work, for the parents were dilatory in sending the children for instruction.<sup>1</sup> In 1754 when John Mather of Lewknor sent in his list of confirmands he had to explain that, though he had obeyed his instructions as far as possible, he had recommended many of those who had not yet learnt to read to get a friend's help. Nevertheless he had given them simple instruction in the chief points of their duty.<sup>2</sup>

We have extant six catechetical lectures of one Herefordshire incumbent, Daniel Renaud of Whitchurch.<sup>3</sup> Written in a meticulously neat hand and lasting just under ten minutes each, they are a useful sample of what a conscientious pastor in the middle of the eighteenth century might attempt. The first deals with the baptismal promises and their meaning and also the first part of the creed. The second lecture deals with the rest of the creed, beginning with belief in the Resurrection, in meticulous detail; his section on the after-life and everlasting happiness is especially full.<sup>4</sup> Lectures three and four are on the Ten Commandments "given to the Jews first" but still in force; they "oblige us Christians and that, in some measure more strictly than they did them, having been either more fully expounded or more properly deliver'd to us by Christ in the New Testament.... They refer to the two great branches of our whole duty - duty towards God, comprised in the four first and our duty towards our neighbour contained in the six last commandments."<sup>5</sup>

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1 Richardson to Secker 6th July 1744. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.652 51.

2 Mather to Secker 18th July 1754. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.653, 119<sup>v</sup> - 120.

3 These are in addition to the notebook, the sermons and the carefully annotated book The Thirty Nine Articles which we have already mentioned. H.R.O. F 63 and A 98.

4 H.R.O. F 63/17 1-4 and 9-12.

5 *ibid.* 9-16.



Renaud insists on a positive aspect of the commandments; for instance, in the sixth, forbidding murder, he says, "The positive duties which this commandment requires of us is, To do all we can for the safety and preservation both of our own and our neighbour's (sic) life. If they are sick, to advise and assist them. If they are well, to prevent their quarrels and make up their differences.... If they have injured us to make them all reasonable satisfaction. In one word to do all we can to promote peace and goodwill among all men."<sup>1</sup> Lecture five is a dissertation on the Lord's Prayer which he explains in three parts - Preface or Introduction, Petitions and Doxology.<sup>2</sup> The final lecture is on the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist.<sup>3</sup> He explains the significance of the original baptismal rite of total immersion as spiritual cleansing, "to aged and healthful persons in that hot country in which our Saviour lived for the most part by dipping or plunging the baptised person into water."<sup>4</sup>

He continued by emphasising the importance of the Lord's Supper as successor of the Jewish Passover. As its aim was the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the Death of Christ and of the benefits which we receive thereby, it ought to be celebrated not once a year as the Passover was but "from time to time" so as to keep up a "constant lively remembrance in our minds of the sacrifice of the Death of Christ, an expiatory sacrifice for the sins of mankind which he became by dying for them". Benefit from it came from the strengthening of souls, but Renaud stressed the necessity of worthy reception of the Sacrament by insisting on strict preparation

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1    ibid. 14  
 2    ibid. 17-20.  
 3    ibid. 21-23.  
 4    ibid. 21.



beforehand;<sup>1</sup> on the other hand he guarded his parishioners against an excessive feeling of unworthiness; it would be wrong not to come at all for that reason, for it was the Lord's express command, and through it the Christian received Grace.<sup>2</sup>

About 25 Oxfordshire clergy preferred to use printed expositions of which there were several.<sup>3</sup> The most popular at the time of Secker's Primary Visitation in 1738 was J. Lewis' The Church Catechism Explained .. . . and confirmed by Scripture Proofs (1712): it ran to 40 editions and had been translated into Irish and Welsh.<sup>4</sup> At least eleven incumbents in the diocese used it.

Another popular instruction book had been written by Thomas Wilson, the saintly Bishop of Sodor and Man. Originally published in 1707 as The Principles and Duties of Christianity Being a further instruction for such as have learned the Church Catechism, it was written in parallel English and Manx. After an introduction there are prayers for use in private and for use in the family. At the end were instructions for those wishing to receive communion and advice for the sick.<sup>5</sup> By 1738 when it had reached its sixth edition a dissertation was added at the beginning entitled "The True Christian Method of Educating the Children of Both Rich and Poor."<sup>6</sup>

1. *ibid.* 22-23.

Renaud's comment on Article 29 denies any form of corporal presence because if Christ were corporally present "then all persons good and bad who receive the Sacrament do also receive Christ". But if Christ is only spiritually present then those who do not believe, do not receive him. This Renaud asserted was supported by the early Church fathers who said "That the wicked do not receive Christ in the sacrament. Origen says, Christ is the true food. Whosoever eats him shall live for ever of whom no wicked person can eat, for it it were possible that any who continue wicked should eat the Word that was made flesh, it had never been written whosoever eateth this bread shall live for ever". P 63/18. 32.

2. H.R.O. F63/17, 23.

Bishop Wilson of Sodor and Man also insisted on careful preparation for communion. "A short address to the clergy touching fitting young people for confirmation" annotated in manuscript in the bishop's own copy of Principles and Duties of Christianity for Use in the Diocese of Man.

Keble College, Oxford MS. Miscellaneous Box.

3. Lloyd-Jukes *op. cit.* *seriatim.*

4. Lloyd-Jukes *op. cit.* 14 n.5

5. T. Wilson Plain and Short Directions and Prayers (1707 ed) 1-27 was part of Principles and Duties.

6. *ibid.* 1738 edition. Also octavo. 11-189.

Other catechetical books included Henry Hammond's A Practial Catechism, in its 15th edition by 1715, with 359 closely printed quarto pages. Its original edition was published in 1645; it was clearly not as suitable for general use as the Bishop of Man's. One incumbent even used Dean Nowell's Catechism, originally published in 1572.<sup>1</sup> More contemporary publications included William Beveridge's, which was originally designed for use in the Diocese of St. Asaph; its second edition was published in 1702.<sup>2</sup> Peter Newcome's A Catechetical Course of Sermons, divided into 52 distinct discourses one for each week, was especially recommended for use by families; it included instruction on communion, non-communicating, confirmation and sermons on parts of the Lord's Prayer and the Commandments. Archbishop William Wake's Principles of Christian Duty Explained, published in 1700 when he was Rector of St. James' Westminster, was used by six Oxfordshire incumbents.

At the parish level, therefore, religious life on the surface at least was far from dead, though it is clear that in a number of places conscientious clergy had an uphill task in keeping worship alive. Furthermore, Sunday worship was often the scene of rural boorishness and signs of boredom. Attendance at Church, enforced as it was, was no guarantee of inner piety which is at all times difficult to evaluate. Morning and evening prayers were said twice every Sunday throughout the year in most parishes; in fact the proportion in the Oxford diocese and in the Salop. Archdeaconry of the Hereford diocese was over 80%. This is good compared with dioceses such as York and London. Where there were pluralities this standard was less easy to maintain, but zealous bishops like Secker were prepared to drive their incumbents to achieve the highest standards, though privately Secker himself was prepared to admit that the services demanded by the Church were often dull in content. Preaching was carried out once a Sunday

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1 A Catechism or Institution of Christian Religion to be learned by all youth next after the Little Catechism.

2 The catechism explained for the use of the diocese of St. Asaph. (1704). W. Beveridge.

Four used this in the Oxford diocese.



even in most chapelries. Celebrations of Holy Communion were by modern standards infrequent; as many as 60% of parishes performed the sacrament only the minimal three or four times a year, but there were a number in both dioceses where monthly communion was the rule. Even so, as far as our evidence allows, attendance was low and declined at the end of the period; probably as few as 5% or 15% of the population in most parishes received communion; even those who did attend annually attended less than the rubric demanded. Baptism was probably maintained at a satisfactory level except in one or two places where the incumbent was under criticism. Catechism was taught regularly except in about one tenth of the parishes where it was claimed there were few children or a great reluctance to attend.

If we compare the respective standards of the three areas, the Oxford diocese and the two archdeaconries of the Hereford diocese, the Shropshire archdeaconry seems to lead the way in religious life as in some other aspects, which is perhaps surprising. It roughly equalled the Oxford diocese in parishes having double duty with over 80% of parishes in this category; the Hereford archdeaconry was behind with only 68%. It led in frequency of Communion services; nearly 32% of its parishes had six or more celebrations a year, whereas this was the case in only 23% in Oxford and 17% in the Hereford archdeaconry. Similarly Salop. led the way in the frequency of catechising.

Such was the spiritual life of the two dioceses, but liturgical worship and catechetical teaching should be partnered by social action. In the chapter that follows we shall survey the Church's part in this field.



CHAPTER VISOCIAL WELFARE

In earlier chapters we have seen how the Church tried to control the moral standards of the people partly by instruction and preaching and partly by coercion through penance and excommunication in the ecclesiastical courts. There was another aspect of the church's role in society, in some ways the reverse of the coin, though it too could be interpreted as another means of control; this was its concern with social welfare, expressed in charitable trusts either in the promotion and oversight of education or in administering charity for the poor.

Benefactions to local charities in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had been considerable. The decline in monasticism in the fourteenth century and its final dissolution in the sixteenth have often been cited as reasons for this. It also remains true that the number of poor was swollen by agrarian changes associated with the sixteenth century. The need to provide for them remained a major problem throughout the next two hundred years. Nearly all charitable institutions, such as almshouses, apprenticeships, foundations and schools existed through endowments and it was in the trusteeship of these that the Church had an important part of play.

Until the Poor Law amendment of 1834 each parish was responsible for its own poor relief, the care of the sick and the education of its children. The administration of this was normally carried out by the church officers of the parish, the incumbent or the curate, the wardens and the overseer of the poor. The church's interest and involvement in this side of life is clearly seen in the visitation articles on these matters. For instance, in 1716-22 each incumbent was asked whether there were any free hospitals, almshouses or free schools in the parish (article 21), what revenue belonged to each (article 22) and what abuses there were in the administration of them.<sup>1</sup>

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1. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28.  
Articles 8, 9 and 10 of the Oxford Visitation of 1738 probe much the same area.  
Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. 5.

Even so, many parishes in the first half of the eighteenth century had no charities to administer. This was especially the case in the Hereford diocese where in 1716-22 as many as 52.7% of parishes with records still extant reported that they had no benefactions to record.<sup>1</sup> In some deaneries the proportion was higher. The Archenfield Deanery in South Herefordshire recorded as many as 78.1% (25 of 32) of its parishes without charity; Stottesden Deanery in the Archdeaconry of Salop had 90% of its parishes without charitable endowment. At the other end of the scale, even the more populated deaneries of Weston, near Hereford, and Ross returned no more than 70% parishes with endowment for charity; even in the Ludlow deanery, presumably the most populated part of the Salop Archdeaconry, where there were most parishes with benefactions, there were still 40% without, though it is true that Ludlow itself had an almshouse, a free school and a charity school. It is clear from these figures that the deaneries near to or including towns were better supplied, for it was here that spare financial resources were available.

The returns for the Oxford diocese twenty years later show a marked improvement on the Hereford figures. Of 165 parishes with records only 25.5% recorded no charities compared with 52.7% in Hereford, but this was not maintained. McClatchey found that 55 out of 160 Oxfordshire parishes (34.4%) in 1793-9 had no charities, which indicates a decline in charitable provision as the century proceeded.<sup>2</sup> Deddington deanery was the least well-endowed with only 58% of the parishes having charities to administer; on the other hand 84% of the parishes in the Chipping Norton deanery, and 81% of the parishes in the Oxford deanery which comprised the city of Oxford itself and Wolvercote, had endowments for charity.<sup>3</sup> This greater prevalence of charities in Oxfordshire is presumably symptomatic of the greater economic prosperity of the Midlands compared with the border counties. It is true that London merchants were far more generous to the five western counties than to comparable areas in the rest of the country; 36% of all Londoner's

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1. The Hereford Deanery in the Archdeaconry of Hereford is here excluded because the records are incomplete.
  2. McClatchey op. cit. 123-4.
  3. Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. seriatim.



foundations outside the capital itself and Middlesex were clustered in Lancashire, Cheshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire and Herefordshire. One might therefore have expected more charity overall there, but this was not the case and it was for this very reason that Londoners saw these counties as backward in opportunity, backward in their adherence to Protestantism and generally to be in need of injections of money for charitable causes.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore M.G. Jones has demonstrated that in rural areas the farming middle-class showed hostility to charitable giving, especially to education which they suspected would deprive them of the labouring poor, the reservoir on which their future workforce depended; they wondered who would do the hard work. Others feared the children would suffer from swollen heads. Some clergy in charity school sermons deplored writing and casting accounts as unnecessary and perhaps dangerous. Thus in country areas charitable giving depended on the nobility and gentry who were too few to make as much impact as their urban counterparts.<sup>2</sup>

Though there were a number of parishes in both dioceses without charities, there were some that had three or four. For instance, in 1738 the parish of Bladon had an almshouse at Woodstock, a Free School and some benefactions for bread and money for the poor.<sup>3</sup> At Lewknor there were three annuities, one of £5, one of £3 and one the interest on £20.<sup>4</sup> At Steeple Aston there were also several charities; £7 to be lent to two poor men who had suffered loss of house or cow; the interest of £5 for the poor.<sup>5</sup> At Witney there was a grammar school, a free school, an almshouse and other charities.<sup>6</sup> At Edvin Ralph in the Hereford diocese there were four separate charities for the poor £20, £5, 20/- and £5.<sup>7</sup> At Upton Episcopi likewise there were four charities.<sup>8</sup>

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1. W.K. Jordan The Charities of London 1480-1660 (London 1960) 249-50.
  2. M.G. Jones The Charity School Movement (London 1938) 85-88.
  3. Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. 19.
  4. *ibid.* 97.
  5. *ibid.* 148.
  6. *ibid.* 175.
  7. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. Visitation of 1716.
  8. *ibid.*



Important charities of the period were those directed towards the education of the young in which the Church was involved in several ways. It licensed all schoolmasters; some of the clergy were themselves engaged in teaching; the oversight of the schools was often the concern of the local incumbent who was occasionally either on the board of trustees or was even sole trustee. Perhaps the most important impact of the church on education at this period, however, was its involvement in the charity school movement.

Before 1660 charitable giving for education had been by endowment. Local gentry and merchants, particularly those in London, granted capital for this purpose, sometimes in the form of land either during their lifetime or by will at death. In the period of our study the charity school movement<sup>1</sup> added considerable impetus to the provision of education for the poor. This movement had its roots in the seventeenth century, especially in its closing years when there was a considerable increase in endowed "English" or elementary schools designed for the teaching of English, reading and writing and sometimes accounts. These contrasted with the older grammar schools where Greek and Latin remained the staple diet. In fact in the eighteenth century it is clear that the real weight of giving went to the elementary schools; there were thousands founded during this century, whereas only 128 grammar schools were endowed in the same period.<sup>2</sup> The movement was taken over by the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge in 1699 and by 1704 in London and Westminster alone there were about 2,000 pupils in 54 such schools; 20 years later there were 27,386 children in 1,356 schools in the country as a whole, of which 5,264 were

1. There is some debate as to whether there was in fact a full scale charity school movement or not. Miss M.G. Jones, writing in 1938, claimed that there was sufficient uniformity of aim and practice to deserve the term. Though M.G. Jones' view has been supported by a study on Gloucestershire schools, it has been queried by Mrs J. Simon in her work on Leicestershire.

Unpublished Bristol M.Ed. thesis by D.H. Evans 1971. "Was there a charity school movement? The Gloucestershire evidence." 5-12, citing also J. Simon "Was there a charity school movement? The Leicestershire evidence" in B. Simon (ed.), Education in Leicestershire 1540-1940 (Leicester U.P. 1968).

2. M.G. Jones op. cit. 18-19.

in the 133 of London and Westminster.<sup>1</sup> The dress of town schools with their blue, grey or green coats were a distinctive reminder to the local population of their support. The charity school venture promoted schools supported by public local subscription as well as by once and for all endowment. Support from local subscription, often encouraged by charity sermons, was a new concept; in the eyes of the law these voluntary schools were exempt from the strict control to which endowed schools were subject. The endowed school was controlled by trustees, appointed by will and by the original deed of gift and often members of the founder's family or the local incumbent. The trustees of the voluntary school, on the other hand, were usually more amenable to the S.P.C.K. under whom the charity school movement had sprung to life.<sup>2</sup>

Nevertheless in all other respects most endowed and subscription schools were alike in personnel and in practice; and the S.P.C.K. had oversight over them all. Furthermore, as the period progressed the distinction, even in the matter of financing, became blurred and indistinct. Frequently those beginning as subscription schools changed by accumulation of gifts and donations into endowed schools. As M.G. Jones has shown there was no precise terminology; similar schools might be called English, elementary, free, non-classical, catechetical or charity schools.<sup>3</sup> This is certainly the case in the two dioceses of our study. At Bicester in 1738, for instance, real fears were expressed over the viability of the school as the original donors and subscribers died out and the Vicar hoped for endowment.<sup>4</sup> Respondents to the Hereford Visitation Articles of 1716 and to the Charities Return of 1718 seem to have had difficulty in making the distinction. The replies show a confusion in terminology. According to the 1716 visitation return Weobley had a free school with an income of £20 a year and yet in the same return Lord Weymouth is reported to have settled £10 to charity school governors.<sup>5</sup> There is also a mention of the two other charity schools described in the 1718 charities return as "lately set up in the parish in which are taught above 40 children".<sup>6</sup>

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1. S.P.C.K. Society's Report 1704, 39.  
S.P.C.K. Society's Report 1724, 42, 51.  
M.G. Jones op. cit. 23 & 72.
  2. M.G. Jones op. cit. 41-2.
  3. M.G. Jones op. cit. 19-20.
  4. Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. 31.
  5. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28.
  6. H.R.O. Charities Box. 1718 Enquiry. 15.



The two schools were earlier mentioned in the S.P.C.K. Report of 1714; 25 boys and 25 girls were being taught there of which 21 boys were clothed at public expense.<sup>1</sup> At Withington in the Hereford diocese the respondent of 1718 clearly saw little difference; the school was reputed to be "a free school with a mistress or rather a charity school for all poor children of the parish."<sup>2</sup> Later in 1738 at Rotherfield Grey in the Oxford diocese the same confusion seems apparent when the curate reported that there was no charity school except that the Rector, Dr. Barker, paid for teaching the poor children to read and some to write.<sup>3</sup>

Many of the endowed "free" schools were royal foundations. The Grammar School at Ludlow was founded by Edward VI,<sup>4</sup> at Bromyard by Elizabeth I,<sup>5</sup> the Cathedral School at Christ Church by Henry VIII and Henley Grammar School by James I.<sup>6</sup> Others were founded by notable gentry or London merchants who had a particular interest in the parish. For instance, the Grammar School at Witney was founded by Henry Box for 30 scholars to be taught Latin, Greek and Hebrew. Here the Grocers' Company were the Governors and consequently the Rector had no control or part in the running of the school.<sup>7</sup>

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1. S.P.C.K. Report for 1714. 63. They were also provided with books.
  2. H.R.O. Charities Box. 1718 Enquiry. 10. According to the Society's Report for 1724 the Withington school was set up in 1723. Report 46.
  3. Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. 126-7.  
No letter from Withington or Rotherfield Grey appears in the Abstract Letter Books of the Society for the period.
  4. H.R.O. Charities Box. 1718 Enquiry. 19.
  5. H.R.O. Charities Box. 1718 Enquiry. 11.
  6. Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. 78. E. Marshall Diocesan Histories: Oxford 284.  
The London merchant class led the way in charitable endowments in the provinces. In a recent study of ten counties 60.89% of the accumulated endowments were provided by London, though throughout the period of the study (1480-1660) the population of London never exceeded 5% of the total population of the kingdom. London stood alone in England and indeed in Europe in the level of its giving, especially in the years 1601-40. Though spread throughout England, reflecting the varying birthplaces of the London merchants, the greatest concentration of them was in the five western counties stretching from Lancashire to Hereford (Lancashire, Cheshire, Salop., Staffordshire, Herefordshire) 36% of all grammar schools endowed by Londoners outside London and Middlesex were clustered in those counties. Of 123 schools endowed by Londoners 58 were in the western fringe of the country. Londoners with their evangelical aspirations may have been especially motivated by their view that these counties were backward and more prone to popish tendencies.  
W.K. Jordan The Charities of London 1480-1660 (London 1960) 311 et seq.
  7. W.K. Jordan op. cit. 248.  
Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. 175.



At Watlington the Grammar School had been founded by the recusant Thomas Stonor of Stonor Park<sup>1</sup> in about 1665 with £10 a year to teach ten boys. He built the school house in the town square which still exists.<sup>2</sup> The school was further endowed in 1731 with an income of £4 a year.<sup>3</sup> It was soon after this that Bishop Potter wrote to another Thomas Stonor, great-grandson of the one mentioned above, to tell him that he believed that his charity was designed merely to win converts to Rome. Stonor apparently retorted that, whatever Potter said, he would persist in his charities. Hearne remarked acidly that "such stingy prelates as Potter will neither do charity themselves nor permit others to do it."<sup>4</sup> Stonor clearly did not try to influence the education of the school, for by 1738 the vicar, Thomas Toovey, not only appointed the schoolmaster but he seems to have used his position to alter the subjects taught; he had deviated from the strict interpretation of the statutes because "in compliance with the condition of the inhabitants we sometimes teach reading, writing and accounts. Instead of grammar."<sup>5</sup>

There were at least 15 endowed grammar schools in the Oxford diocese at this time,<sup>6</sup> but the vast majority of schools were endowed "English" schools, designed to teach all children to read, some to write and cast accounts. At Holton in Oxfordshire Dr. Rogers had left £200 for land to pay a schoolmaster of 25 or at least 20 poor children and he was to be appointed by the Rector and the executors of the will.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand at Steeple Aston in about 1639 Dr. Radcliffe, then President of Brasenose College, Oxford, had endowed the parish with £20 for teaching "all parish boys" and the sum was to be paid yearly by the Bursars of the college; two

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1. The Stonors normally lived at Watlington Park, but Thomas Stonor had leased it in 1660 and went to live at Stonor Park. In 1675 he resumed possession of Watlington & erected the present building. It has been noted that the chapel at Stonor was the only one to have had Latin Mass said continuously throughout the years of persecution; in fact on 10th February 1752 Dr. Hornyold was consecrated as bishop there by Bishop John Talbot Stonor.  
R.J. Stonor Stonor (1951) 277-8.
  2. *ibid.* Pevsner Oxfordshire 830.
  3. Lloyd-Jukes *op. cit.* 164.
  4. Hearne Collections XI 1731-35 (1918) 175.
  5. Lloyd-Jukes *op. cit.* 164.
  6. E. Marshall Diocesan Histories: Oxford 284. (quoting Report of Schools Enquiry Commission 1864 I app. IV 37-90; V 96-8. 1868)
  7. Lloyd-Jukes *op. cit.* 83.

scholarships tenable at the College were available to pupils at the school if they were good enough.<sup>1</sup>

At Somerton, also in the Oxford diocese, there was an English school where "all the boys in the parish come free to reading English, writing and accounts which the schoolmaster is very well qualified to teach and very diligent in his office and I believe a true Church of England man." This was significant, for the patrons of the living, the Fermour family, who had also founded the school in the sixteenth century were, like the Stonors at Watlington at the time of Secker, Roman Catholics. There seemed to be some doubt over the whereabouts of the original ordinances but the Fermours always appointed the schoolmaster; his salary was about £13, part of which according to an old custom he had received from parishioners in the church porch at Milcom. The custom had died out but there was clearly some connection with the local church, though the Rector had no part in the schoolmaster's appointment.<sup>2</sup>

In the Hereford diocese in 1716-22 45% of the parishes had schools of some sort but only 9.6% had institutions specifically designated as charity schools;<sup>3</sup> similarly in Oxfordshire twenty years later 27% of the parishes had schools but only 12% had those named specifically charity schools.<sup>4</sup> Ledbury had three charity schools for over 30 children and Mainstow one for 20. At Ross there was a charity school for 20 boys and 20 girls. St. Peter's parish in Hereford had a charity school for 60 boys and 40 girls.<sup>5</sup> At Henley-on-Thames apart from the James I Grammar School there was the Dame Perriam Blue School for 20 poor boys and girls which was housed downstairs in the same building, the Chantry, as the Grammar School. In Henley there was also the Green School founded in 1717 by John Steven for 4 boys and girls.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. 148.
  2. Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. 137.
  3. H.R.O. Visitation Returns 1716-22.
  4. Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. seriatim.
  5. H.R.O. Visitation Returns and Charities Box. 1718 Inquiry. The S.P.C.K. Report for 1724 does not agree with the Diocesan Returns. According to the S.P.C.K., Ledbury had 1 school for 24 boys, Mainstow 2 schools to cater for 20 boys and Ross 2 for 30 boys and 20 girls. S.P.C.K. Report of 1724. 46, 49.
  6. The Chantry was an old building which still stands and housed the Grammar School upstairs. The evidence for the Green School is slender; it rests on an old print in the Chantry seen on 27th March 1977. There is no reference to it in the S.P.C.K. annual reports.



It is perhaps significant that parliamentary boroughs like Weobley should have ample provision of charity of all sorts ranging from schools and almshouses to disbursements for the poor; in this way men of means could exercise patronage where it was needed in the political system of the period. Weobley which already had a free school had two further charity schools "lately set up" in 1716.<sup>1</sup>

Out in the country schools were difficult to start or, if once started, were difficult to keep afloat. Even the Blue Coat School in Ross, started by subscription in 1717, failed temporarily until revived under a substantial endowment from Walter Scott, the son of a Ross carpenter.<sup>2</sup> The school at Manselhope, where in 1707 the minister was reported to be teaching gratis 18 poor boys and 6 girls, soon had to close. The story was similar at Walford.<sup>3</sup> A charity school at Kingsland in the Leominster Deanery which had been started at Christmas 1713 varied in numbers between 8 and 24 children a few years later.<sup>4</sup> At Stanton Lacy in the Ludlow Deanery the incumbent reported that he had started a school but he was unclear of the number of children being taught in the parish in 1718.<sup>5</sup> Chetton in the Stottesdon Deanery the Rector reported that there was no settled charity school because the number of children "is but small, but such as are have been generally taught to read by private charity."<sup>6</sup>

On the other hand Robert Goodwin, Vicar of Cleobury Mortimer, whose school was fee-paying, noted in his diary with some pride and certainly interest the names of pupils who started under his care in 1661. Goodwin also recorded dutifully expenditure on behalf of his pupils. For instance, after a boy called Marston arrived on Michaelmas Day 1670 Goodwin paid 2s-6d for "the carrier who brought him", 1s-6d for making his suit, 4d for a pair of gloves from Ludlow, 1s-6d for a hat, one shilling for a grammar and fivepence for a knife.<sup>7</sup> Likewise he noted the arrival of two further

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1. H.R.O. Visitation Returns 1716-22. See page 141 of this thesis. The S.P.C.K. Report of 1724 says that Weobley had 2 schools for 28 boys and 15 girls, which shows a discrepancy with the 1714 figures.
  2. Duncumb County of Hereford III 115.
  3. Whiting to S.P.C.K. 18th April 1709. S.P.C.K. Abstract Letter Book I 1607. S.P.C.K. Report 1707. 18.
  4. H.R.O. Charities Box 1718 Enquiry. 5. In 1724 the Kingsland school had 15 pupils. S.P.C.K. Report 46.
  5. H.R.O. Charities Box. *ibid.* 20.
  6. H.R.O. Charities Box. *ibid.* 21.
  7. Robert Goodwin's Notebook Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society Series 3 Vol. 5 (1905) 212.



pupils, Charles Fenton, the son of the Rector of Ludlow, and Yock Colbach on the 16th January 1676. For Fenton he paid fivepence for mending shoes, fivepence for repairs to his suit, one shilling for Ovid's Metemorphossii (sic), another sixpence for shoe repairs and 4s-8d for two pairs of shoes.<sup>1</sup>

Boarding fees were also reckonable. In 1660 Goodwin charged £4 a year in quarterly instalments for the education of his cousin's daughter, Mary Burton.<sup>2</sup> In 1672/3 16s-8d was due on behalf of Will Pyke and Henry for the month "from Christmas till four days before Candlemas".<sup>3</sup> Sometimes Goodwin felt embarrassed at the expenditure he had to record; for instance, in 1676 he had laid out so much for the sons of a Bridgnorth parent that he felt ashamed to send the account which amounted to £2-11s-10d.<sup>4</sup>

Some of these pupils went to Oxford. Charles Fenton who started at Goodwin's school in 1676, went to Balliol in 1681, became Vicar of Felton in 1689 and Rector of Ludlow in 1702. Benjamin Prichard who was at the school in 1661 went to Christ Church and was later Rector of Croft, Vicar of Ledbury and Canon of Hereford.<sup>5</sup> William Pyke went to Cambridge.<sup>6</sup>

Another aspect of church influence in education was the licensing of schoolmasters. Each had to make subscription and receive a licence from the bishop; his name was then duly recorded in the bishop's register. Unlike surgeons whose licences ran through the whole diocese, teachers were usually only licensed to a parish; occasionally, however, as in the case of Richard Hartshorne in 1675 they were licensed to a whole deanery - "in aliquo loco infra decanat. Wenlock."<sup>7</sup> Under Canon 77 of 1603 no man was to teach in public school or in a private house but "such as shall be allowed by the bishop." They had to be learned, have dexterity in teaching, sober and honest conversation and also a right understanding 'of God's true religion'.<sup>8</sup> After 1700 the S.P.C.K. rules for charity schoolmasters were even more stringent. The teacher had to be an Anglican of sober life and conversation, not under 25 years of age, a frequent communicant and have

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1. *ibid.* 213.

2. *ibid.* 199.

3. *ibid.* 213.

4. *ibid.* 202.

5. *ibid.* 212 & 213.

Foster.

6. *ibid.* 205.

7. H.R.O. Subscription Roll (1661-83) 5th May 1675.

8. Gibson Codex II 1144.

"a good genius of teaching"; he had to be able to have a good account of the grounds and principles of the Christian religion and satisfy in an examination carried out by the incumbent or the ordinary.<sup>1</sup>

The testimonials delivered to the Hereford diocesan registry reveal the high standards normally expected. For instance, in March 1663 Philip Morris of Stockton in the Burford Deanery was described as "a man of civil carriage and sober conversation and is very studious, sedulous and diligent and is capable of teaching at Grammar School." Timothy Baldwin, the Chancellor, subsequently granted him a licence.<sup>2</sup> When licensed to their incumbents, curates were often granted an additional licence to teach; in October 1669 Randolph Wright, deacon, was licensed to be curate of Kinnersley and to be schoolmaster "in libero Gymnasio de Kinnersley".<sup>3</sup> In February 1672/3 the Rector of Church Stretton asked for John Bowdler of Oriel College to be licensed as curate of Church Stretton and also to teach school "praeterea in re grammaticali pueros instruendi locum habeat."<sup>4</sup> This coupling of curacies and teaching was important, as McClatchey has shown, for it maintained the standard of classical education where it was taught. As the parochial clergy became less involved in education towards the end of the eighteenth century, the teaching of Latin and Greek ceased in certain places. Steeple Aston Grammar School dropped these subjects after Lionel Lampet was succeeded by a layman. Similar fates befell the schools at Watlington in 1795 and Bicester in 1768.<sup>5</sup>

Even in the eighteenth century the church courts followed up those who taught without a licence. In 1716 James Phillips of Ross was presented for keeping school in the parish without leave of the Minister and for not coming to church.<sup>6</sup> Subscriptions for schoolmasters continue right through the period; for instance, in November 1758 John Jenkins subscribed to teach school at Ross and in February 1760 Robert Simkinson for the Free School at Lucton.<sup>7</sup>

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1. M.G. Jones op. cit. 98.

2. H.R.O. Visitation Box 20 31st March 1663.

3. H.R.O. Subscription Book (1661-83) 36.

4. Clayton to Croft 10th February 1672-3.  
H.R.O. Visitation Box 15.

5. McClatchey op. cit. 137-8.

6. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. Returns of 1716.

7. Though Simkinson's licence was signed by a commissary, it is interesting to notice that Bishop James Beauclerk normally signed them himself as he did in the case of John Jenkins.

H.R.O. Subscription Roll 10 (1758-1812).



Sometimes the teachers were elderly folk who merely took in one or two children for reading or writing; for instance, at Home Lacy in 1716 the master was reported to be "so aged and infirm" that he could not bring them to the church but nevertheless he catechised them.<sup>1</sup> At Neenton "an ancient widow" was reported to teach two or three little children and "comes to church".<sup>2</sup> At Walford in 1680 the parish clerk had been teaching the poor youth of the village for 40 years until he went blind.<sup>3</sup>

The salaries and perquisites of the masters varied considerably. In London in 1700 the average salary of schoolmasters was £30 p.a. with coals and sometimes a house free; the woman teacher's maximum salary was £24. In the second half of the century the London teacher could expect £50 to £65 p.a.<sup>4</sup> At Monmouth the Lecturer had £100 a year, the Chief Schoolmaster £90 a year and the Usher £45.<sup>5</sup> At Ludlow the Headmaster had £30 a year and the Under-Master £20.<sup>6</sup> On the other hand at a small place like Barrow the schoolmaster had £10 a year, a good house, 4-5 acres of land and two stacks of coal a year.<sup>7</sup> At the free school at Onibury the master merely had the interest on £30.<sup>8</sup> At Holton in Oxfordshire the master had the interest on £200 worth of land.<sup>9</sup> When one compares these figures with those for London, it is not surprising that, as Jones has found, teachers did not like the provinces.<sup>10</sup>

In some parishes there was a particular building set aside for the school as at Henley and Watlington,<sup>11</sup> but in other places nothing specific was provided. For instance, in 1680 we read of a request from 27 parishioners for Richard Perks the younger to be licensed to teach school in the chancel of Binfield church and "the rather for that there is not a convenient place in the said parish. We have been lately destitute of a schoolmaster." The Chancellor, Timothy Baldwin, duly allowed the licence

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1. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. Return of 1716.
  2. *ibid.*
  3. H.R.O. Box 324 (Petitions). Petition dated 15th July 1680.
  4. M.G. Jones The Charity School Movement. 100.
  5. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. Return of 1716.
  6. H.R.O. Charities Box. 1718 Return. 19.
  7. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. Return of 1716.
  8. H.R.O. Charities Box. 1718 Return. 19.
  9. Lloyd-Jukes *op. cit.* 83.
  10. M.G. Jones *op. cit.* 100.
  11. See pages 144 & 143 of this thesis.



but stipulated that Perks should take care to repair windows which might be broken by his scholars and not to permit his scholars to abuse the church.<sup>1</sup> Similarly on 15th February 1672 at Deddington the school house was made "in the church" for "Edmund Hempster to teach there."<sup>2</sup> Likewise Banbury's charity school was housed in the church and at Knill in 1719 the school was run in the church by Rice Jones.<sup>3</sup>

In many parishes the schoolmaster had to use his own house. For instance, in October 1678 Charles Pool of Ledbury was given a licence to teach the son of a certain Margaret Skinner "in aedibus suis privatis".<sup>4</sup> Similarly in January 1679 John Baker of Ledbury and in July Richard Higgins of Chirbury were licensed to teach in their own houses.<sup>5</sup>

If we turn from education to the provision of homes for the aged such as almshouses and hospitals, we find that the number is very small; in fact, even in the best supplied area, the Archdeaconry of Salop, only 11.1% of parishes had this sort of benefaction; the Oxford dioceses and the archdeaconry of Hereford had only 9.7% and 8.5% respectively.<sup>6</sup>

Almshouses were sometimes governed by the corporation as in the case of Woodstock, where Benjamin Holloway, the incumbent, reported that the council would not "like that the Minister should concern himself with their civil affairs" and so he made little enquiry into what the situation was.<sup>7</sup> In other places the local incumbent had more influence and involvement often as an ex officio trustee of the benefaction.

The amenities and perquisites allowed to the inhabitants of almshouses varied. For instance, at Barrow in the Wenlock Deanery where there were almshouses for six, each received £3-4s a year, a room, a garden plot and a stack of coals a year; they also received a new gown every other year.<sup>8</sup> At Pyrton in Oxfordshire the almshouse endowed by the papist Stonor family provided 10 almsfolk with two shillings a week each; every other year they

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1. H.R.O. Visitation Box 20.

2. Deddington Parish Register c.1. 269.

3. V.C.H. Oxfordshire I 463 et seq.

H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. Returns of 1719.

4. H.R.O. Subscription Book (1661-83). 69.

5. *ibid.* 71 and 73.

6. This figure for the Hereford archdeaconry includes the Hereford deanery which itself had 5 such institutions of a total of 14 in the whole archdeaconry.

7. Lloyd-Jukes *op. cit.* 19.

8. H.R.O. Charities Box. Enquiry of 1718. 17.

were given cloth for making into garments; the men had 4½ yards of cloth for a coat and women had 4 yards for a gown. Each had in addition an allowance of firewood a year and a bushel of wheat at Christmas. One of the parishioners, Mrs Stonor, gave each 2/6d and 8 lbs of beef at Christmas. Under the benefaction the religious needs of the almsfolk were provided for; a reader was appointed to say prayers but according to the 1738 returns these seemed to have lapsed in the previous eight years since a new reader had been appointed.<sup>1</sup>

At Goring there were two groups of almshouses. One set erected in the churchyard under the will of Richard Lybbe in 1714, was for four poor men. The other set, a few miles outside the town, at Goring Heath, was founded under the will of Henry Allnut for twelve almsmen who were allowed "two rooms each, four shillings a week with cloaths, firing and garden."<sup>2</sup> Again the religious aspect was evident for a special chapel was consecrated on St. Bartholomew's Day 1742 for the use of the inmates; prayers were to be said there twice daily.<sup>3</sup>

1. Church to Secker 31st January 1738/9.

MS Oxf. Dioc. c.651. 29.

Four of the almsfolk were Roman Catholic, one of whom lived with Mrs Stonor.

See also p 143 of this thesis.

See also Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. 125.

2. Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. 69.

3. From Secker's correspondence it is clear that there was some concern over the status of the chapel in relation to the rights of the Vicar of Goring and of the Bishop himself. So much was this the case that Secker referred the matter to the Archbishop, John Potter, who at the time of the foundation of the almshouses had himself been Bishop of Oxford. He referred to a decree of the Master of the Rolls concerning the case in 1727. Potter did not see why, apart from usual prayers, other ecclesiastical offices such as marriage and burial should not be allowed there, provided the fees were reserved for the Vicar of Goring and the officiant was licensed by the Bishop.

Potter to Secker 13th July 1742. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.651. 121.

Attorney General against Clement 6th May 1727. *ibid.* 123.

Burton to Secker 18th July 1742. *ibid.* 124.

The correspondence does not specifically state that the chapel was that connected with the Allnut almshouses, but a visit on 27th March 1977 makes it reasonably certain that this is the case. The chapel which stands in the centre of the almshouses is dedicated to St. Bartholomew on whose day the consecration took place.

A visit to the almshouses in Goring Churchyard on 28th March 1977 revealed no chapel.



Witney in Oxfordshire had a hospital for "six poor blanketteers' widows" with 2s-6d a week for each widow.<sup>1</sup> In the parish of St. Aldates, Oxford, the almshouse founded in Henry VIII's reign and known as Wolsey's Almshouse, now the Master of Pembroke's lodging, was for "vétérans disabled soldiers."<sup>2</sup>

In a minority of parishes charitable benefactions provided accommodation for the poor, but usually endowments took the form of cash payments, clothing, food or other means of assistance for them in their own homes. At Cradley in the Frome deanery Anthony Turner in 1662 gave the rent of four nobles a year payable out of the Mill Inn Farm in Castle Frome to be distributed to the "most deserving poor."<sup>3</sup> At Home Lacy in the Archenfield deanery 20 shillings was distributed to the poor every Good Friday and a similar sum every St. Thomas' Day under the will of Sir John Scudamore.<sup>4</sup>

At other places bread was distributed. At Bishop's Frome not only was the interest of £18 given out every Good Friday, but in another benefaction 40d a year was to be distributed yearly "in 02d wheaten loaves betwixt our poor and those from the adjacent parishes on St. Mary's Day."<sup>5</sup> At Bishop's Castle in the Clun Deanery the interest of £10 left by an inhabitant of Shrewsbury was to be laid out in bread and distributed annually on St. Thomas' Day by the vicar and senior aldermen.<sup>6</sup> At Ashpirton in the Frome Deanery 20 shillings a year was to be spent on "three coals for poor men and likewise xxd a week in bread distributed every Lord's Day to ten poor people."<sup>7</sup> At Rushbury 40 shillings a year was spent to buy six penny loaves for six poor people of the parish every Sunday of the year.<sup>8</sup> In a number of churches a breadshelf still exists; at All Saints', Hereford, it dates from 1683.<sup>9</sup>

1. Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. 175.
2. *ibid.* 114.
3. H.R.O. Charities Box. 1718 Enquiry. 11.  
A noble was worth 6s-8d.
4. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. 1716 Visitation.
5. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. 1716 Visitation.
6. H.R.O. Charities Box. 1718 Enquiry. 15.
7. H.R.O. Charities Box. 1718 Enquiry. 11.
8. *ibid.* 18.
9. Pevsner Herefordshire 176.



Sometimes clothing was the stipulation of the benefactor. At Llangarren there was a donation to buy coats for the poor.<sup>1</sup> Similarly at Cradley in the Frome Deanery the sum remaining after distribution of bread was for coats to be given to "the most needy poor".<sup>2</sup>

Other donors gave money for placing boys in apprenticeship. For instance, at Forden in the Pontesbury deanery under the will of Arthur Devereux the interest on £100 was to be used for this purpose.<sup>3</sup> At Chesterton and at Wendlebury it was noted that Drusilla Bowell of Bicester had left two-thirds of her estate yearly "to the binding of two poor boys apprentices of mean parents in the county of Oxon and that particular regard be had to great Chesterton to take one boy there every other year ... particularly £5 a piece to every of my poor boys as shall be bound apprentice and serve faithfully his master to help set him up in trade."<sup>4</sup> At Bloxham too the interest of £20 was "to set poor children to be apprentices."<sup>5</sup>

Sometimes money was left not so much to assist people as to help maintain church fabric. At Bloxham in North Oxfordshire £70 a year was to be given "to the repairs of the church, the bridges and the relief of the poor."<sup>6</sup> At Heyford Warren in the same county the interest of one shilling and sixpence, the interest on £1.6.8d., was given for carrying four loads of stones a year for the repair of the church.<sup>7</sup> At Chalgrove the yearly rent of £20 from lands in the parish was granted to repairs and ornaments of the church, but the incumbent at the time of Secker's Primary Visitation, George Villiers, found that the money had been misapplied.<sup>8</sup> When the tower collapsed in 1727 the trustees who were all local farmers decided to save an "assessment" for rebuilding and agreed to mortgage the land for the purpose, much to the Rector's disgust. His complaint to Bishop Potter was of no avail; he was told that nothing could be done to prevent it. Clearly abuse was rife in the parish for Villier's

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1. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. 1716 Visitation.

2. H.R.O. Charities Box. 1718 Enquiry. 11.

3. H.R.O. Charities Box. 1718 Enquiry. 16.

4. Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. 43.

5. *ibid.* 23.

6. Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. 23.

7. *ibid.* 82.

8. *ibid.* 38.

George Villiers (1690-1748) claimed the title of Earl of Buckingham.

successor as Rector had to record at Hume's Primary Visitation in 1759 that the abuse of funds was so bad in his adjoining chapelry of Berwick that it loudly called for "your Lordship's attention."<sup>1</sup>

Occasionally money was given for less charitable causes. At Richard's Castle in 1719 the only donation was a small piece of meadow-ground for a dinner "at the perambulation" and a sum of 8 groats for the same purpose.<sup>2</sup> At Moore in the Clun deanery a library of "very useful" books given by Richard More, the patron to the parish, was appropriated to the Rector himself.<sup>3</sup> At Steeple Aston in Oxfordshire a former Rector, John Carpenter (1579-96) gave £7 to be lent upon security "to two poor men who have suffered loss of house or cow"; the loan was to be for one or at most two years at a time and was to be free of interest.<sup>4</sup>

The offertory money at celebrations of Holy Communion was another source of charity. In Secker's Primary Visitation of the Oxford diocese in 1738 the eleventh article asked "By whom and to what uses is the money given at the Offertory disposed of?"<sup>5</sup> Of 162 replies 38.3% (62) showed that no collection was made at the sacrament. Of the remaining parishes 32.7% (53) gave the sacrament money to the poor, another 14.8% (24) stipulated that it should be given to the poor who attended the sacrament, 3% (5) to the school and a further 18 to other causes. As we have seen, at Heyford the sacrament money was distributed amongst the poor who communicated.<sup>6</sup> In some places this was seen to be unjust. For instance, in 1759 James Bruce, curate of Lewknor also in the Oxford diocese, reported that the churchwardens had objected that the collection was too great to be distributed solely amongst those present. Consequently half of it was distributed amongst the poor who did not attend.<sup>7</sup>

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1. Bodl. MS Oxf. Dioc. d.555 112.

2. H.R.O. 1719 Visitation Returns.

3. H.R.O. Charities Box. 1718 Enquiry. 16.

4. Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. 148.

5. Lloyd-Jukes op. cit. 5.

There was no equivalent article in the Hereford Articles 1716-22.

6. See page 124 of this thesis.

7. MS Oxf. Dioc. d.556. 88.



Another aspect of social welfare during the period was the charity brief by which a collection on a national scale could be mounted, when a local response would not be enough to meet the needs of a specific case. Usually the application for the brief was made by the Bishop to the Quarter Sessions who in turn certified to the Lord Keeper and then the brief was issued under Letters Patent. Copies were printed and circulated throughout the country.

The causes for which briefs were issued varied considerably. In February 1679/80 there was a collection for Bohemian Protestants.<sup>1</sup> The trustees for this fund were the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's; a fair number of bishops pledged an annual sum "toward the education of some young men of that communion in the English universities (by equal numbers in each) till they shall be Masters of Arts there and capable in regard of their age to enter into Holy Orders and then return home for the service of that church." The Bishop of Hereford, Herbert Croft, pledged £5 a year and John Fell, Bishop of Oxford, £6. Other subscribers included the Archbishop who pledged £10.<sup>2</sup>

French Protestants persecuted by the government before their expulsion in 1685 also attracted charity. There were collections for them in 1684 when Bishop Mews of Bath and Wells contributed £50 as his first payment in May of that year.<sup>3</sup> The village of Alkerton in Oxfordshire collected £1.13.6d for this purpose in 1686 and 12s-6d in 1688.<sup>4</sup> In 1694 Pencombe in Herefordshire subscribed £1.8.6d.<sup>5</sup>

Englishmen in trouble also attracted attention. For instance, in 1684 a brief was issued for ransom money for a parson's son, taken prisoner by the Moroccans; about £70 was collected, but to no avail, for it was learnt there was little or no hope of release unless arrangements were made for all of those imprisoned in the same town.<sup>6</sup>

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1. M S Rawlinson C.985. 5. 27th February 1679/80.
  2. *ibid.*
  3. Mews to ..... 3rd May 1684. M S Rawlinson C.984. 55.
  4. Alkerton Parish Register d.1 (1544-1742) 74.
  5. Pencombe Parish Register (1540-1726) 11th November 1694.
  6. Croft to Sancroft 24th May 1686.  
MS Tanner XXX 39.



More frequently the call was for church repairs following, perhaps, a fire. Alkŕrton, whose incumbent kept a close record of all charity briefs between 1686 and 1717 noted that, for instance, in 1689 there was a collection for Bungay in Suffolk, which had lost as much as £29,898 by fire.<sup>1</sup> A while later there was another brief for Leominster in Herefordshire which had lost £14,241.18s.1d. by fire.<sup>2</sup> At the beginning of the period in May 1661 the Oxfordshire village of Bampton collected four shillings and sixpence after a fire in Hereford city;<sup>3</sup> the Herefordshire village of Pencombe, collected four shillings for Wooller in Northumberland and a further three shillings and three pence for Churchill in Oxfordshire.<sup>4</sup> We so often assume that the horizon of the eighteenth century citizen was limited, that it is worth drawing attention to the way in which he participated in affairs sometimes very far removed from his parish and felt strongly enough about some to refuse payment.

The frequency of briefs could cause resistance. In February 1680/1 John Boraston, Rector of Ribsford with Bewdley, wrote to Griffith Reynolds, the Diocesan Register, at the instigation of the chief men of the town, including Mr. Justice Walker and Mr. Bailiff Dedicott, and asked him to intercede with the Bishop for yet further forbearance in the matter of the brief for St. Paul's, London; "our town hath been and is openhanded to pious uses as is testified by their late contributing for the captives at Algiers the sum of £13.7.8. They take hold of the kind word (command) and beg of you to pleasure the town in this for present". There was also resistance at Wigmore in the Leominster Deanery and at Thornbury in the Frome Deanery.<sup>5</sup> It was clear that some regulation was needed and presumably

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1. Alkŕrton Parish Register d.1 (1544-1742) 73. The parish raised 12s-4d, paid to Ben Cooper.
  2. *ibid.* 84.
  3. Bampton Parish Register d.1 (1653-60) 4.
  4. H.R.O. Pencombe Parish Register unfoliated. 8th November 1698 and 16th October 1693.
  5. Boraston to Reynolds 7th February 1680/1.  
Clogie to Reynolds 10th January 1680/1.  
Evans to Reynolds 10th January 1680/1.  
H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.

the Act to improve the collection of charity money in briefs by Letters Patent did something to cure the situation; all moneys collected on briefs from 25th March 1706 thenceforth were to be set down in a register.<sup>1</sup>

Sometimes incumbents were casual about returning the money collected; for instance, in February 1672 Phineas Jackson, Vicar of Bromyard, complained to Register Staverton that the ministers of Frome Deanery had neglected to pay in the collection money for the redemption of the captives. He, Jackson, had informed the Bishop who had immediately ordered them to be cited in the court "for their neglect, to their great shame."<sup>2</sup> Jackson was so impressed by the bishop's attitude that he concluded "They are his Lordship's own words in his letter to me".<sup>3</sup> Sometimes apparitors at the base of the system were inefficient, as we have seen in an earlier chapter. The briefs for French Protestants which should have been issued throughout one of the deaneries were all lost and this failure had been concealed until too late. Croft himself wrote to the incumbents asking them to try "to stir up the charity of all zealous persons and make a speedy return of what is given .... and then the remainder of the money collected which is about £26 (much of it bad money) shall be sent up."<sup>4</sup>

Briefs were still being collected in December 1760 when there was an appeal for Wendlebury church.<sup>5</sup> The Archdeacon of Oxford, John Potter, who had visited parochially in October 1757 had been appalled at the ruinous state of the church. The parishioners were only able to meet half the sum needed for repair; consequently on Potter's suggestion Bishop Secker applied

1. 4 and 5 Anne cap. 14.  
At Woodeaton, Oxfordshire, for instance a meticulous list was kept from 1706 to 1768. Woodeaton Parish Register 1564-1812.
2. Jackson to Staverton 5th February 1671/2. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13. Namely Eastnor, Pencombe, Ullingswick, Cowarne Parva, Cowarne Magna, Stretton, Ashburton and Dormington.
3. *ibid.*
4. See page 50 of this thesis.  
Croft to ..... 24th May 1684. Rawlinson MS C.983. 67.
5. A section on Wendlebury church appears in Chapter VII of this thesis at page 168.  
Welborne to Secker 29th December 1760.  
MS Oxf. Dioc. c.654. 27-8.



for a brief. Printed copies were issued at the following Easter Visitation. Though by December 1760 just over £217 had been collected, the sum fell short by about £250 to £300.<sup>1</sup> As early as 1753 Secker had noted that briefs were an inefficient means of producing money, at least for church repairs.<sup>2</sup>

The failure of the Windlebury brief and of others raised the whole question of the viability of this means of raising money. Robert Welborne, Rector of Windlebury, wondered whether the time had come for Parliament to establish an annual fund to supply deficiencies in the brief system or even to answer every demand of this sort without applying for a brief at all.<sup>3</sup> Briefs eventually came to an end in the nineteenth century, after they had been found to be open to abuse.<sup>4</sup>

Overall therefore the Church in these two dioceses was still aware of its task to promote and oversee works of charity which was so much part of its role in the Middle Ages.<sup>5</sup> It is true that between 25% and 50% of the parishes still had no endowments for charity. Nevertheless, the Church's involvement in education was significant and increasing especially in regard to charity schools; there were also monetary charities in each diocese. Charity briefs gave ordinary people a chance to subscribe to, and no doubt show sympathy for, those in need elsewhere. Diocesan authorities appeared often keen to check on the size of charitable endowment and to watch out for abuse; Bishop Philip Bisse of Hereford was particularly so in his visitation articles<sup>6</sup> and in his special enquiry of July 10th 1718.<sup>7</sup> Likewise in the Oxford diocese Secker was sharp to detect mismanagement in this field as in many others. In the parishes some incumbents were concerned but too many seemed content to let matters slide. It is doubtless true that at this level it took the impact of Wesley to stir those with local responsibility to take more care with the charitable aspect of the church's mission.

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1. Welborne to Secker *ibid.*
  2. Secker Works. IV 140. Charge of 1753.
  3. Welborne to Secker *ibid.*
  4. The spread of methods of associated philanthropy and specifically the formation in 1818 of the Church Building Society hastened the end, until ten years later briefs were stopped by Act of Parliament. 9 Geo. IV c.42. D. Owen English Philanthropy 1660-1960 (O.U.P. 1965) 84.
  5. On the medical side the Church still had control over surgeons and midwives who had to make subscription and swear certain oaths. In the seventeenth century at least the Church was still supervising the licensing of butchers to kill meat for sick persons. See Appendix V.
  6. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28.
  7. H.R.O. Charities Box. 1718 Enquiry.



CHAPTER VIICHURCH BUILDINGS AND FABRIC

Diocesan and parish authorities not only had responsibility for the maintenance of standards of education and the quality of the clergy, for the weekly and daily spiritual life of the parishes, for the moral conduct of the people and for the provision of social benefit; they also had the more mundane, and yet important, task of maintaining church buildings and property within which the gospel could be preached, the spiritual life of the people nurtured and social benefits provided.

The Acts of Uniformity of 1559 and 1662 and the Canons of 1604 regulated the upkeep of church buildings and property in general. For instance, Canon 85 made the churchwardens responsible for the repair of the church, its windows and floor and the churchyard. The chancel was the responsibility of the rector.<sup>1</sup> The furnishings of the church were covered by other canons; canon 81 concerned the font, 82 "a decent communion table", 83 a pulpit, 80 the Bible and Book of Common Prayer. Canon 70 required the keeping of a parish register which had been compulsory since 1538.<sup>2</sup> The first thirteen articles of the Hereford Visitation enquiries of 1716, 1719 and 1722 covered much the same ground and show that a regular triennial check was made that all was well.<sup>3</sup> The Oxford Visitation articles of 1738 and of 1759 are not so detailed with regard to fabric and in fact they do not specifically mention it all all; incumbents or churchwardens reported on this under article 12 when they deemed it necessary to do so.<sup>4</sup> By 1740 the Hereford enquiries were briefer and the returns even shorter, but again when all was well with the building the respondents reported accordingly.<sup>5</sup>

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1. Gibson Codex I (1713) 218-224.
  2. *ibid.* 226-229.
  3. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28.
  4. Lloyd-Jukes *op. cit.* 4-5. 1738 Visitation.  
MS Oxf. Dioc. d.555-7. 1759 Visitation.
  5. H.R.O. Visitation Box 53. 1740 Visitation.

Evidence at the beginning of the period shows that immediately after the Restoration in 1660 some churches were in a state of ruin or at least out of repair. Even in the cathedral at Christ Church, Oxford, the altar canopy collapsed during an ordination service on 31st March 1661. According to Wood the canopy which had been put up in about 1633 "fell down upon the vessels and spilt the wine and tumbled the bread about. .... This was a great disturbance to the ceremony and many wondered at it."<sup>1</sup> In the Hereford diocese a chapel in the parish of St. Weonard's had been destroyed in the Civil War and only ruins remained.<sup>2</sup> The old church at Benthall in Shropshire had been burned in the war and a new one with a hammer beam roof, to-day still in its original condition, was completed in 1667.<sup>3</sup> The church of St. Andrew, Hereford, was reported in October 1663 to have been destroyed in "late ill times" and was to be united with St. Peters.<sup>4</sup> In the visitation of 1663 there were several churches out of order. Billingsley was in disrepair because of the winds.<sup>5</sup> At How Caple in the Ross Deanery not only were the church and bells out of repair but there was no flagon, the reading desk was "not very decent" and

1. Wood Life and Times I 388.  
Certainly at cathedral level expenditure was high in the Restoration years. At Wells the chapter spent as much as £2,922 between 1660 and 1672 on fabric and ornaments. The Worcester chapter spent £3,988.  
M.S. Tanner 140.12 and 140.143,
2. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. 1716 Visitation.
3. Pevsner Shropshire 72. The church was gothicised in the 19th century.  
Visited 8th July 1976.  
There is no visitation return relating to Benthall for this period, but allocation of seats for the new church was made in October 1673.  
Hereford Episcopal Register 1672-82. 13.
4. Hereford Episcopal Register 1672-82. 7.
5. H.R.O. Visitation Box 18. 1663.



there was no Prayer Book, no book of articles and no surplice.<sup>1</sup> At Tarrington in 1664 the chancel was decayed for want of glass and tiles.<sup>2</sup> At Stretton Grensham in 1662 the church was reported to be in a very poor state of repair, "being neither well tile slated ... nor paved as it should be, neither are the pews so devoutly put in the body of the said church as they ought to be and the cover of the font is not in good order; we have no decent carpet or convenient covering cloth for the communion table nor cup chalice or cover. We have no pew for the Minister to read divine service in nor pulpit cloth."<sup>3</sup> The wardens at Westhild were having difficulty in getting their church in order because of the "unseasonableness of the weather."<sup>4</sup> Eastnor had had its chalice plundered during the Civil War.<sup>5</sup> At Sidbury a bell had been stolen<sup>6</sup> and at Lugwardine the font was reported to be "broke in pieces" by some of the Scots army, presumably after the battle of Worcester, and the carpet and linen cover for the communion table had been "plundered away in the late wars."<sup>7</sup> They were still without chalice, paten and flagon in the following year.<sup>8</sup> There is no further return extant until 1722, when all was well.<sup>9</sup> Similarly in the Oxford diocese at Lower Heyford a new font was installed in 1662.<sup>10</sup>

Nevertheless we must not exaggerate the extent of disrepair. There were, after all, always bound to be repairs outstanding and not all can be ascribed to the Civil War. Of the 33 Hereford parishes for which we have visitation returns in 1662 and 1663 only five reported their churches out of repair, and one, Badger in the Wenlock Deanery, already in 1662 was having its steeple repaired.<sup>11</sup> Aston Botterell had already completed its repair by the visitation of May 1663.<sup>12</sup> Idbury in 1674 was described as a church "kept in excellent repair, being an handsome and well-built pile."<sup>13</sup>

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1. H.R.O. Visitation Box 18. 19th May 1663.
  2. *ibid.* 1664 visitation.
  3. H.R.O. Box 324. Presentment of 1662.
  4. H.R.O. Visitation Box 18. 16th November 1663.
  5. *ibid.* 1669 visitation.
  6. *ibid.* 13th May 1663.
  7. *ibid.* 24th January 1662/3.
  8. *ibid.* 3rd May 1664.
  9. *ibid.* Visitation Boxes. 1722 Visitation.
  10. Seen on 29th March 1977. The font is inscribed '1662'.
  11. H.R.O. Visitation Box 18.
  12. *ibid.*
  13. Wood Life and Times II 284.

If we can rely on the 1716-22 Hereford visitation records, the Hereford Archdeaconry had 27 out of a sample of 165 returns reporting churches out of repair or repairing or with some minor problem such as walls "indifferently white". This represents a percentage of about 16%, much the same as the 1662/3 proportion of 15%. The Shropshire Archdeaconry looks rather better; from a sample of 114 only 3.5% (4) churches were reported out of repair. There are no visitation returns available for the Oxford diocese until 1738 and then, as we have already seen, there is little evidence about fabric provided.

Throughout the period of this study there is ample evidence that the diocesan authorities were doing their utmost to keep church fabric in repair. Secker in Oxford was particularly keen. In his visitation charge of 1750 he laid stress on the importance, for instance, of maintaining the chancel.<sup>1</sup> Though in the Middle Ages, he said, too much had been spent on the chancel, it was nevertheless in his view the most sacred part of the church and that not enough had been done in recent years to beautify it. He emphasised that, though "anciently" the repair of the whole church had been the duty of the rector, now that the parish was responsible for the nave there was no reason for not doing more for the chancel, even at the expense of the rector's own standard of living. The need to keep churches in repair was most important, for he feared that all the old churches would finish in a hundred years.<sup>2</sup> Likewise Bishop Butler at Durham in his charge of 1751 asked for more to be spent "amidst the opulence and improvement of all ..... it would be hard to find a reason why these monuments of ancient piety should not be preserved in their original beauty and magnificence. But in the least opulent places they must be preserved in becoming repair and everything relating to Divine Service to be decent and clean otherwise we shall destroy the face of religion....."<sup>3</sup> In the Hereford diocese Bishop Croft personally visited Weobley church in September 1684 and noticed several matters out of order. "A record of several things and causes exhibited unto and ordered and discerned by" the bishop was made. He ordered that they should be put right with all convenient speed.<sup>4</sup> In July 1739 Secker had visited the

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1. Secker Works IV 129-131. Charge of 1750.
  2. *ibid* 140. Charge of 1753.
  3. J. Butler Works (Oxford 1896) II 408. quoted by Legg *op. cit.* 123.
  4. H.R.O. Weobley Parish Register II (1682-1731).



church at Lower Heyford and found many things out of order. "It is my duty to see these things be rectified and I give you this notice that you may avoid the experience of a prosecution. Your Minister hath pleaded for you that you are not able to do a great deal at once. But I expect that you begin immediately."<sup>1</sup>

In his own church at Cuddesdon Secker set a good example.<sup>2</sup> Writing from Christ Church in April 1739 Walter Ward, his curate,<sup>3</sup> told him that the church was to be whitewashed; a pair of stairs was to be made to replace the ladder leading to the pulpit. Secker's reply reveals his personal interest; "It is my duty and shall be my endeavour to see that all the churches of my diocese be in good order - and I promise myself the inhabitants of my own parish they will not desire that I should see that of my own parish out of order but set an example which may hinder both me and themselves from being reproached." He nevertheless agreed that it would be better to save expense by not repainting the King's arms and to whitewash the walls instead.<sup>4</sup> His personal interest in Cuddesdon was still evident in October 1756 when he made a contribution to the beautifying of the church.<sup>5</sup>

Earlier in the period on 29th November 1683 Robert Parsons, curate of Adderbury in Oxfordshire, reported the poor repair of the chapel at Barford St. John; "stript of all the glass windows, much of it open and shattered in the covering of the roof ....; to officiate in it is very dangerous by extremity of cold." Apparently the parishioners had always been responsible for it, but at this stage they objected and put the

1. Lower Heyford Incumbent's Book. Bodl. MS Top. Oxon. f50 359-60. (24th August 1739).
2. Ward to Secker 25th April 1739. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.651. 35-6. Even as early as 1664 the bishop had been vicar. (MS. Oxf. Dioc. e.2) Originally the living had belonged to Abingdon Abbey. (Pevsner Oxfordshire 562).
3. MS. Oxf. Dioc. c.136. 4. Walter Walker Ward matriculated at Christ Church in 1719, became B.D. in 1734 and D.D. in 1740-1.
4. Secker to Ward (draft letter) 3rd April 1740. MS. Oxf. Dioc. c.651. 76/76<sup>v</sup>.
5. Secker's Account Book 1746-58. MS St. Edmund Hall 55 166 (22nd October 1756). In Secker's view the painter charged a great deal too much and pretended it was a mistake when Secker drew his attention to it.

responsibility on William Beaw, the Bishop of Llandaff, as Vicar who had nearly all the Great Tithe.<sup>1</sup> By 6th May 1684 work was under way, but there was still trouble over finance; the old roof had been removed, but the new one was incomplete because some of the titheholders had failed to produce their share of the cost and had been cited. Meanwhile the church "lay open to the air".<sup>2</sup> According to Parsons, Adderbury was a difficult living; he had to deal with "an odd sort of people" who among other bad qualities were very covetous. He could not get a new bible, a book of homilies, a rail for the communion table and other "common conveniences" for the church. It was clear to him that they were using money given for charity instead of making a rate; they were robbing the poor so barbarously and notoriously that he suggested that the Chief Commissioner for Charities should look into it.<sup>3</sup>

Wrangles over the responsibility for repairs were likely at any stage of the period. For instance, in March 1742/3 there was trouble at Watlington over chancel repairs. Thomas Stonor of Watlington Park,<sup>4</sup>

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1. Parsons to Secker 29th November 1683.  
MS Oxford Dioc. Papers. c.650. 41.  
William Beaw was Bishop of Llandaff from 1679 to 1706 - see page 194 of this thesis.
  2. Belchier to Cooper 6th May 1684.  
ibid. 44.
  3. Parsons to Secker 17th November 1684.  
Bodl. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.650. 45.
  4. The Stonor family were a noted recusant family throughout the period. In 1719 the fifth Thomas Stonor was reckoned to be the most substantial papist in the diocese with an estate valued at £1,465.8s.1d. His son, the sixth Thomas Stonor, spent much time at Watlington Park, while his uncle John Talbot Stonor, a recusant bishop, lived at and ran Stonor Park itself. In 1752 he carried out the consecration of a coadjutor bishop in Stonor Chapel. Thomas did not allow his papist faith to prevent him from fulfilling his responsibilities as patron.  
R.J. Stonor Stonor (1951) 289-90.  
MS Clar. c.415. 53.  
See also page 143 of this thesis, note 1, and page 169 note 3.



a recusant patron and incidentally a noted benefactor, reported to Secker that he had ordered the chancel steps and pavement to be taken up and levelled to meet the Bishop's wishes; five days later he reported that he had examined the chancel roof which clearly had never been ceiled before and was therefore not his responsibility. In spite of this, towards the end of April (22nd April 1743) he had set about the task and had even started replacing the East window which was out of repair. In this church it was the wardens who were dilatory; Secker's personal recommendation that the font should be removed<sup>1</sup> and the Lord's Prayer inscription set up on the wall was ignored for a time. According to John Gabriel the parish had not spent a farthing on the church since the reign of James I. The estate of £25 per annum for the support of the fabric was in fact used by the incumbent and churchwardens for other purposes such as bibles, prayer books, surplices and sacrament wine. On the other hand Thomas Stonor was most conscientious. On 22nd April 1743 he was reported to be repairing the chancel paving and ceiling; when the poor condition of the East window was barely mentioned to him, he said he would order a new one and that nothing necessary should be wanting on his part.<sup>2</sup>

In the Hereford Archdeaconry too, disputes between the Rector or Impropiator and the parish over upkeep were apparent at times; for instance at Foy in the Deanery of Archenfield in 1671 the wardens complained that John Abrahall's bequest of a "fair window" in the chancel was not yet carried out.<sup>3</sup> In fact Abrahall's wishes under his will of 1640 were implemented in 1673 and "a fair window containing three lights ..... after the same manner as such a window" at Sellack church was put in.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Canon 81 stipulated that a font of stone should be set up "in the ancient usual places" at the entrance, mystically symbolic of entry. At the Savoy conference the bishops had reiterated this stipulation but they agreed that it could be moved, if it was more convenient. In fact in the eighteenth century it was sometimes placed up the nave near the reading pew. Addleshaw and Etchells The Architectural Setting of Anglican Worship (London 1948) 64-66.  
The present font at Watlington is late nineteenth century (1897). Pevsner Oxfordshire 829.
  2. Stonor to Secker 3rd March 1742/3. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.652. 8.  
Stonor to Secker 8th March 1742/3. *ibid.* c.652. 10.  
Gabriel to Secker 22nd April 1743. *ibid.* c.652. 11<sup>v</sup> - 12.
  3. 1671 Visitation - presentment dated 6th September 1671.  
H.R.O. Visitation Box 18.
  4. Pevsner Herefordshire 133-4.

At Easter 1687 the wardens at Dilwyn were cited for not repairing the steeple which was much decayed and likely to fall, endangering the whole body of the church.<sup>1</sup> In September 1759 Titley church was reported to be in so ruinous and decayed a state that "Divine Service cannot be performed therein in safety." Bishop James Beauclerk accordingly dispensed Joseph Guest, the new incumbent, from taking services there.<sup>2</sup> When Morgan Price, Vicar of Weobley, was ordered by the Court in 1766 to repair the floor of the chancel, he appealed to the Court of Arches who upheld the vicar's claim and ordered Jonathan Peploe Birch to pay, which he did.<sup>3</sup>

But work was going on in a number of places, whenever visitation returns are still extant. For instance, at Dormington in 1716 and at Bromyard in 1719 the roof was "now repairing".<sup>4</sup> At Shobdon where in 1719 the tower had "recently" been blown down it was soon to be rebuilt and the rest of the roof was in good order.<sup>5</sup> At Mordiford where tiles had been "wanting" in 1716 the spire was under repair in 1719. At Chelmarsh work was continuing on the tower and as a consequence the walls could not be kept "white and clean". At Ford in 1719 the church was under repair according to an order of the court. The walls were not quite finished but would be soon. At Dorston in the Weobley Deanery there had been a recent general repair - the roof had been restored, the windows reglazed and the aisles, though not the rest of the church, had been paved; the walls had been whitened four years previously. Similarly the wardens of Wellington reported with pride in 1719 that fifty pounds had been spent on repairs over the previous two years and tile brought in order to make all "completely decent". John Broster, minister of Wormbridge, in rebutting a false citation addressed to his aged warden claimed that though his steeple had been ready to fall it had now been taken down "in a great measure." The parish had tried to repair

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1. H.R.O. Act Books Box 29 Book 105 (1687-91) 18<sup>v</sup>.

2. Guest had been instituted on 18th July 1759.

H.R.O. Episcopal Register 1755-71. 48<sup>v</sup>.

Bannister op. cit. 94.

3. H.R.O. Weobley Parish Register II (1682-1731). Annotation of 1766.

4. The information in this paragraph is taken from the Hereford diocesan returns for 1716 and 1719.

5. A new church at Shobdon was built a few decades later, as we shall see on page 166 of this thesis.



it "which we could not finish the last summer, winter coming upon us .... and the ways for carriage of tile were impassable"; it had, however, been repaired by March 1674.<sup>1</sup> At Islip in the Oxford diocese a new chancel was built in 1680.<sup>2</sup>

There is little evidence of widespread decay in church fabric during the period. Not only did incumbents, patrons and parishioners keep the churches in reasonable order; there is substantial evidence of the rebuilding of old churches and construction of new ones. One of the most remarkable examples of rebuilding may be seen at Shobdon in the Hereford Diocese where the tower, all that remains of the old thirteenth century church, is enhanced by the rococo Gothic church<sup>3</sup> rebuilt in 1753 by Hon. Richard Bateman of Shobdon Court. The church with all its furnishings in white and light blue "has all the lightness and gaiety of a rococo church in Austria or Bavaria." At the west end there is a gallery for the singers and the organ. The Bateman pew in the south transept is complete with fireplace and domestic chairs; the north transept was reserved for the household. The three-decker pulpit in the north crossing balanced the font on the south side.<sup>4</sup>

The church at Monnington-on-Wye was also rebuilt, apart from the perpendicular tower, in 1679, but on a mediaeval plan; the windows are mullioned and transomed with round arches to the lights at the top and below the transom. The altar-table constructed at the same time as the church had "1679" inscribed on it.<sup>5</sup>

At Stoke Edith the Foleys rebuilt the body of the church between 1740 and 1742 using great Tuscan columns to separate the entrance and

1. Broster to Reynolds 2nd May 1674. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.

2. Pevsner Oxfordshire 664.

3. Visited 7th July 1976. So called by Sir Kenneth Clark, quoted by Pevsner Herefordshire 287-8.

4. Visited 6th July 1976. Pevsner Herefordshire 287-8. Addleshaw and Etchells op. cit. 190-191.

The pews are of a most unusual shape. Addleshaw and Etchells say the reading pew is like "nothing so much as the sleighs in the Marstall Museum at Munich which once belonged to Ludwig II."

5. Visited 9th July 1976.

Pevsner op. cit. 254-5.

Built for Uvedale Tomkins.

altar bays.<sup>1</sup> When the church at Norton Canon was rebuilt in brick, the 14th century windows of the old church were re-used; similarly at Coreley in Shropshire when a new brick nave and chancel were built to replace the old one, reported in 1756 to be totally "ruinated", they used the gothic style for the windows.<sup>2</sup>

In Shropshire where churches had been more affected by the civil wars there was, at least in the early part of the period, considerable activity. The churches at Condover (1662-7),<sup>3</sup> just outside the diocese, and Stokesay (1654-64), were rebuilt in the perpendicular style.<sup>4</sup> At Benthall, where the old church had been burnt at the time of the civil war a new one was built in 1667, again in the perpendicular style and with a hammer roof. The west gallery dates from 1667 and so does the pulpit, though it is in the Jacobean style.<sup>5</sup> At Tyberton in Herefordshire the church was rebuilt in 1719-21, though they retained the late Norman south doorway.<sup>6</sup>

1. Visited on 5th July 1976.

According to Duncumb, Stoke Edith church was opened for worship on 13th September 1741. *op. cit.* V 132.

The hexagonal pulpit with reading desk is on the south side with the squire's pew opposite on the north side.

See also Pevsner *op. cit.* 292 and 53.

2. H.R.O. Act Books Box 41.

Chancellor's Visitation 4th December 1759.

Coreley church had been presented as out of repair as early as Nov. 1757.

3. Visited 20th July 1977.

Pevsner Shropshire 111-112. As Pevsner notes, the tower at Condover looks entirely mediaeval and it is hard to believe that it was completely rebuilt under Charles II.

4. Visited 21st July 1977.

There was considerable damage at Stokesay after a point-blank battle. *ibid* 296. According to Pevsner the nave at Stokesay was rebuilt in 1654 and the tower in 1664. The pulpit and canopied pew, though Jacobean in character, are probably of about 1660.

5. Visited 8th July 1976.

The pulpit is inscribed with the date 1667.

See also Pevsner *op. cit.* 72. who calls this 'perpendicular survival'.

6. Visited 19th July 1977.

Pevsner Herefordshire 301-2. Full furnishings of 18th century still remain.



In Oxfordshire the nave and chancel at Weston-on-the-Green were rebuilt in 1743 by Norreys Bertie, the lord of the manor.<sup>1</sup> There had been some procedural queries about this work a year earlier. Writing to Secker in April 1742, Bertie explained that he had shown the plan to Lord Abingdon. Furthermore, Bertie was quite sure that the church would be "full big enough for the parish" and he offered to send the bishop a copy of the plan. Meanwhile he asked for a faculty to go ahead. But there was some hesitation over this on the part of Register Beaver as he felt they should wait for a petition; but the Bishop was content to let the matter go ahead without a faculty and without seeing the plan.<sup>2</sup> The work presumably began soon after 12th May 1742; rather ambitiously Bertie hoped it would be complete by the end of the summer, but it is clear that it had not been finished until the following year.<sup>3</sup>

At Wendlebury, where the church was reported ruinous by Archdeacon Potter in October 1757,<sup>4</sup> the parishioners managed to get a brief in 1759 which brought them in £240.1.4 by December 1760.<sup>5</sup> The old church was pulled down, the new foundation was laid on 6th April 1761 and the shell of the building was complete early in the following spring at a cost of £275.19.1. The plan submitted to Secker in November 1761 shows a cruciform church with west tower. The plan provided for a central three-decker pulpit and for pews in the nave and in both transepts; the north transept was also to have a gallery "for the singers and such others occasionally for whom there may not be room..." There was also provision for a parochial library. Under the gallery there was to be a vestry and at the base of the tower there was to be porch and a place "for town

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1. Visited 29th March 1977. The canvas behind the altar depicts the Ten Commandments, surrounded by emblems of the Passion; the painting is reputed to be by Battoni (1708-87). See also Pevsner Oxfordshire 833.
  2. The Chancellor had recently died which caused difficulty in getting a faculty. Bertie to Secker 7th April 1742. MS Oxf. Dioc. c 651. 113.  
Beaver to Secker 16th April 1742.                   ibid. 114.  
Bertie to Secker 18th April 1742.                   ibid. 115.  
Bertie to Secker 12th May 1742.                   ibid. 116.
  3. Bertie to Secker 12th May 1742. Ox. Dioc paper c.651. 116.
  4. Welborne to Secker 29th December 1760. Ox. Dioc. paper c.654. 27-8.
  5. The accounts in November 1761 showed receipts of £240.1.4. from the brief and a further £61.9.6 by private contributions. Bills paid amounted to £275.19.1. which left a balance of £25.11.9., but the completion of the work would depend on the "countenance and encouragement of such as are friends to the work in hand".  
Welborne to Secker 13th November 1761. Oxf. Dioc. papers c.654. 29.

meetings on parish business". It is clear that the whole building was not complete at the time of the letter.<sup>1</sup> To-day there is no sign of a south transept or of a tower.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand the solution at Hampton Poyle was less drastic. The Rector, Jonathan Dennis of Queen's, Oxford, wanted the south aisle removed. The estimates, amounting to £56, were in his view too small; he asked Secker to intervene and request John Tilson of Watlington Park who owned more than half the parish to supply his proportion of the cost.<sup>3</sup> Tilson complained that his Hampton Poyle tenants were in arrears of rent,<sup>4</sup> but he would try to get them to advance the money out of their arrears. Dennis was sceptical; "If Mr. Tilson should make it a condition ..... that the tenants shall pay all their arrears (which I fear he will do) I shall then despair of seeing the church repaired at all ..... I only wish he may be as willing as he is able to conform to your lordship's sentiments."<sup>5</sup> Dennis' plan of June 1756 included the removal of the south aisle and the use of those materials to repair the rest of the church.<sup>6</sup> To-day the south aisle still stands, though with some Victorian restoration.<sup>7</sup>

New Oxfordshire churches built at the end of the period include Sarsden "a bleak little church" built alongside Sarsden House in 1760,<sup>8</sup> and Chiselhampton church built in 1762. Though just outside the period

1. *ibid.* 31.

2. Visited 29th March 1977.

3. Dennis to Secker 30th June 1756. Oxf. dioc. c 653. 152.  
The Tilson family had lived at Hampton Poyle and there is a tomb of Christopher Tilson dated 1742 in the church there. (Pevsner Oxfordshire 630). John Tilson bought the site of Watlington Park from the Stonor family in 1753 and built the present house there in 1755. There was previously a large H-shaped building built there in 1675 by Thomas Stonor (*ibid.* 831). The Stonor family had owned Stonor Park from at least the 12th century (*ibid.* 791).

4. Tilson to Secker 20th July 1756. MS Oxf. dioc. c 653. 155.

5. Dennis to Secker n.d. MS Oxf. dioc. c 653. 156.

6. Dennis to Secker 30th June 1756. Oxf. dioc. c 653. 152.  
The rough plan for the improvement is at MS Oxf. dioc. c.653. 157.

7. Visited on 29th March 1977.

The tower mentioned in the correspondence no longer exists, *ibid.* c.653.15

8. Visited on 30th March 1977 and so described by Pevsner Oxfordshire 752.



the latter provides a splendid example of a village auditory church of the time. Apart from its Jacobean pulpit the fittings are entirely Georgian, with high box pews, clerk's desk and reading desk and a west gallery on Tuscan columns.<sup>1</sup> In Shropshire to cater for the growing industrial area near Broseley a new brick church was built at Jackfield.<sup>2</sup> At an earlier date, 1689, Viscount Weymouth had one built at Minsterley in Shropshire; this is an interesting red brick church using semi-classical, semi-baroque motifs.<sup>3</sup>

Once the work of the church was complete the building was re-opened, or, if it was new, it was consecrated. At Dore the East End of the old Cistercian Abbey was restored by the Scudamore family shortly before<sup>4</sup> our period and reconsecrated as a parish church on 22nd March 1634. There never had been an official Anglican form of consecration, but we have a full account<sup>5</sup> of the consecration of Minsterley church in 1692 which provides us with an example of what may perhaps have been typical. First the legal instrument of Lord Weymouth, the patron, was read out; it was dated 11th July 1692 and declared that the building was to be set aside for use as a chapel. Psalm 24, "The earth is the Lord's and all that therein is" was said antiphonally by the Bishop and congregation. As the Bishop approached the door, the congregation sang "I was glad when they said unto me: we will go into the house of the Lord".

1. Visited 28th March 1977.  
See also Pevsner op. cit. 541 and Addleshaw and Etchells op. cit. 61 which shows a plan.
2. Pevsner Shropshire 37, 158. The church is now deserted.
3. Visited 8th July 1976. The 1914-18 Roll of Honour records the death of a more recent Lord Weymouth. In the church there are interesting maiden's garlands made of cloth and paper each in the shape of a mitral crown. They are ornamented with blue, white and red rosettes; in each are hung three pairs of gloves cut from white paper. They are said to represent a challenge to anyone who defames the character of the deceased maiden. The garland was carried before the coffin to the grave and then after the funeral it was hung above the maiden's pew in the church. The first garland dates from 1726, the last 1794. ex info. notes in church. There is a reference to this custom in Hamlet Act V scene 1 line 254 "Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants, her maiden strewments, and the bringing home of bell and burial."  
See also Pevsner Shropshire 201-2.
4. F.C. Morgan. A Short Account of the Church of Abbey Dore (6th ed. 1973) 4.
5. Hereford Episcopal Register (1682/3 - 1709) 138-155.

After some more prayers, Mattins was said, followed by a celebration of Communion. During the latter after the Creed the Bishop recited the prayer of Solomon at the consecration of the Temple. The Parchment of Consecration was read before the completion of the Communion service. Finally the consecration proper took place.

For those churches that did not need rebuilding the diocesan authorities stipulated standards of repair and cleanliness. The inside walls were to be kept whitewashed. Article 4 of the 1716 Hereford visitation asked: "Are the inside walls white and clean?" The vast majority of the parishes could report clean walls, though some hastened to reply that they were about to whiten them; for instance at Bullingham in the Archenfield Deanery the wardens reported that "we design to whiten them speedily". At Hentland in the same deanery the inside walls were not clean, but the Earl of Caernarvon had lodged money with Sir John Williams for plastering and ceiling it. At Frome Episcopi in the Frome Deanery the bishop was assured that the wall would be whitened within a fortnight. At Cardeston in 1719 the walls were reported clean but not very white; at Much Birch they were "indifferent white and clean".<sup>1</sup>

Floors were to be paved and kept plain and even, but this was easier said than done in an age when burials frequently took place within the church. In 1669 Easthope reported that the floors were not paved on some graves "lately made in the chancel".<sup>2</sup> Again when Bishop Herbert Croft visited Weobley on 10th September 1684, the church aisles were "particularly taken notice of by the Bishop himself to be uneven" and he ordered the churchwardens to have them paved.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore he ordered the porch to be repaved. Nevertheless the floor was again out of order in 1766 and the matter resulted in an appeal to the Court of Arches.<sup>4</sup> At Presteigne the wardens reported in 1719 that the floor was paved but frequent burials made it uneven.<sup>5</sup> The story was the same at Peterchurch

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1. The Returns of 1716 for Bullingham, Hentland and Frome Episcopi.  
The Return of 1719 for Cardeston.  
The Return of 1716 for Much Birch.  
H.R.O. Visitation Boxes.
  2. H.R.O. Visitation Box 18. Return of 28th April 1669.
  3. H.R.O. Weobley Parish Register II (1682-1731) 10th September 1684. Item 7
  4. *ibid* on the same page (annotation).
  5. H.R.O. Visitation Boxes. Return of 1719.



in the Weobley Deanery<sup>1</sup> and no doubt in many other places where the respondents to the queries were reluctant to report the matter.

Secker disapproved of burials within church buildings and did what he could to dissuade parishes from continuing the custom, "though when friends have been laid there, desire of being laid near them may be natural enough and expresses regard and affection, yet any earnest solicitude about it is but a weakness." Especially where death occurred from smallpox "such burial at least without leaden coffins may be extremely dangerous or if they are not, may be thought so, and deter many from coming to Divine Service".<sup>2</sup> Secker's medical training no doubt made him more cautious than most.

The furnishings of the church also formed a subject for enquiry at visitations in the Hereford diocese. In accordance with Canon 83 the articles asked whether there was "a convenient reading desk and pulpit".<sup>3</sup> From Elizabethan times until the nineteenth century it was customary for the minister to read from a seat or special reading desk in the nave and not, as later became customary, from a desk behind the screen in the chancel.

The Elizabethans had adapted the mediaeval churches they had inherited into two rooms, each for the whole congregation. The chancel screen was retained after the Reformation, so that the chancel became the special place for the performance of the Eucharist not only for the priest, but also for the communicants who moved there at a certain stage in the liturgy. Consequently the position of the reading desk in the nave confirmed the notion that the nave was the place for the offices, the sermon and for Altar Prayers. As we have already seen in another chapter, Altar Prayers (the Communion up to the Invitation) were commonly said every Sunday at the end of Mattins whether there was a full celebration of Communion or not.<sup>4</sup>

It is, however, clear that soon after the Restoration movements were afoot in some parishes to reorganise the interiors. For instance,

1. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. Return of 1716.

2. Secker to Witts 16th July 1754. Oxf. Dioc. papers c.653. 116. Mr. Witts of Friday Street, Witney, had asked for the burial of a relative in the church.

3. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. 1716 Visitation. Article 5.

4. Addleshaw and Etchells op. cit. 68-9 and 112.

The plan for Windlebury church in 1761 clearly shows that the chancel had become more or less a separate room, cut off from the nave by the three-decker pulpit. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.654. 31.

authority was given in December 1664 to the parish of Stretton Gresham to make certain alterations in answer to an application by the Vicar, Henry Wright, and by James Clerk, the Rural Dean. The pulpit standing as it did on the north side "almost directly opposite to the great door" was inconvenient. Instead there was to be a combined pulpit, minister's reading desk and clerk's pew "at the upper end of the South side" in the place of a seat illegally erected by Thomas Cooke. The remains of the rood loft was to be removed to make room for the pulpit and it was to be set back in the chancel arch where it was to have the King's arms placed upon it. Cooke objected at the Leominster court, but in vain.<sup>1</sup>

Pulpits and reading desks were scarcely ever lacking, but there is evidence of some confusion between the two. In the extant returns to the Hereford visitation articles of 1716-22 which cover almost the whole diocese there were only nine parishes or chapelries which reported no reading desk.<sup>2</sup> All of these had pulpits which served as reading desks, though Brobury had a desk and pulpit that were out of repair and Holgate no desk and an "indifferent pulpit".<sup>3</sup> At Wackton the respondents of 1719 complained they had no pulpit neither had they "room to make one". On the other hand three years earlier they said they had a pulpit, but no reading desk "nor ever was as we have heard".<sup>4</sup> The confusion between the two is understandable when one remembers the normal arrangement in a seventeenth or eighteenth century church, where the reading pew with two desks sometimes only differed from the pulpit in height. Frequently the pulpit was raised above the level of the reading pew; sometimes it would be of equal height but on the opposite side of the central aisle. A third arrangement might be the so-called 'three-decker' with the preaching pulpit at the top, the reading pew next and on the lowest level the clerk's pew. Occasionally there might also be a singing pew adjoining rather after the style of a Byzantine ambo, like that in St. Mark's Venice.<sup>5</sup> At Ludford in 1719 the desk and the pulpit were the same and at Little Hereford the

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1. H.R.O. Act Book 99 (1663-5) 264<sup>v</sup> - 265. 15th December 1664.
  2. These were Pixley, Wackton, Stoke Prior, Yarpole, Clifford, Ludford, Holgate, Bredenbury, Greinton. At Middleton Scriven there was no pulpit in 1716, but there appears to have been one in 1719.
  3. H.R.O. Visitation Boxes. Brobury (1716) and Holgate (1719).
  4. There is nothing now left of Wackton church except a ruin. Pevsner Herefordshire 306. H.R.O. Visitation Box 1719 Return. The pulpit at Benthall made in the Jacobean style when the church was built in 1667 is still in use. Visited 8th July 1976.
  5. Addleshaw and Etchells op. cit. 74-76. J.W. Legg op. cit. 147.



whole service was performed from the pulpit "with no small inconvenience."<sup>1</sup>

The seating for the worshippers in the nave was also evolving. Square box-pews became more and more fashionable during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Puritans favoured them because they could avoid making acts of reverence which they found offensive, such as turning east for the creed. When fitted with curtains, box-pews also appealed to those who wanted protection from draughts, "the wind that cometh out of the chancel."<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, in the seventeenth century at least, a number of churches still had low open seating; for instance, at Monnington-on-Wye in the Hereford diocese the church was furnished with late seventeenth century settles, common in Spanish churches.<sup>3</sup> Pews of both the open and of the box type were painted, the usual colour being white as at Shobdon.<sup>4</sup> The seats in a typical church of the period faced the pulpit and reading desk from North, South and West. This does not imply, as some have suggested, a disrespect for the altar; seating in collegiate institutions and in choir stalls has never faced the altar. The plan for Wendlebury church had pews facing the central aisle, collegiate-fashion though the planned three-decker pulpit was central at the chancel arch and obscuring the altar.<sup>5</sup> At Chiselhampton however, though there are box pews, the pulpit, reading desk and clerk's pew are on the North side half way down the nave and the altar is open to full view.<sup>6</sup>

Pews were normally allotted by the church wardens acting on behalf of the chancellor of the diocese. Church finance of the period was to some extent dependent on the letting and selling of pews; in new churches, for instance, they often went up for auction. The temptation to use all available space for these private pews led to the virtual exclusion of the poor except in the gallery or, if they did obtain a place at ground level, it would perhaps only be by sitting or standing in the aisle.<sup>7</sup> It is interesting to notice that though faculties for seats were fairly constant in number during the century in question, faculties for galleries show a marked increase after 1730.<sup>8</sup>

At the other end of the social scale the local squire often had his family pew on the site of the family chantry chapel. For instance, at Weobley church

1. H.R.O. 1719 Visitation Returns.

2. Addleshaw and Etchells op. cit. 86-87.

Box pews were not the preserve of English Protestantism; they were common too in both Roman & Protestant churches on the continent at the time.

3. Addleshaw and Etchells op. cit. 88 n.1.  
Visited 9th July 1976.

4. As it now is - visited 6th July 1976.

5. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.654. 31. Visited 29th March 1977.

6. Visited 28th March 1977.

7. Addleshaw and Etchells op. cit. 90-92.

8. This is based on a study of the Hereford Episcopal Registers of the period.



the Monningtons of Sarnesfield owned seats in the North chapel, but, as they were recusants, they allowed the use of them to John Duppa, the tenant of Little Sarnesfield. The South chapel, named after St. Nicholas, was at one time disputed between the Bridges and the Birch families.<sup>1</sup> Addleshaw and Etchells have made the interesting point that the eighteenth century parish church with its high box pews was much more like the mediaeval church with its screened chantries dividing up the interior than the modern "open" restorations of these buildings. Even many of the post-Reformation family pews, like those at Madley, Stokesay and Richard's Castle in the Hereford diocese and at Rycote chapel in Oxfordshire, appear to have been built to look like chantry chapels.<sup>2</sup>

As examples, we now turn to the allotment of seats in two parishes. In July 1722 there was a complete revision of the seating in Orleton parish church. In the reconstruction the seats were to be "uniform, and decent and so contrived that men and their wives (sic) might be seated together." Sir Robert Cornwall Bart., William Lambe, George Powell, William Hopkins, George Stephens, Richard Hooper and William Matthews were given authority to carry the scheme into practice. Seats were numbered up to 70. No. 2 was for the Clerk; the rest were attached to certain houses within the parish; "To Edward Moor for a house at Wood Side, two kneelings, to Thomas Davies one for Sharphar; two to Edward Hall for a house at Portway ... No. 67 Thomas Philips for a house at the Mill-Brook."<sup>3</sup> The arrangement was similar at Ford in December 1717, the pews were attached to the houses not to the people; No.5 on the South side went "To the messuages or tenements wherein Humphrey Morris, John Peint and Thomas Taylor now dwell."<sup>4</sup>

The plan at Abberley in March 1717/18 was probably more usual, for the sexes were divided. Men sat in the first seven pews on the North side with the women in the seven behind. Similarly on the South side there were five seats for men with five for women behind. The ninth and tenth seats on the South side and the 14th on the North side were allotted to day-labourers, wives and maidservants without distinction. In the gallery five pews were for women, the passage for children and a further range of seats was allowed for men and maidservants respectively.<sup>5</sup>

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1. H.R.O. Weobley Parish Register II. 10th September 1684.
  2. Addleshaw and Etchells op. cit. 95-97.
  3. Hereford Episcopal Register 1710-23. 93<sup>v</sup> - 95<sup>v</sup>.
  4. Hereford Episcopal Register 1710-23. 60<sup>v</sup>.
  5. *ibid.* 62-63<sup>v</sup>.



Allocation of pews could cause dissension. For instance, Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, was concerned about this in 1738 and Secker had to point out to her that not only was the matter the concern of the consistory court, but that in any case "parishioners ought to be accommodated as far as they can and should not be denied seats upon a general plea of leaving room for strangers". Woodstock Park was extra-parochial, and when the family was in residence at Blenheim he expected there would be a service in the palace chapel; but when the family were not there it would seem perfectly reasonable for the servants to have room in Woodstock church.<sup>1</sup>

Canon 82 of 1604 stipulated that the communion table was to be in "a convenient place" for celebration. This was deliberately vague, for it had become the custom in Elizabethan and Jacobean times to set the altar table-wise in the chancel; the minister was on the North side with the communicants grouped round the table which ran East to West. Under Charles I the Laudian reformers had insisted on the altar being at the East and altarwise,<sup>2</sup> as it had been in mediaeval times. The Commonwealth period saw a return to the Elizabethan pattern; after the Restoration there was once again a swing back to the East end position, though this was not achieved rapidly. Restoration visitation articles often asked whether there was an altar in a convenient place either in chancel or church; in fact it was often in the nave or at the lower end of the chancel.<sup>3</sup> At Weobley in 1684, for instance, the communion table standing "the one end east and the other west" was ordered only to be altered at the charge of the churchwardens, "some more convenient movable forms to be put about the said table."<sup>4</sup> It is clear from this that the Elizabethan practice mentioned above was still in use at Weobley late in Charles II's reign. In a church catechism of 1674 there are two contrary illustrations, one showing the altar set tablewise in the chancel with the ministers in black

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1. Secker to Sarah Duchess of Marlborough 10th September 1738 (draft reply). Oxf. Dioc. papers c. 651 16.  
A dispute over seats at Monmouth was taken to the Court of Arches and thence to the Judges' Delegates. Hereford Episcopal Register (1723-54) 101'
  2. i.e. running North and South.
  3. Addleshaw and Etchells op. cit. 150.
  4. Weobley Parish Register II (1682-1731) 10th September 1684.

gowns at the North and South sides; the other has the altar at the East end. Nevertheless, according to Addleshaw and Etchells the general rule seems to have been for the altar to be at the East end; as early as 1700 churchmen could be shocked by seeing the altar anywhere but at the East end.<sup>1</sup>

The altar of the post-Restoration period, like that at Monnington,<sup>2</sup> and in the eighteenth century, like those at Shobdon and Chiselhampton,<sup>3</sup> was smaller than its earlier counterpart which had been modelled for proportion on the late mediaeval high altar.<sup>4</sup> The squareness of the smaller altar of our period allowed for greater economy of space; the celebrant was normally at the north end with his assistant at the south. Normally the altar was covered with a carpet of cloth, velvet, silk or satin on all four sides. There was no attempt to follow a liturgical colour sequence, though black was the normal colour for Lent.<sup>5</sup>

Article six of the 1716 Hereford visitation articles did not refer to the position of the communion table, but merely asked if there was one "covered in time of divine service with a carpet of silk or other decent stuff and with a fair linen cloth at the time of the administration of the Holy Sacrament?" Soon after the Restoration several parishes asked for time to make good the losses of the Commonwealth period. For instance, at Lugwardine in 1664 the coverings were reported to have been "plundered in the late war".<sup>6</sup> At Stokesay, where the church had recently been rebuilt, they needed time to provide a communion table, carpet and chalice.<sup>7</sup> At Stottesdon in 1663 they asked time to provide a cloth for the communion table.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, most parishes, even in the early Restoration period, replied in the affirmative and by 1716 there were only a few parishes which were in default. At Brampton Bryan, the seat of the Harleys, the

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1. Addleshaw and Etchells op. cit. Plate VI and 28, 112-14, 150-4. (The Catechism referred to is Εὐλαύτης or A Course of Catechising etc. (2nd ed. 1674).
  2. Visited 9th July 1976. The Monnington altar has the date 1679 inscribed on it.
  3. Visited 6th July 1976 and 28th March 1977 respectively.
  4. The Elizabethan communion table was long and narrow, running east and west so that the congregation could gather round. The altars were normally railed off with communion rails on three sides as at Chiselhampton in Oxfordshire. Visited 28th March 1977.
  5. Addleshaw and Etchells op. cit. 165-7.
  6. H.R.O. Visitation Box 18. This had already been reported in 1662/3.
  7. *ibid.*
  8. *ibid.*



parishioners had sent off to London for an altar carpet. At Brobury and at Letton the table was only covered at the time of the Sacrament.<sup>1</sup> At Greinton Episcopi there was no carpet but linen was used for the sacrament. The incumbent and churchwardens at Peterchurch defended their lack of carpet by saying that the "decent carpet" was only used on communion days "as formerly accustomed." At Llangarren on the other hand the covering was of good linen cloth and on sacrament days with "a much better". Hope Bowdler which was without in 1716 had one in 1719.

In the vast majority of churches where there were carpets and covers of varying colours. Acton Round had scarlet and used "a fine diaper cloth at the sacrament"; Woolhope had blue, Llanrothall, Winforton and Credenhill green. Monnington had purple velvet, Sutton St. Nicholas purple. Willey had a "very decent" cover of fine broadcloth with laced border.<sup>2</sup> At St. Ebbe's, Oxford, in 1712 the new communion table had a blue carpet with gold lace and a damask tablecloth.<sup>3</sup>

When Norreys Bertie rebuilt Weston-on-the-Green church in 1743, he adorned the altar with a canopy and a reredos with an elaborate painting of the Ten Commandments surrounded by emblems of the passion.<sup>4</sup> According to Legg, candlesticks were only placed on the altar when the Eucharist was celebrated.<sup>5</sup>

If we turn from the altar to the altar vessels we notice that the seventh article in the Hereford Visitation returns for 1716 asked if there was "a fair chalice a paten and a flagon proper for that service", and if they were kept for that service only. In the returns for these years and earlier in the period there were very few churches which had not the bare necessities for celebrating the sacrament. It is true that a parish such as Burghill had to report in November 1663 that they had no chalice,

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1. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. 1716 Visitation.

2. *ibid.* 1716 and 1719 Visitation returns.

3. Bodl. MS DD Par. Oxford St. Ebbe's c.13 item a.

4. Visited 29th March 1977. The canopy and reredos diptych is still in position. See page 168 note 1 of this thesis.

5. Legg *op. cit.* 142-3.

Addleshaw and Etchells *op. cit.* 170.

but by April 1667 all was well. In 1669 Eastnor had no chalice as their last one had been plundered "in the time of war".<sup>1</sup> Later in the period we read of one or two losses. At Onibury in 1783 the window by the pulpit was broken and the chalice stolen out of the coffer near the belfry.<sup>2</sup> In 1719 it was reported that at Stretford in the Leominster Deanery the chalice had been stolen out of the late churchwarden's house.<sup>3</sup>

Nevertheless, in the records still extant from the visitations of 1716, 1719 and 1722, only Knill lacked a chalice and paten and had to borrow at the time of a celebration.<sup>4</sup> Cold Weston merely had a silver chalice, but no paten or flagon "which is sufficient for our small parish." In other parishes the majority by this time had all three, chalice, paten and flagon. The chalice was invariably of silver, but, depending on the wealth and size of the parish and of its benefactions, the flagon and paten or salver might be of pewter or, as at Lucton, of plate. Some had no flagon; at Dormington, where they had a good chalice and paten, wine was poured out of bottles "and has been so ever since we knew the parish." Monnington had a complete set in silver; Chirbury a small parish whose patron was the borough of Shrewsbury had two silver chalices, a silver paten and a large silver flagon. Leominster, predictably perhaps, had a fine set of two chalices, two patens and four flagons. Holme Lacy, where the Scudamores were the patrons, had two chalices, two patens and a silver-gilt flagon. Llangarren had a complete set in silver-gilt. St. Ebbe's in Oxford in 1712 had two silver plates and three silver chalices, one of which dated from 1569.<sup>5</sup> Frequently, however, where there was a full set at least the flagon was of pewter as at Tretire; sometimes both flagon and paten were of pewter as at Aston Ingham.

Benefactors often gave silverware either during their lifetimes or by will. For instance, Anthony Biddulph gave two silver flagons to Ledbury

1. H.R.O. Visitation Box 18.
2. Shropshire R.O. Onibury Parish Register III.
3. H.R.O. 1719 Visitation.
4. The information in this paragraph is drawn from the Hereford Visitation returns of 1716, 1719 and 1722, unless otherwise stated.
5. Bodl. MS DD Par. Oxford St. Ebbes c.13. item a.



in 1699.<sup>1</sup> At Wardington Elizabeth Chamberlayne who died in 1752 gave a paten, flagon and large bible among other items.<sup>2</sup> Catherine Jackson the wife of the Vicar of Bromyard gave a silver chalice and cover at the cost of £5.11 and a parish breadplate at £3.1.10d.<sup>3</sup> Similarly Edmund Skinner, Rector of Cradley from 1627 to 1678, gave a silver flagon and cover.<sup>4</sup> At Launton Bishop Robert Skinner who held the cure while he was Bishop of Oxford gave "a Laudian chalice and paten of rare type" still in the possession of Launton church.<sup>5</sup>

As we have already seen, several fonts had to be replaced after the deprodatations of the Interregnum. An example of one of these may be seen at <sup>lower</sup> Heyford ~~Bridge~~ where the font had '1662' clearly inscribed upon it.<sup>6</sup> Later other new fonts were installed at Credenhill (1667),<sup>7</sup> Thrupton (1677), Holme Lacy, Llanwarne and How Caple. Aston Ingham has a leaden bowl of 1689.<sup>8</sup> At Aston Ayre there was no font even in 1719, but it is clear that it was merely an office chapel with prayers only being said once every two or three weeks.<sup>9</sup> The traditional place for the font was near the door, symbolic of entry to the church, but often in the eighteenth century it was placed near the reading desk and pulpit as at Shobdon where it formed part of the liturgical centre of the church.<sup>10</sup> At Chiselhampton, however, the font is not far from the door, but it has a convenient bay opposite for baptismal parties to group themselves.<sup>11</sup>

The Canons and Visitation Articles also required every parish to have "a large Bible of the last translation and a Book of Common Prayer". Again invariably the replies to articles were in the affirmative, but in some cases pages were in disrepair. At Stoke Lacy in 1716<sup>12</sup> the last pages of

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1. Duncumb op. cit. V 91.
  2. Wardington Parish Register c.4 (1726-68) 10<sup>v</sup>.
  3. H.R.O. Bromyard Parish Register. III (1656-1700).
  4. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. 1716 Visitation.
  5. Handbook to the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Launton, Oxfordshire. Frederick Sharpe FSA (2nd ed. 1971) 6.
  6. Visited 29th March 1977.
  7. Credenhill had a "fluted bowl with elementary rosettes." Pevsner Herefordshire 108.
  8. *ibid.* 47.
  9. H.R.O. 1719 Visitation Returns.
  10. Addleshaw and Etchells op. cit. 64. Visited 6th July 1976.
  11. Visited 29th March 1977.
  12. References in this section are all from Hereford Visitation Returns for 1716 - 22 unless otherwise indicated.

the Book of Revelation were lost; similarly at Stretton Gresham one leaf of Revelation had gone. At Eastnor the Bible was "a little decayed" in the binding. At Bridge Sollers and at Brobury their bibles of the old translation were in a state of decay; at Bishopston on the other hand the churchwardens felt that, though their bible was of the old translation, it would still serve for several more years. The bible at Credenhill had breaks in three pages which would be repaired. At Monnington in 1716 the Book of Common Prayer was being replaced. Books of homilies, which were required in the earlier part of the period, became less necessary as the regular sermon gradually took its place; Willey in 1662 had to report that they had no book of homilies.<sup>1</sup> Sometimes, as with communion vessels, the incumbent himself would provide a new bible; at Croft in 1742 the Rector, Blayney Baldwin, supplied a large bible inscribed with his name; this is still in use to-day.<sup>2</sup>

As a reminder of the old controversies between the Established Church and Puritan elements vestments were important; the Hereford Articles in 1716 still asked in article 9 whether there was "a comely surplice for the minister washed and repaired at the charges of the parish." Clearly this question would have been of greater significance in the immediate post-Restoration period. In 1662 there were seven out of thirty four parishes in the Weobley Deanery alone without a surplice (Weobley, Dorston, Almeley, Leinthalls, Winforton, Kinnersley and Bredwardine).<sup>3</sup> Mordiford (Ross Deanery) in 1662, however, was able to report, perhaps rather proudly, that it had a "large surplice",<sup>4</sup> and yet in the following year How Caple in the same deanery was still without.<sup>5</sup> By 1716 surplices were kept in every parish except Willersley which reported that "there was never any that can be remembered";<sup>6</sup> they had the excuse that there was only one family in the parish and all went to Eardisley, the mother church, on communion days.<sup>7</sup> The catechism of 1674, already alluded to, shows ministers wearing

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1. H.R.O. Visitation Box 18.
  2. Visited 12th June 1974. The bible is inscribed "Gift of Mr. Blayney Baldwin, Rector of Croft. 1742."
  3. H.R.O. Visitation Book 12.
  4. H.R.O. Visitation Box 18. 1662 Visitation.
  5. *ibid.*
  6. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28.
  7. Willersley seems to have been an office chapel.



black gowns only for the Communion Service; there was clearly a residue of puritan custom that needed to be checked even in the eighteenth century.<sup>1</sup>

Some parishes could give a good account of themselves. Little Cowarne in 1719 had a "new and comely" surplice,<sup>2</sup> and Cusop in 1716 repeating the words of the article also had a "comely" one. Some like Tretire (1716) kept two; Dorston (1716) had one new one and one old "kept cleaned". At Shipton (1719) there was an old surplice and one in the making. At other places the situation was not so good. Silvington's surplice was "tolerable" (1719). The return for Barrow (1716) complained that theirs was "pretty old and much worn but washed and repaired." Sometimes, though according to the records infrequently, an incumbent would cite a churchwarden into court for not providing a surplice. In 1756 John Collier, the Rector of Abdon, cited one of his wardens for not providing a decent surplice, the one then being used being rotten, rent and very indecent; when the case came up for hearing, on 22nd September, it was in fact dismissed without fees.<sup>3</sup>

Bells were not specifically mentioned in the Visitation articles either of Hereford in 1716 or of Oxford in 1738; nevertheless many parishes felt inclined to report on them as part of the general return relating to the fabric. The peculiarly English art of change-ringing had been developing since early in the seventeenth century<sup>4</sup> and, as it grew, so there was a corresponding increasing in the number of bells in each church. Great St. Mary's in Cambridge, for instance, itself increased its ring from 4 to 5 as early as 1611 and then to 6 a few years later.<sup>5</sup> Though the earliest ring of five dated from the ninth century rings of more than 5 remained rare;<sup>6</sup> the earliest in Suffolk was at Horham in 1672, in Buckinghamshire at Denham in 1683; but in Huntingdonshire there was no peal of five until 1723.<sup>7</sup> By the late seventeenth century ringing of bells had become a popular pastime; Stedman published the first book on ringing, Tintinnalogia,

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1. A Course of Catechising 2nd ed. 1674. Plate VI.
  2. All the information in this paragraph is taken from the Visitation Returns for 1716 to 1722 unless otherwise stated.
  3. H.R.O. Act Book 159.
  4. E. Morris The History and Art of Change-Ringing (1931) 32-33.
  5. *ibid.*
  6. *op. cit.* 24.
  7. *op. cit.* 33.

in 1668; in 1677 this was followed by his Campanalogia.<sup>1</sup> Groups of ringers came into existence early in the next century. In May 1713 the Union Scholars was founded and in 1733-5 the Rambling Club of Ringers was formed in London.<sup>2</sup>

As one would expect, there was a corresponding increase in bells in the two dioceses of this study. In the Hereford diocese in the immediate aftermath of the Commonwealth several churches had bells out of order. For instance, Sidbury in Shropshire had one bell reported stolen in 1663;<sup>3</sup> How Caple reported its bells out of order.<sup>4</sup> This might be expected so soon after the Restoration. All through the century after Charles II's return there were naturally bells out of order from time to time in different parts of the diocese. In the year 1716 Eastnor's second bell<sup>5</sup> was reported broken and Rushbury<sup>6</sup> had one bell cracked. In 1743 Pencombe<sup>7</sup> was having a bell cast but it was not "brought here and hung up" at the time of the report; Byford had one, presumably the treble, out of repair in the same year.<sup>8</sup> Thirteen years later in April 1756 Hope-under-Dinmore spent £3.11 for repair of bells.<sup>9</sup>

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1. Morris The History and Art of Change-Ringing 34.
  2. *ibid.* 82, 97.
  3. Sidbury - H.R.O. Visitation Box 18. 1663 returns. 13th May 1663. The present bell at Sidbury dates from 1699 - H.B. Walters The Church Bells of Shropshire (Oswestry 1915) 61.
  4. 1663 Return. 19th May 1663. Sharpe reported the treble bell still "cracked and toneless" in 1969. F. Sharpe The Church Bells of Herefordshire (1966-72) 238-9.
  5. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. Eastnor had a new Rudhall second bell in 1717. Sharpe *op. cit.* 146-8.
  6. H.R.O. 1716 Visitation Returns. Four of the present ring of five at Rushbury were cast by Rudhall in 1716. (The no. 1 was cast in 1795). Walters *op. cit.* 97.
  7. H.R.O. Visitation Box 53. 1743 Visitation. Only No. 5 of the present ring of 6 dates from our period (cast 1658); the rest are all nineteenth century bells. Sharpe *op. cit.* 400-403.
  8. H.R.O. Visitation Box 53. 1743 Visitation. Byford had a new treble cast by Rudhall in 1746. Sharpe *op. cit.* 96-7.
  9. H.R.O. N31/32 - Hope-under-Dinmore parish records (1726-87) 19th April 1756.



Repairs of this sort were to be expected and they do not seem to show the bells of the diocese generally to be in a bad state of repair. More important perhaps were the attempts to augment the number of bells in each parish, for this matches the national increase. In 1678 at Bromyard the five old bells were recast into six.<sup>1</sup> The Cathedral ring was increased to ten in 1697.<sup>2</sup> Six of Ledbury's eight bells were recast between 1690 and 1736, mostly by Rudhall.<sup>3</sup> The ring at Ross was recast in 1761. The ring of six at Dilwyn were recast by Rudhall in 1733;<sup>4</sup> likewise five of Kington's ring of six were cast in the same foundry between 1736 and 1739 and the present No. 1 bell in 1764.<sup>5</sup> The ring of six at Leominster in 1755 were taken by barge down the Lugg and the Wye to Chepstow where they were recast and augmented to eight by Evans of Chepstow.<sup>6</sup> Other places with bells dating from the period are Discoed with its single of 1675,<sup>7</sup> and Wigmore with its ring of six originally cast in 1721;<sup>8</sup> all the bells at Chelmarsh except the No. 3 were cast by Rudhall

1. H.R.O. Bromyard Parish Register. In 1678 the five old bells were cast into six as follows:-

1.  $6\frac{1}{2}$  cwt + 12 lbs.
2.  $7\frac{3}{4}$  cwt + 8 lbs.
3.  $9\frac{1}{2}$  cwt + 12 lbs.
4.  $8\frac{1}{2}$  cwt + 15 lbs.
5.  $12\frac{1}{4}$  cwt + 6 lbs.
6.  $15\frac{1}{4}$  cwt + 3 lbs.

The present ring of six dates from 1752 and 1759.

Sharpe 90 - 92.

2. .C. Reade - Memorials of Old Herefordshire (London 1904) 266.

3. *ibid.* 268.

Ledbury has a detached campanile. The present bells were cast as follows:

- |                        |          |
|------------------------|----------|
| 1. 1690.               | 5. 1817. |
| 2. 1690. (recast 1929) | 6. 1690. |
| 3. 1706.               | 7. 1699. |
| 4. 1723.               | 8. 1736. |

Sharpe *op. cit.* 267-72.

Visited 18th July 1977.

4. Sharpe 129-130. This ring still exists intact, but was rehung in a metal frame in 1975 and 1976. It was rededicated by the Bishop of Hereford on 30th March 1976. Visited 9th July 1976.

5. Sharpe 257-8.

6. Sharpe 285-7. Two smaller bells were subsequently added in 1894 to make a ring of 10.

Visited and inspected 6th July 1976.

7. *ibid.* 132.

8. *ibid.* 546.

in 1720.<sup>1</sup> Ludlow's eight bells date originally from 1732 when they were cast by Rudhall.<sup>2</sup> There is little doubt that the science of change-ringing was already popular in 1708.<sup>3</sup>

Nevertheless these improvements did not always meet with the approval of the parishioners. At Discoed, a chapelry of Presteigne, a vestry was called to discuss the bell situation and the disposal of the recently acquired chimes. It was suggested that to satisfy the curiosity of a few of the parishioners Benjamin Fieldhouse had been called upon in an arbitrary manner to put up the bell tower. His agreement also included an annual payment of £10 to see that the bells remained in order. But, the vestry complained, the bells were badly set up and had become expensive to repair; "a very good clock in the said tower, noted for its regular movement and usefulness, to the neighbourhood has been very much prejudiced by this new erection". The vestry consequently decided to dispose of the chimes.<sup>4</sup>

In the Oxford diocese the same pattern is noticeable. Browne Willis, the antiquarian, was a keen bellringer in the county during his youth. He claimed that even before the turn of the century when he was a young man twelve of the thirteen market towns in the county had rings of six. Deddington at that stage only had four and two had been added more recently. He thought the Deddington bells had been melted down for cannon by the royalists in the civil war; the spire had collapsed in 1634 and was not rebuilt until 1680.<sup>5</sup> Rudhall cast the six at Charlbury in 1716.<sup>6</sup> There

1. Walters op. cit. 27.

2. Walters op. cit. 111.

Visited and inspected 7th July 1976.

3. At Leominster a wall tablet records doggerel verses composed at the death of two ringers:-

"If you'll give eare, then you shall heare  
Of ringing in commendation;  
Of our bonney bells with their shuger'd knells,  
Which are held in admiration.  
Our ancestors in ringing took this order,  
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, they never sought no further.  
To rays to fall, to close withal.

It was their whole intention.  
Nothing did change, they thought it strange,  
They knew no such invention.

But as in trades and arts new things are daily learned,  
These noble spirited hearts their ringing have decerned."

Quoted by Morris op. cit. 54.

4. H.R.O. Box 30. Act Book 109 - loose sheet at folio 161. 17 Jan 1721/2.

5. Unless otherwise stated the information in this paragraph comes from Browne Willis to Secker 1737/8. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.651. 1.

6. Visited and checked 29th March 1977.

F. Sharpe The Church Bells of Oxfordshire 83.



was a notable bellfoundry at Burford. Bagley made the original six at Woodstock<sup>1</sup> and at Banbury. In 1692 the five "good bells" at Henley were cast into six. At Kingham a complete ring of six was cast by Rudhall in 1723.<sup>2</sup> At Launton Thomas Goodwin, the Rector, was dissatisfied with the bells and had them recast by the Chandlers of Buckinghamshire. Four of the present bells are dated 1701, the tenor 1712 and the sanctus 1725.<sup>3</sup> In Oxford itself New College at least had a ring of ten in 1734.<sup>4</sup>

As with many other sides of parish life diocesan authorities kept a close watch on the condition of the bells. At Neen Savage in January 1663 George Hopkins was presented for selling a bell out of church;<sup>5</sup> in 1687 the churchwardens at Stoke Bliss were cited for not casting two bells. At Hope under Dinmore in the same year the wardens were cited to mend the bells and bellwheels.<sup>6</sup> In 1750 the chimes at Tenbury were to be repaired and at Stottesdon the "great bell".<sup>7</sup> In 1753 Holgate was to recast its treble bell and Cleobury Mortimer its 4th bell in 1756.<sup>8</sup> At Sibdon the order of the court was not obeyed so readily. In 1744 the steeple was to be repaired; in the following year a bell was to be recast. Then in 1746 they were ordered to provide a new bell, which was still unhung in 1749 when the parish were given until Christmas to hang it.<sup>9</sup> The bell

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1. Visited and inspected 30th March 1977.  
Sharpe op. cit. IV 450.  
The bell cast in 1695 for Windlebury now stands at the back of the church. (Visited 29th March 1977).
  2. Visited and inspected 30th March 1977.
  3. Visited and inspected 29th March 1977.  
Sharpe op. cit. 195-7.  
Sharpe The Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Launton. 6.
  4. Morris op. cit. 219.
  5. H.R.O. Act Book 99. 33.
  6. H.R.O. Act Book 105 (1687-91). 1<sup>v</sup> and 13.
  7. H.R.O. Box 41. Act Book 159, unfoliated.  
In fact at Stottesdon all 5 of the present ring were cast shortly afterwards in 1752.  
Walters op. cit. 62.
  8. H.R.O. Act Book 159, unfoliated.  
The Rudhall ring of six at Cleobury Mortimer date from the following year 1757.  
Walters op. cit. 51.
  9. H.R.O. Act Book 159. seriatim.

had already been cast by Rudhall in 1748 and inscribed with the common Rudhall inscription 'Haste away without delay'.<sup>1</sup>

In all this attention to buildings there was usually good cooperation between clerical and lay authorities, as we have seen, but sometimes the relationship between the incumbent and the squire could be acrimonious. For instance, in April 1682 John Kerie, Rector of Cornwell in the deanery of Chipping Norton, complained that Sir Faire Maddon of Pennington had built a wall across the path to the church so that the parishioners could only go to the church through the rector's own yard. His water supply had also been cut off.<sup>2</sup>

Likewise in December 1710 Daniel Phillips, Vicar of Much Marcle, complained that John Noble had set up bars in his path to the church. Phillips asked him, without making it a common right of way, to allow his wife through in her chair and to allow her a key for it. He agreed that to give it to a third party might cause more trouble than it was worth and then "the furthest way about may be the nearest way". Noble it seems had objected that a chair was unnecessary for churchgoing nor perhaps was it the right way to Heaven. Phillips retort was to the point. "How common is it at or near London and at Bath to see men as well as women travail (sic) that road in a chair?"<sup>3</sup> There were probably two sides to this problem because the Vicarage had been newly built in 1703 and thus caused disputes over routes to the Church. Noble lived at Hellens, a large Jacobean house in the village.<sup>4</sup>

Another responsibility of the incumbent was the parsonage house. Predictably there were signs of decay or dilapidation in parts of the two dioceses during the period.

1. Walters op. cit. 189.

According to Walters (441-2) no bellfoundry surpassed Rudhalls of Gloucester who cast 4,500 bells in 150 years (1684-1835).

Common Rudhall inscriptions in all three counties included "God Save the King", "May the Church Flourish", "God Save His Church" and "Prosperity to this Parish". "Peace and Good Neighbourhood", which was often used, was a West Country greeting, especially on Palm Sunday when Pax Cake was given. The tenor bell was often ominously inscribed "I to the Church the Living call and to the Grave do summon all" (Dilwyn - 1733, seen 9th July 1976), or as at Weobley "Men that hear my roing (sic) sound repent before ye ly in ground. 1657." (seen 6th July 1976).

2. Kerie to Bishop Fell 25th April 1682.  
MS Oxf. Dioc. c.650. 27.

3. Phillips to Noble 9th December 1710. RC/IV/J/22.

4. N. Pevsner Herefordshire 261-2.



For instance, in 1663 Billingsley vicarage was in a poor state because "in the time of William Martin he took the profits of the parsonage."<sup>1</sup> At Upton Cressett in the same year the parson was awaiting the bishop's consent to remove the site of his house to another part of the parish; hence the poor state of repair.<sup>2</sup> At Tarrington in 1664 the parsonage had been "thrown down by the wind."<sup>3</sup> Sometimes the problem was the poverty of the minister; in 1665 a faculty was given to John Birch of Whitborne to rebuild Weobley vicarage because the vicar, Samuel Clark, was too poor.<sup>4</sup>

By 1716 most parishes in the Hereford diocese had parsonages in good order; Wigmore in 1719 with its parsonage "down and out of order" was an exception.<sup>5</sup> At Holgate where the Rectory was in "sufficient" repair, the deacon's house was "ready to drop down"; instead of a licensed curate there was a licensed ale-seller in the deacon's house. Elsewhere, when necessary, repairs were being carried out; at Puddlestone where the vicarage was out of order in 1716, all was well at the visitation of 1719.<sup>6</sup>

Rebuilding was going on elsewhere, at Much Marcle in 1703,<sup>7</sup> at Pontesbury in 1712,<sup>8</sup> at Culmington and at Clun in 1719; at Upton Episcopi the new incumbent, William Lloyd, was about to rebuild in 1722.<sup>9</sup> There is evidence from both dioceses that the parish clergy were often keen to rebuild on a smaller scale which is strange in view of the rising social background of the clergy.<sup>10</sup> Between 1710 and 1760 in the Hereford diocese the parsonages at Kingsland (1710), Lugwardine (1710), Puddlestone (1720), Holgate (1735) and Lindridge (1751) were given faculties to reduce the size of the dwellings.<sup>11</sup> Similarly in the Oxford diocese in 1690 the Rector of Islip, Robert South, obtained a faculty for the rebuilding of the Rectory and its outbuildings which "by the default of former incumbents were so utterly ruinous and decayed" that they could only be demolished. The rebuilt

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1. H.R.O. Visitation Box 18. 1663 Visitation.
  2. *ibid.*
  3. *ibid.* 1664 Visitation.
  4. Hereford Episcopal Register (1635-77) 209.  
The Bishop was patron.
  5. H.R.O. Visitation Returns 1719.
  6. H.R.O. Visitation Returns for 1716 and 1719.
  7. Visited 18th July 1977.  
Pevsner Herefordshire 261.
  8. Hereford Episcopal Register (1709-23) 17.
  9. H.R.O. Visitation Returns for 1719 and 1722.
  10. See page 97 of this thesis.
  11. Hereford Episcopal Register (1709-23) 3, 9<sup>v</sup>, 77<sup>v</sup>.  
Hereford Episcopal Register (1723-54) 50<sup>v</sup>, 125.

house was to be 42 feet in length, 40 feet broad and 40 feet high with four rooms on each floor, "besides closets, garretts together with a washing house and dairy" which would be a more useful size.<sup>1</sup>

At Holgate in the Wenlock Deanery in 1735 Samuel Fowler, the Rector, was overruled for trying to reduce the size of his parsonage too drastically. He had asked permission to take down a back kitchen, lumber room and a stable and to convert another large kitchen into a brewhouse. He presented a model of the proposed alterations, but the bishop's commission, consisting of six clergy of the same deanery, recommended that a room should be added to "the now intended kitchen ..... in order to make it more useful and convenient to any succeeding rector" and the faculty was granted on that understanding.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand the new rectory, built at Weston-under-Penyard, was increased in size during the period. Joseph Harvey, chaplain to Bishop Croft and the first Rector of the new parish after its separation from the vicarage of Ross in 1671,<sup>3</sup> obtained a grant of stone from the demolished Castle of Penyard which was in the possession of the Earl of Kent; from this he built the parsonage at his own expense in 1691 and added a barn in 1694. Thomas Bisse, the next rector and brother of the Bishop, "adorned" the building and added a brewhouse, a low building adjoining it and a large stable. Later still, Robert Breton made two more additions and added a gallery between 1735 and 1749.<sup>4</sup>

Thus, though immediately after the Restoration there was, predictably, considerable damage to fabric still visible in some places and at least neglect in others, most of this was put right in the next two decades. Throughout the remainder of the period there was a persistent interest in the maintenance of church buildings in the two dioceses. Bishops, like

1. MS Oxf. Dioc. d.106. 119<sup>v</sup> - 120.

2. Hereford Episcopal Register (1723-54) 50<sup>v</sup> - 51<sup>v</sup>.

The Commission consisted of John Taylor, Vicar of Eaton, Thomas Hotchkiss, Rector of Munslow, Robert Watkins, Vicar of Diddlebury, Thomas Baker, Vicar of Much Wenlock, Charles Hicks, Vicar of Long Stanton, and William Parsons, Curate of Munkhopton.

3. In 1671 the chapelries of Weston-under-Penyard and Brampton Abbotts were separated from Ross.

Hereford Episcopal Register 1672-82. 52<sup>v</sup>.

4. Weston-under-Penyard Parish Register II (1671-1740).



Croft and Bisse in Hereford and Secker in Oxford, were particularly keen to see that standards were maintained; incumbents, patrons, and churchwardens were interested in keeping to these standards; in some cases they built new churches to replace those in decay or to serve new areas of population growth. Evidence like this reflects not only vigorous leadership at both diocesan and parish levels, but also an increasing inflow of wealth into the fabric and contents of church buildings which itself reflected the growing prosperity of the age.

## CHAPTER VIII

THE WORK OF A BISHOP

So far we have been concerned with life in the two dioceses at the grass roots, in the working of administrative machine and its outreach to the parishes, with the parochial clergy, parish worship, the care of buildings and with social welfare and education. Now before turning to the bishops themselves we should consider their work, for there were certain functions which were, and are, peculiarly episcopal; pre-eminently this was the case with ordination and confirmation, but also to a lesser extent with triennial visitation, in which the prelate kept an eye on the functioning of the church at parish level.

Ordination was one of the bishop's most important duties, for those ordained were the future subalterns of the diocese, upon whom the day-to-day conduct of the Church's role in society largely depended. Whereas many of the bishop's other tasks could be performed by a deputy, a vicar-general or an archdeacon, it was the bishop alone who could ordain to the priesthood or the diaconate. Though in the reigns of Henry VIII and Charles II attempts had been made to appoint suffragan bishops to assist in the performance of the purely episcopal functions, nothing came of the plan and during the whole of the period of this study diocesan bishops had to cope alone with the ceremonies attached to both the conferring of Holy Orders and the confirmation of the laity.<sup>1</sup> This was not easy, for, as we shall see in the next chapter, prelates were expected to spend much of their time in London as members of the House of Lords, in the same way as their mediaeval and Tudor predecessors had a duty to attend the Kings Court.<sup>2</sup>

1. Sykes Church and State 96, 131, 132.

Suffragan bishops had been appointed briefly in the sixteenth century, but the last John Sterne, Bishop of Colchester, who had been consecrated in 1592, died in 1608. There were no new suffragans until 1870.

N. Sykes Sheldon to Secker 193, 196.

2. *ibid* 193. Chapter IX of this thesis.



Canon 31 stipulated that they should ordain regularly within the four Ember seasons, the jejunia quatuor temporum, of Advent, Lent, Trinity and Michaelmas.<sup>1</sup> If they were conscientious in their parliamentary duties, bishops would have difficulty in performing these episcopal functions especially in Lent and sometimes in Advent when in all probability Parliament would be in session. Bishops with dioceses near London would pay short visits to their sees for this purpose. Some bishops, like John Potter of Oxford, insisted on doing this, even if it incurred the displeasure of their parliamentary masters. For instance, in March 1722 Potter wrote to the Archbishop telling him that the Lord Chancellor had requested his attendance in Parliament, but that "having attended the parliament from the beginning of the winter I was obliged to return the last week into my diocese, where there waited for me between thirty and forty candidates for orders whom I could not oblige to come to London without great inconvenience." Furthermore his duties as Regius Professor of Divinity three days a week would prevent his return to Westminster.<sup>2</sup> Others either held their ordinations in London, issued Letters Dimissory, delegating their duty to other bishops, or, if they had obtained dispensation from the Archbishop, ordained extra tempora.<sup>3</sup>

In fact the frequency of ordination ceremonies in the two dioceses of this study was fairly constant.<sup>4</sup> If we exclude the episcopate of Nicholas Monck, who died within a year of his consecration,<sup>5</sup> the average rate in the Hereford diocese varied from Egerton with one year to James Beauclerk with over four a year. Hereford ordination records do not resume after the Restoration until 1670, but from then to the end of his period of office Herbert Croft had an average of 2.2 ceremonies a year; in nine of these years he held three. Trinity

1. According to Gibson this had become the usual time as early as the fourth and fifth centuries. Archbishop Egbert's Canons of about 750 are the first evidence of this in the Church of England. Gibson Codex I 160-1.
2. Potter to Wake 11th March 1722. Wake MSS 22. 196.
3. A section on Letters Dimissory occurs later in this chapter.
4. The statistical evidence here is drawn from the episcopal registers and the subscription books and rolls.
5. Monck was appointed in January 1661 and died on 17th December 1661.

and Michaelmas were his regular times; he conferred orders at Trinity every year except three between 1670 and 1689.<sup>1</sup> Ironside maintained Croft's pattern, though in his last two full years, 1699 and 1700, he held an ordination in each of the four seasons.<sup>2</sup> Humphrey's pattern was less regular; in the period of which we have a record there was a Michaelmas ordination every year, but there is an unsolved gap in both the Register and the subscription books between Lent 1708 and Advent 1711.<sup>3</sup> Neither Philip Bisse nor Henry Egerton, each of whom was more politically minded, ordained more than once a year, at Michaelmas, though Bisse did increase the number to three in 1720 and two in 1721, the year of his death. Benjamin Hoadly in his one recorded visit to Hereford conferred orders in the cathedral on 1st July 1722;<sup>4</sup> he also seems to have ordained extra tempora on 1st April 1722, in November 1722 and January 1722/3, and he held a Trinity ordination in June 1723.<sup>5</sup> When Beauclerk succeeded Egerton in 1746, greater frequency of ordinations returned, but Trinity and Michaelmas remained the main seasons; he only ordained twice in Advent up to the end of our period.<sup>6</sup>

Oxford ordination records are poor until the accession of John Fell in 1676, but throughout the rest of the period to 1760 there was at all times a greater frequency than at Hereford, presumably because the number of candidates was much greater; Oxford's proximity to London was also probably a factor, for politically-minded bishops

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1. The three exceptions were 1672, 1685 and 1689.
  2. The gap in the register is filled by details from the subscription book 1691-1702. HD/A43/5.
  3. H.R.O. Subscription Book 7 ends in 1708 and there is a gap in ordinations in the register between 31st January 1693/4 and 23rd December 1711.  
Episcopal Registers (1682/3 - 1709) 171 and (1709 - 23) 12<sup>v</sup>.
  4. Hereford Episcopal Register (1709 - 1723) 93.
  5. H.R.O. Subscription Book 10 (1722-45) 2 - 4<sup>v</sup>.  
This small subscription book may well have been Hoadly's personal one.
  6. In 1749 and 1751. The 1749 ordination was in fact held on Christmas Day.  
Hereford Episcopal Register (1723-54) 120 and 131.



could more easily combine attendance at Parliament with short visits to the diocese.<sup>1</sup> The frequency varied from Talbot with 3.09 ceremonies a year to Potter with 4.4. Perhaps typically, John Fell was by far the most regular with four a year throughout his episcopate. John Hough ordained regularly only at Trinity and Michaelmas, though in his ten years he did also hold three at each of Lent and Advent.<sup>2</sup> William Talbot, John Potter and Thomas Secker all held regular ordinations three times a year at Trinity, Michaelmas and Advent and were far less frequent in Lent. After 1750 Secker seems to have preferred Lent to Advent.<sup>3</sup>

It seems clear that at Oxford from the candidates' point of view Trinity was the principal season for ordination. For instance during each of the episcopates of Hough and Talbot there was an average of about thirty candidates for the diaconate at that season compared with only an average of about thirteen at Michaelmas; under Potter the figures dropped respectively to 20.4 and 10.9 and under Secker to 12.75 and 5.95 but nevertheless we can see that the summer ordination remained the most popular. At Hereford there does not seem to have been the same discrepancy of numbers between the different seasons.

The Canons of 1603, which codified much canon law on the matter, and later regulations by Archbishops, notably Sancroft, insisted on definite guidelines for the selection of ordinands. The candidate had to be of canonical age and to have a title to a curacy, "some certain place where he might use his function".<sup>4</sup> He also had to give

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1. The short episcopates of Parker and Hall in the reign of James II are not in the statistical analysis as the disturbed nature of the times, especially in Oxford, would only give a false picture.
  2. At this time, after 1697, William Beaw, Bishop of Llandaff, was holding frequent ordinations at his church at Adderbury in the Oxford diocese. In 1697 he held 12 such ceremonies and in 1705 11. Until this time he had always held his ordinations at Llandaff, usually in the palace chapel.  
J.R. Guy "William Beaw: Bishop and Secret Agent!" Article in History To-day (December 1976) 801-803.
  3. In 1752 and 1756 he ordained in Advent but in 1754, 1755, 1756 and 1758 he ordained in Lent.  
Oxford Episcopal Register (1737-1802) 38<sup>v</sup>, 45, 40<sup>v</sup>, 43<sup>v</sup>, 48.
  4. Gibson Codex 161 - Canon 33 of 1603.  
W. Sancroft "Regulations concerning ordination". Paragraph V. Nelson MSS.

evidence of his academic standing and of his moral life. To comply with these stipulations the diocesan secretariat kept files on all candidates for orders. We are lucky to have a large collection of Hereford ordination files for the period 1740 to 1760 and some for the 1690's;<sup>1</sup> none exists for Oxford. Certainly in the mid-eighteenth century records were meticulously kept and checked off as they arrived. Five or six documents were required before a man could go forward to ordination; a certificate of age which was in fact usually a certificate of baptism; a certificate of title to ensure that he had employment; a college testimonial if he was a graduate; a country testimonial and a Si Quis which together testified as to his moral standing.<sup>2</sup>

Canon 34 laid down that no man should be made deacon until the age of 23 or priest until he "is four and twenty years complete." There seems to have been rather more elasticity over the interpretation of the age for deacons than for priests; certainly Sancroft in his regulations allowed for this; whereas no exception could be made for the age of priests, he did allow for the possibility of exceptions being made for deacons by faculty from the Archbishop, but this would only be granted "upon very urgent occasion".<sup>3</sup> Indeed in 1720 Bishop Chandler of Lichfield interpreted the preface to the ordinal as meaning that the candidate for deacon's orders must be in his twenty-third year, not twenty three years complete.<sup>4</sup> Trelawny at Exeter made some men deacons at the age of twenty; for instance, William Sweeting in September 1704. He was priested in the following year and was instituted to St. Thomas, Exeter, in September 1705.<sup>5</sup>

Among the Hereford records we unfortunately have no baptismal certificates for the candidates of the 1690's, but 100 of the 145 files for the years 1751 to 1760 give definite evidence of age. Three men at least were unable to produce certificates and had to furnish affidavit

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1. H.R.O. Ordination Paper Box I.
  2. The Registry's use of these documents is exemplified by the careful tabulation of each ordinand's documents.  
H.R.O. Ordination Papers Box I.
  3. such as "unless he have a family".  
'Sancrofts Regulations'. Paragraph I. Nelson. MSS.
  4. Sykes Church and State 113-114.
  5. M.G. Smith op. cit. 290.



instead.<sup>1</sup> For instance in 1742 William Adair, the son of Captain Robert Adair of the Dragoons, had to obtain a certificate from Patrick St. Clair, formerly chaplain of the regiment, to the effect that he had been baptised in 1724. He went to Worcester College, Oxford, and was due to be ordained deacon in 1749 and priest in the following year.<sup>2</sup> John Sergeant who applied for deacon's orders in May 1756 produced an affidavit, sworn before a Master Extraordinary in Chancery, that he was born on 5th September 1732 and that he was baptised at Longhope in Gloucestershire, though no record existed in the parish register. He was ordained in Hereford Cathedral on 13th June 1756 under letter dimissory from the Bishop of Gloucester.<sup>3</sup> Another interesting case concerns John William Fletcher who had to obtain a certificate from the church at Nion in Switzerland where he had been baptised in September 1729. His father was a judge and magistrate in the town and stood proxy for one of the godparents, William Quizard, Lord of Gran. Fletcher went to private school in Nion before moving on to Geneva University where he studied for Holy Orders. He apparently left there without testimonials, thinking they would either be useless or that a strict examination would everywhere supply the lack of them. He was ordained deacon on 6th March 1757 by Beauclerk in the Chapel of Spring Gardens, Westminster, and was titled as curate at Madeley. *He was priested by Bishop Egerton of Bangor at St. James' London on 13th March 1757.<sup>4</sup>*

1. This was apparently not uncommon. Secker in his visitation charge of 1753 insisted that parish clergy kept their registers scrupulously; he had had difficulties in tracing baptismal records of ordinands.

Secker Works IV 145-146. Charge of 1753.

2. Adair had a title to Eye in 1749. There is no sign of his ordination in the episcopal register. He had testimonials from Worcester College, Oxford, and from the diocese of Connor in Ireland. His father at the time of his matriculation was living at Ludlow.

H.R.O. Ordination Papers Box 1. 1st 1750 Bundle.

Hereford Episcopal Register 1755-71.

Foster,

3. H.R.O. Ordination Papers Box I 1756 Bundle.

Hereford Episcopal Register 1755-71. 12<sup>v</sup>.

Sergeant had a testimonial from All Souls', Oxford, but there is no sign of him in Foster. He was born on 5th September 1732. He was thus just under canonical age. H.R.O. Ordination papers Box I.

4. H.R.O. Ordination Papers Box I 1757 (sic) Bundle. His curacy was worth £25 p.a. Hereford Episcopal Register 1755-71. 19.

*National Library of Wales. Bangor Episcopal Register. D.N.B. He later supported the Arminian group in the Wesleyan movement.*

It is clear from the records at Hereford and Oxford at least that the deacon's age rule was elastic. There are two such cases in Hereford in 1756. Benjamin Yate of Wolveley, Worcestershire, and Trinity, Cambridge, applied for deacon's orders when he was still only 22. His title, dated 15th February 1756, was for Oldbury. It seems that Bishop Beauclerk wanted to discuss his case with Pearson, his secretary, at one stage before Yate was finally ordained on 14th March 1756 at the Royal Chapel in Somerset House.<sup>1</sup> We know nothing of what happened to him in later life. Thomas Hodges who applied for orders at the same time was a graduate of Hertford, Oxford. Aged 22, he was ordained on 13th June 1756 and titled to Ludlow. In 1769 he became Vicar of Bromfield, the place where he was baptised.<sup>2</sup>

There were two more under-age applicants in 1758. John Giles, the son of a priest in Worcester, was baptised in November 1735. By 1758 he was a graduate of Worcester, Oxford, and had a title to Edwyn Ralph where his father, Thomas Giles, was rector. He was ordained on 2nd July 1758 with the other Trinity ordinands, though the date was a little late. When he was priested in June 1760, he was already a Fellow of Worcester.<sup>3</sup> Less fortunate perhaps was Evan Evans who applied at the same time. He was an undergraduate of Jesus, Oxford, and had a title to a curacy under Owen Owens at Montgomery. He appears to have signed his own baptismal certificate and his Si Quis both at Llanwrin where his father David Evans was described as "gentleman". He was apparently made to wait until 12th November 1758 for ordination when he was ordained deacon extra tempora in the Cathedral, but he was just 23 then. Later he became Vicar of Welsh Hampton and died in 1823

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1. H.R.O. Ordination papers Box I 1756 Bundle.  
Bishop's note dated 26th February 1756.  
Hereford Episcopal Register 1755-71, 9<sup>v</sup>.  
There is no sign of Yate being ordained priest or being instituted to a living at least up to 1790.
  2. H.R.O. Ordination papers Box I. 1756 Bundle.  
Bannister op. cit. 102.  
Hereford Episcopal Register 1755-71, 12<sup>v</sup>.
  3. H.R.O. Ordination papers Box I 1758 Bundle.  
Hereford Episcopal Register 1755-71, 29 and 58.  
Foster.  
Thomas Giles became Rector of Edvin Ralph in 1747.  
Bannister op. cit. 86.



at the age of 89.<sup>1</sup> In 1759 Robert Foley was another who was ordained at the age of 22. He was baptised in Hereford and went to Oriel College, Oxford. Titled as a curate to All Saints, Hereford, he was made deacon on 10th June 1759 and was priested extra tempora, on his own, early in November of the following year, so that on the next day he could be instituted to the living of Frome Castle. Later he held the livings of Mordiford and Old Swinford.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless it is clear that to obtain early ordination in this way was no formality and that Bishop James Beauclerk had to be persuaded that it was necessary. For instance, in February 1753 William Sneade, Rector of Bedstone, "incapacitated to do duty by reason my eyesight is much impaired through old age" wrote asking for consideration to be given to Robert Cooper to whom he had given a title. He would "be deficient in age at next ordination about a week which I humbly crave your lordship to dispense with; being at present much necessitated for a curate and obliged to trouble my neighbours for some weeks past to assist me." A note in the file urges agreement with the request: "Let Mr. Pearson be consulted in respect to the point of time which being but a week only deficient and will not the bishop be prevailed upon to give him a private ordination, there being a curacy awaiting him." A month later the Chancellor, Burton, examined Robert Cooper and because there was no Lent ordination in Hereford<sup>3</sup> he asked the Bishop to give him Letters Dimissory to Bishop Trevor of Durham,<sup>4</sup> who carried out

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1. H.R.O. Ordination Papers Box I 1758 Bundle.

Foster.

Hereford Episcopal Register 1755-71, 42<sup>v</sup>.

2. H.R.O. Ordination Papers Box I 1759 Bundle.

Hereford Episcopal Register 1755-71, 46 and 64.

Foster.

Bannister op. cit. 95.

Foley was related to the armigerous Foley family - Foster.

3. Hereford Episcopal Register 1723-54, 140<sup>v</sup>-149.

4. Robert Cooper was the son of Ellis Cooper of Knighton. He was born 23rd September 1730, went to Jesus, Oxford, and became B.A. in 1752. At the time of his application for deacon's orders he had a title for a curacy at Bedstone. H.R.O. Ordination Papers Box I 1753 Bundle  
Foster

He was ordained priest on 1st June 1755 in the Cathedral. There is no evidence of his having received a benefice in the Hereford diocese before 1767.

Hereford Episcopal Register 1755-71, 2.

the ceremony on 18th March 1753.<sup>1</sup>

In the Oxford diocese it is impossible to make a direct study of under-age admissions to the diaconate as the source material is limited, but, if we can rely on Foster's Alumni Oxonienses for obtaining the age of ordinands, we find that the Canon Law in this matter was quite often broken, even by such respected Bishops as Fell and Potter. If at random we take the first year of Fell's episcopate (May 1676 to March 1677) we find that out of 47 deacons ordained by him four were only 21; one, John Naylor of University College, was only 20. Seven were 22, but as these were in their 23rd year this would satisfy the slightly more lax rule we have already noticed. Of 34 men priested 3 were 23, 2 were 22 and one, Charles Hinde of New Inn Hall, was only 21. Again if we take at random the last year of Potter's episcopate (June 1737 to January 1737/8) we find much the same story. Of 31 men made deacon 3 were aged 21 only and 10 were still only 22. Of the 28 men priested, as many as ten were below the canonical age of 24 years. Secker also was inclined to be easy about the rule. In 1749 he ordained one man of 20 and 8 of 22 to the diaconate and he ordained two of 23 to the priesthood.<sup>2</sup> We also know that George Whitefield was only 21 when he received deacon's orders in June 1720.<sup>3</sup>

Canon 34 also laid down academic standards for the clergy. The ordinand had to be a graduate "or at the least ... be able to yield an account of his faith in Latin" according to the 39 Articles and "to confirm the same by sufficient testimonies out of Holy Scriptures." Canon 35 enjoined that the Bishop should examine the candidate in the presence of ministers who were to assist at the ceremony.<sup>4</sup> At some

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1. Durham Diocesan MSS. Bishop's Act Book (1753-71) 2. The Letters Dimissory still exist. ex. info. Senior Assistant Keeper, University of Durham Department of Palaeography and Diplomatic.
  2. Foster and Oxford Episcopal Registers.
  3. Bullock Training for the Ministry 108. Other examples in Sykes Church and State. 113-4.
  4. Gibson Codex 168-9.



stages during the period attempts were made to create an all-graduate clergy; for instance, Sancroft's articles said that the bishops had agreed to ordain no man "who hath not taken some degree of school in one of the universities of this realm unless the archbishop in some extraordinary case and upon the express desire and wish of the bishop ordaining shall think fit to dispense with this particular"; even then the candidate would have to fulfil the conditions laid down in the 34th canon.<sup>1</sup> Though throughout our period there was a steady move towards a graduate clergy, as we have seen in another chapter, Sancroft's stipulation was impossible to honour and, though all bishops hoped for graduate candidates, they in fact had to rely on personal examination either in addition to evidence of degree or university status or in place of it for non-graduates.<sup>2</sup> Bishop Gilbert Burnet of Salisbury was much concerned at the poor standard of theological education at the Universities and attempted to correct the situation by starting a theological college of his own at Salisbury, but, though it was run at his own expense for five years, he had to close it because of opposition from Oxford. Prideaux was likewise critical.<sup>3</sup>

There is plenty of evidence to show that bishops at all times during the period were conscientious about this. Gibson and Wake at Lincoln, Kidder and Hooper at Bath and Wells, Lloyd at Worcester and White Kennett at Peterborough all kept high standards.<sup>4</sup> Sharp as

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1. Nelson MSS "Sancroft's Regulations". Paragraph III.
  2. The academic standards of the parish clergy are discussed in Chapter IV of this thesis. In the seventeenth century some bishops were quite content with non-graduates. For instance, Thomas Ken wrote to Sancroft to explain that because of the smallness of some of his parishes he was very glad to get "a sober person" to supply them though he might not be a graduate.  
Ken to Sancroft 1st October 1687. Bodl. MS Tanner 29. 79.
  3. Sykes Sheldon to Secker 200.
  4. Gibson to Charlett 23rd September 1718. Ballard MSS VI. 132.  
N. Sykes "Episcopal Administration in England in the Eighteenth Century". E.H.R. XLVII 424-5.  
W.M. Marshall - Hooper 113-114.  
A.T. Hart William Lloyd 202-3.  
G.V. Bennett White Kennett 231-3.  
There is also evidence that Hoadly as Bishop of Winchester, was interested to see that candidates to be ordained by others by Letters Dimissory were properly examined.  
H.R.O. Ordination Papers Box I. 1753 bundle (letter of 9th March 1749). 1757 bundle (letter of 4th March 1757).

Archbishop of York found ordinands rejected elsewhere applied to him, but he too would refuse.<sup>1</sup> Young Tories from the universities used to attend on Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester, at either Westminster or his summer home at Bromley thinking that he would sympathise with them, only to find themselves faced with a severe examination from the Bishop himself; "some who prided themselves on their political orthodoxy were disconcerted to discover that they fell short of his standards of theological competence."<sup>2</sup> Later in the century Warburton of Gloucester set such a high standard that ordinands tried to obtain Letters Dimissory to other bishops "by fear of an examination which carries greater terror at Gloucester than elsewhere."<sup>3</sup>

The Bishops of Hereford certainly seem to have examined thoroughly. In March 1671 Thomas Adney, Rector of Rushbury and surrogate, wrote to William Johnson, Croft's Chaplain and clearly his chief examiner, supporting the candidature of Woode, the local schoolmaster, for admission as deacon. "He is no university man and therefore I hope you will not put him upon any philosophical questions - but I assure you he is an ingenious and industrious person and one that is like to make a profitable instrument of much good in the church."<sup>4</sup> In the same year Thomas Martin, Vicar of Holme Lacy, asked William Allen, Vicar of All Saints', Hereford, to write a note to Johnson on behalf of a candidate presumably for examination; the letter which the candidate was to take with him was to explain that he was the man recommended by both Allen and Johnson in Hereford a month before.<sup>5</sup>

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1. Hart Sharp. 167-8.
  2. Bennett Atterbury 203.  
North to Charlett 6th January 1718.  
Ballard MSS 10. 79.
  3. Warne op. cit. 31 citing A.W. Evans Warburton and the Warburtonians (1952) 224.
  4. Adney to Johnson 1st March 1671/2. H.R.O. Visitation Box 15.  
There is no mention of Woode in the Register, but the ordination lists at this stage are incomplete. There is a William Woode who subscribed as schoolmaster at Ledbury in 1671. H.R.O. Subscription Book (1661-83) 40<sup>v</sup>.
  5. Martin to Allen 16th June 1671. H.R.O. Visitation Box 15.



Another ordinand was presented by John Vernon<sup>1</sup> in June 1671 with a recommendation that "he hath money in his purse and I think learning enough in his head"; the Register, John Staverton, passed him on to Johnson for examination.<sup>2</sup> Three years later Edward Lewis of Cherbury wrote asking for a kinsman to be advanced to priest's orders to serve "Mr. Jones" between Montgomery and Beriew in Montgomeryshire; though he had served as a deacon-curate in several parishes a priest was needed in his new post for administration of the sacrament. Lewis expressed some concern about the tests. "I hope you will find him capable, although he be not ripe in everything (for you cannot alwaies expect old heads upon young shoulders). I hope it will be looked upon as res dispensabilis since I shall have a care myself of his waies for the future and see that he proceed in his study with care and diligence."<sup>3</sup>

At the other end of the period the examination of ordinands remained as careful. On 6th December 1750 Egerton Leigh, Archdeacon of Salop, certified to the bishop that he had that day examined and

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1. John Vernon, a Balliol man, became Rector of Hanbury, Worcestershire, in 1624, and was clearly still there in 1671. Hanbury, East of Droitwich, is outside the Hereford diocese. Presumably the candidate was ordained by letters dimissory. There was an ordination of 9 deacons at Croft on 18th June 1671, but there is no means of knowing who the candidate named in the letter was. Vernon to (Staverton) 17th June 1671. H.R.O. Visitation Box 15. Hereford Episcopal Register (1635-77) 230.
  2. Vernon to Staverton 17th June 1671. *ibid.*
  3. Lewis to ..... 4th June 1674. H.R.O. Visitation Box 15. The candidate had been curate to Lewis himself at Cherbury and then to Cressett at Cund, which is presumably to be identified as Cound in the Lichfield diocese between Shrewsbury and Much Wenlock (ex. info. H.R.O.). Finally at Christmas 1673 he had been given a curacy to Jones who needed a man "in presbyter's orders because of the distance between the two parishes." It is possible that "Mr. Jones" was outside the diocese. In the 1680 visitation there is no incumbent by the name of Jones in the Montgomery area. A further search by H.R.O. has revealed no incumbent of that name.

approved Benjamin Biddulph.<sup>1</sup> As we have already seen the Chancellor, Daniel Burton, examined Robert Cooper and William Hale for deacon's orders and Rowland Chambre for priest's. "Mr. Hale appeared to me well qualified, the other two moderately so."<sup>2</sup>

John Bromwich, Headmaster of Bridgnorth School and father of nine children, was an older ordinand. There was some fear that Bishop Beauclerk might refuse him orders on the grounds that he was not a graduate. His referee, Charles Tucker, rector of Hopesay and a Brasenose graduate, was able to allay the Bishop's fears; in learning, the Bishop would, he said, find Bromwich equal, if not superior, to most in the diocese. The Archdeacon of Lichfield would be one to support such a reputation.<sup>3</sup> Tucker also felt that to ordain Bromwich would be a means of bringing a very deserving man out of obscurity and rendering his circumstances, which were then too narrow for supporting a wife and nine children, comfortable. He was ordained a month later on 14th March 1756.<sup>4</sup>

In April 1759 Richard Bellamy, curate of Monmouth, who had been made deacon on 5th June 1757, wrote to enquire when the next ordination was, for he was anxious to be priested; he took it for granted that he would have to appear again for examination, but wrongly assumed that he would not have to produce a new set of documents. In the event, to hasten matters he wrote them all out in his own hand and had them signed by the appropriate parties. He

1. H.R.O. Ordination Box I 1750 Bundle.  
Biddulph had a title to Colwall (£30) but there is no sign of his ordination as deacon (in fact there was no Advent ordination in 1750), but he was ordained priest in the Cathedral on 17th June 1753. He was no longer curate in 1759 according to the visitation return of that year, for John Whitcombe held that position. Biddulph's father lived in Ledbury. By 1793 Benjamin himself was living in Hereford city.  
Hereford Episcopal Register (1723-54) 123<sup>v</sup>- 125<sup>v</sup>, 149<sup>v</sup>.  
H.R.O. Visitation Book 36.  
Poster.
2. Burton to Beauclerk 15th March 1753.  
H.R.O. Ordination Papers Box I, 1753 Bundle.
3. Bridgnorth was in the Lichfield and Coventry diocese.
4. Tucker to Pearson 18th February 1756.  
H.R.O. Ordination Papers Box I 1756 Bundle.  
Hereford Episcopal Register (1755-71) 9<sup>v</sup>.



was ordained priest on 10th June 1759.<sup>1</sup>

John Bromwich the younger, son of the Headmaster of Bridgnorth, was still at Oxford on 20th May 1760, but expected to be in Hereford at the beginning of Ember week "in order to be examined." Apparently he had sent all his documents during the previous February, but there had been no Lenten ordination. Much to his chagrin, Pearson, the Bishop's secretary, had only told him a day or two before. To avoid further disappointment his father sent another copy of the testimonials to the Register "not knowing but (Pearson's) forgetfulness or some other accident might prevent them being sent to you in time."<sup>2</sup> Normally the registry required the documents three weeks before the ordination date.<sup>3</sup> He was finally ordained deacon on 1st June 1760.<sup>4</sup> Bishop Beauclerk seems to have been strict over these procedures; so much so that in 1757, when John Baldwin applied for deacon's orders, his father who was Rector of Coreley asked the Register to pass the documents to the Bishop as soon as possible "as his Lordship requires them in proper time".<sup>5</sup>

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1. Bellamy, whose father was described as "pleb." of Monmouth, had been to Oriel and had been made deacon on 5th June 1757. In his letter of 21st April 1759 he explained how essential it was for him to be priested, as they had great difficulty in getting assistance for the monthly communion. His title to the curacy was raised in value from £25 p.a. in 1757 to £30 in 1759. He succeeded to the living of Monmouth on 16th August 1761.  
Foster.  
Hereford Episcopal Register (1755-71) 21, 46.  
Bellamy to Clark 21st April 1759.  
H.R.O. Ordination Papers Box I 1757 and 1759 bundles.  
Bannister op. cit. 96.
  2. Bromwich to Clarke 20th May 1760.  
H.R.O. Ordination Papers Box I 1760 Bundle.
  3. Vernon Yonge to Beauclerk 21st February 1756. *ibid* 1756 bundle.
  4. Hereford Episcopal Register (1755-71) 58.
  5. Baldwin to Register (n.d. but received 10th May 1757).  
Ordination Papers Box I 1757 Bundle.

Again we have less evidence of what took place at Oxford, but probably the situation was much the same. On 11th December 1731 Bishop Potter entertained Thomas Wilson, son of the Bishop of Sodor and Man, to dinner.<sup>1</sup> A week later Wilson, who had been made deacon in May 1727, was examined for priesting by the Archdeacon, George Rye, and subsequently on the same day subscribed before Potter himself. He was ordained on the following day, the 19th, in the Cathedral and on Christmas Day administered the Communion for the first time at St. Thomas, Oxford, where the incumbent was ill.<sup>2</sup>

There must have been various methods of study for ordination in the period. Robert Nelson, the non-juror, who rejoined the Church in 1709, was deeply interested in many aspects of the religious life of the Church including training for orders. For instance, in 1713 he made a plea for improvement in this field, in particular that Oxford and Cambridge "which are the wonder of the world ...." should set entirely aside some colleges for training ordinands "where they might be fully instructed in all those duties which are peculiarly incumbent upon a parish priest." Activities would include lectures practical training in performing services "with a becoming gravity and devotion and with all that advantage of elocution which is aptest to secure attention and beget devout affections in the congregation."<sup>3</sup> Earlier in 1705 Nelson received an interesting and useful letter from Dr. Thomas Bennet of Colchester. This suggested a method of study and

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1. This was no doubt an unusual case as the ordinand was the son of a fellow-bishop.  
Keble College MSS. Thomas Wilson's MS Diary (1731-6) 15, 16-18.  
MS Oxf. Dioc. c.266. 72.
  2. Wilson was made deacon on 28th May 1727. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.266. 61.  
Later Wilson, a Christ Church man, assisted the bishop at other ordinations; for instance, on 4th June 1732 he administered the cup at the Trinity ordination. "Mr. Douglas of Balliol preached the sermon; no very extraordinary one." Again on 24th September 1732 he assisted the bishop at ordination. On 24th December 1732 he assisted again when 13 deacons and 8 priests were ordained. On the latter occasion Langford, a member of Wesley's Holy Club, preached the sermon.  
Wilson MS Diary 32 (4th June), 71 (24th September), 85 (24th December).  
Wilson matriculated at Christ Church in April 1721 at the age of 17. In 1753 he became Rector of St. Margaret's, Westminster, and died in 1784.
  3. F.W.B. Bullock A History of Training for the Ministry 598-1799 95.  
citing Nelson The Life of George Bull 19 - 22.



a list of books at great length and in great detail. First the candidate should read suitable treatises on vocation and convince himself "of the weight of that sacred employment which you have some thoughts of devoting yourself to" and make certain that the vocation is not motivated by material gain or preferment. Only then must the ordinand furnish himself "with a competent knowledge of divinity." There followed a long discourse on basic education and on the best methods of studying the subject, after which follows a bibliography of as many as 63 authors ranging from a recent edition of Robert South's sermons printed in 1704 to works of St. John Chrysostom and Thomas à Kempis.<sup>1</sup>

Secker as Bishop of Oxford was keen to see that the clergy kept up their studies after ordination. They "must take care not to be more remarkable for their diversions than their studies". They must keep up their search of the scriptures, their knowledge of New Testament Greek and, if possible, Old Testament Hebrew and have a sound knowledge of the powers of good reasoning and early history. They must have the intellectual equipment to enter controversy though they must also be equipped to show the people that religion was not the concern of the clergy merely but of all men.<sup>2</sup>

Candidates for ordination had to provide testimonials from their Oxford or Cambridge colleges, if they were graduates, and from their home neighbourhood. There were frequent attempts by those in authority to raise the standard of these important documents. For instance, in 1680 Archbishop Sancroft complained of the poor, perfunctory and dilute nature of them; there had apparently even been criticism in Parliament. He insisted that the appropriate canon of 1603 should be observed by making sure that they stemmed "from immediate and personal knowledge and that owned and expressed in the letters themselves."<sup>3</sup>

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1. Bennet to Nelson 25th September 1705. Nelson MSS. Bennet was a graduate of St. John's, Cambridge, and held incumbencies in Colchester, Southwark and Cripplegate. He wrote pamphlets profusely and sometimes inaccurately against dissenting views. D.N.B.
  2. Secker Works IV 66-69.
  3. Hereford Episcopal Register (1672-82) 113 - 114<sup>v</sup>.

In 1716 Archbishop Wake laid down certain rules; and in 1720 White Kennett appealed to the clergy of Peterborough diocese to be faithful and truly conscientious in their testimonials.<sup>1</sup> Again in 1723 Potter, as Bishop of Oxford, wrote to Wake disapproving of Cambridge letters in particular, for they showed no personal knowledge of the candidate and there was no college seal to authenticate them.<sup>2</sup>

It is true that all college testimonials tended to be formal and often in Latin, but the standard of them varied.<sup>3</sup> Thomas Leigh, Master of Balliol, refused to give any of his undergraduates testimonials for orders, even in a case of merit and good behaviour like that of Thomas Procter ... "It would (we think) be attended with great inconvenience here were we to depart from this rule".<sup>4</sup> Though there was no official college testimonial, Procter's tutor, Charles Godwyn was satisfied to write unofficially that Procter was "entirely unexceptionable". He had led a virtuous sober and honest life, had applied himself diligently to his studies and had made "a very good proficiency in learning". Procter, though still an undergraduate, was made deacon in Hereford Cathedral eleven days later on 13th June 1756. He was ordained priest the following June.<sup>5</sup>

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1. G.V. Bennett White Kennett. 228.
  2. Potter to Wake 8th October 1723.  
Wake MSS 22. 248.
  3. Sometimes a bishop might suspect the veracity of the testimonial. Herbert Croft was much concerned by Duell Poad who sought a living from him with the help of a testimonial purporting to come from the Fellows of Trinity, Cambridge, but he felt it to be unlikely as rumour had it that Poad had been expelled from Cambridge for his "very scandalous life and heretical opinions".  
Croft to Sancroft. n.d.  
MS Tanner 42. 108.
  4. Leigh to Beauclerk 2nd June 1756.  
H.R.O. Ordination Papers Box I 1756 Bundle.
  5. In 1756 he was tithed to Kimbolton and Middleton at £20 p.a.; his title at the time of his priesting was worth £30. In February 1766 he succeeded his father, Henry, as Vicar of Orleton.  
Goodwin to Beauclerk 2nd June 1756.  
H.R.O. Ordination Box I 1756 Bundle.  
ibid. 1757 Bundle.  
Hereford Episcopal Register (1755-71) 12<sup>v</sup> and 21.  
Bannister op. cit. 98.  
Foster.



Apart from assurance over academic standards the bishop needed to be certain of the ordinand's "godly life". For this he relied partly, it is true, on what the college reported, but also on "country testimonials" written by clergy, sometimes as many as three from his own home area. In the Hereford collection there are well over 30 of these in the ordination files. For instance, in the autumn of 1674 Timothy Kettilby of Bitterly was able to produce a Latin testimonial from Pembroke College, Oxford, and also a good "country" one from Robert Goodwin, Vicar of Cleobury Mortimer, and John Salwey of Richard's Castle who described him as "a person of honest life and conversation, orthodox in judgement and conformable to the liturgy of the Church of England".<sup>1</sup> In March 1671 George Lawson, Rector of More, described Thomas Rogers of Pontesbury as being "for life blameless, for doctrine orthodox, for the present government loyal, for ecclesiastical discipline conformable."<sup>2</sup> Likewise at the other end of the period a similar form was used; in 1751 James Volant Vashon, Vicar of Eye, supported James Beynon of Eye as having "sincere conformity to the doctrine, discipline and government of the Church of England and of which he has made a solemn protestation to me from religious motives and upon rational grounds of conviction." This is of particular importance because according to the testimonial from Ludlow Corporation dated 5th August 1751 he had been a dissenting teacher; the Corporation nevertheless were sure that he would be "an able and orthodox minister in the Church". He was made deacon extra tempora on 11th August 1751 in the Cathedral and priested on 22nd September in the same year.<sup>3</sup> Country testimonials

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1. In the imperfect entries of the Episcopal Register there is no sign of his being made deacon. He became Rector of Aston in 1701. College Testimonial (23rd October 1674) and Country Testimonial (7th December 1674). H.R.O. Visitation Box 15. Bannister op. cit. 57.
  2. Lawson to Croft 29th March 1671. H.R.O. Visitation Box 15.
  3. Vashon to Beauclerk 27th July 1751. H.R.O. Ordination Papers Box I 1751 Bundle. Hereford Episcopal Register (1723-1754) 130<sup>v</sup>. Beynon was a non-graduate and was initially curate to Vashon. On 22nd September 1751 he became Rector of Aston. Bannister op. cit. 88.

emanating from other dioceses usually had a counter-signature from the bishop of that diocese, certifying that the referees were reliable. Though bishops were on their guard against falsely complimentary testimonials, the process could work the other way. In 1756 William Reece, schoolmaster of Wellington, had to have the support of two J.P's to counter malicious letters about his character from fellow-parishioners who were "very mean people and some of the popish religion of a litigious behaviour". One of them had been bound over for insolently assaulting and wounding him. The magistrates could give him a good report; they knew him as "a sober deserving young man whose morals, behaviour and principles are such that never gave occasion of any just censure"; furthermore they had entrusted their own children to his care and education.<sup>1</sup>

Apart from these the potential ordinand had to supply a certificate of title. Canon 33 of 1603 stipulated that "no person shall be admitted into sacred orders except he shall at that time exhibit to the bishop" a certificate of title.<sup>2</sup> It had been customary since early Christian times to make sure that the newly ordained man had "some certain place where he might use his function". It was also of concern to church authorities that they should be financially provided for and subject to the surveillance of older and more experienced clerics.

The incumbent to whom the ordinand was to be licensed had to provide a written certificate that he had nominated and appointed him as assistant curate and that he promised to pay him a sum, usually between £20 and £30, as maintenance. He also undertook to allow him to continue "until he shall be otherwise provided of some ecclesiastical preferment unless by fault of him committed he shall be lawfully removed from the same". In the files at Hereford there are 126 such documents still existing from the period 1740 to 1760

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1. Lewis et al. to Beauclerk 8th September 1755.  
H.R.O. Ordination Papers Box I 1756 Bundle.  
The letter was countersigned on 17th September by Richard Waring, the Vicar of Wellington.
  2. Gibson Codex 161-162.



and a few from the end of the seventeenth century. It is noticeable that the seventeenth century certificates merely mention "sufficient" or "competent" maintenance, while the later ones stipulate an exact sum, usually between £20 and £30.<sup>1</sup> Bishops could be strict about this. In May 1755 William Barnes, Rector of Much Marcle, offered to employ an ordinand, William Bridge, as an assistant curate the following spring, if he had found no other post by then; meanwhile his father who had an estate worth more than £90 a year would support him. Beauclerk would have none of this and insisted on employment immediately following ordination. Barnes accordingly promised to have him straight away and allow him £30 a year.<sup>2</sup> Consequently the Bishop ordained him deacon on 1st June 1755 and priest two years later on 5th June 1757.<sup>3</sup> He was at Balliol and University Colleges. His father was a "gentleman" of Ross.<sup>4</sup>

With his testimonials the ordinand also had to produce a Si Quis to the Registry. This in effect was, and is, similar to the banns before marriage. It was normally read out in the home parish of the candidate at the main service, usually in the morning, on a Sunday a few weeks before the ceremony. We know, from the 94 Si Quis documents we have for the Hereford diocese in the mid-eighteenth century, when and in what church each was read out. The congregation was charged that if they knew anything of the man "why he ought not to be ordained by reason of any vice that he is addicted to or any scandal that he has given" they should inform the bishop; otherwise the bishop "declares it shall not be his fault but yours and that your souls are to answer for it at the dreadful tribunal of God for concealing that fault or that scandal that you know of and thereby betraying the church to the mischiefs that may come upon it by this ordination". If they knew of no such impediment, the congregation were asked to pray for the candidate as he approached his ordination. The incumbent and the churchwardens

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1. Robert Goodwin, Vicar of Cleobury Mortimer, made a copy of his certificate of title for Timothy Kettelby in his notebook, "Extracts from the Notebook of a Shropshire Vicar, 1656 to 1691" in Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society Series 3 Vol 5 (1905) 206-7.
  2. Barnes to Beauclerk 22nd May 1755.  
Barnes to Beauclerk 30th May 1755.  
H.R.O. Ordination Papers. 1755 Bundle.
  3. Hereford Episcopal Register (1755-71) 2 and 21.
  4. Foster.

then normally endorsed the document to certify that it had been read publicly and returned it to the registry. The fact that these were clearly in full use and carefully filed in the 1750's indicates that the diocesan authorities were vigilant to keep a good standard of entry to the priesthood.<sup>1</sup>

Beauclerk was equally strict over this and it is clear that he at least of the bishops regarded the Si Quis as vital. For instance, on 29th September William Read, Vicar of Tenbury, reported to Chancellor Burton that James Cooke from the York diocese, who was a candidate for the priesthood and titled as a curate to Neen Savage, found that he had no time before the Michaelmas ordination to get his Si Quis. Burton passed the letter to the Bishop "for your Lordship's resolutions" informing him that, if he wanted Cooke, he was to be heard of that evening at the Red Streak Tree in Hereford.<sup>2</sup> It is, however, clear that Beauclerk was not prepared to go ahead either at his regular Michaelmas ordination in the cathedral on 1st October 1752 or extra tempora on 19th November, when he ordained two priests.<sup>3</sup> Eventually Cooke's Si Quis was completed on 23rd December 1752, but he seems already to have applied to Beauclerk for Letters Dimissory on 5th December for the Bishop of Worcester who was to ordain at Hartlebury on 17th December.<sup>4</sup> Cooke subscribed at Worcester for ordination as priest on 1st January 1753/4.<sup>5</sup>

Canon 31 of 1603 stipulated that the ordination ceremony itself was to be held "in the cathedral or parish church where the bishop resideth" and the ceremony was to be in public - "in the face of the

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1. e.g. Si Quis of Other Philpott May 1748. See Appendix VI.
  2. Read to Burton 29th September 1752. This letter and the note by Burton are in the 1750 1st bundle. The rest are in the 1753 bundle. H.R.O. Ordination Box I.  
James Cooke was the son of Rev. Thomas Cooke of Cleobury Mortimer.
  3. Hereford Episcopal Register (1723-54) 140<sup>v</sup>.
  4. 1753 Bundle.
  5. He had already been ordained deacon by him in 1748.  
Worcester R.O. 732. 2. BA 2045/4 and 716.051 BA 2697/2.  
The Worcester R.O. has no record of his actual ordination.



Church" as the Edwardine ordinal phrased it.<sup>1</sup> Certainly it became increasingly a practice for some prelates who had to be in London for parliamentary duties to confer orders in London churches. White Kennett of Peterborough held only 14 of 44 ceremonies in his Cathedral. Likewise Wake, as Bishop of Lincoln, held as many as 22 of 40 in London; Gibson during his tenure of the same see ordained 50 out of 60 times in the capital.<sup>2</sup> This, however, was not often the case with bishops of Hereford and Oxford.<sup>3</sup>

Early in the period in both dioceses it seems to have been customary for the bishops to use their local parish churches for the purpose. For instance, Herbert Croft held all his recorded ordinations before Michaelmas 1677 in the small church adjoining Croft Castle, his family seat.<sup>4</sup> Likewise Robert Skinner, the Restoration Bishop of Oxford, held 16 ceremonies at Launton. But by 1680 it had become the custom in the Hereford diocese more often than not to ordain in the cathedral. For instance, 15 of Croft's 26 remaining ordinations were held in Hereford cathedral and 11 in the Bishop's chapel in the palace alongside the cathedral. Whitborne was popular with some later bishops;<sup>5</sup> Humphrey Humphreys held ten of his 18 ordinations there and Ironside 3 of his 18.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Gibson Codex. 161, 160.
  2. G.V. Bennett - White Kennett 229.  
N. Sykes - William Wake I 160.  
N. Sykes 'Episcopal Administration in England in the Eighteenth Century'. E.H.R. XLVII (July 1932) 422.  
William Beaw, Bishop of Llandaff, who held the Oxfordshire incumbency of Adderbury frequently ordained in Adderbury church and not in his cathedral after his retirement to Oxfordshire in 1697. History To-day (December 1976) 803.
  3. Bishops of Bath and Wells, however, like their contemporaries at Hereford and Oxford kept up a consistent policy of ordinations in their own cathedral or palace chapel at Wells.  
W.M. Marshall George Hooper. 114.
  4. His first ordination in the cathedral was on 23rd September 1677 when he ordained three deacons and five priests.  
Hereford Episcopal Register (1635-77) 185 - 250<sup>v</sup>.  
ibid. (1672-82) 70.
  5. Whitborne was originally the site of a palace of the Bishops of Hereford.
  6. Hereford Episcopal Registers.

At Oxford the venues varied as much. During Fell's episcopate all ordinations were held in the Cathedral of which he was also Dean, but after his death ordinations were still held in parish churches or in college chapels. Bishops, like Hough, who were Heads of Colleges often used their own college chapels; Hough who was President of Magdalen invariably used the college chapel, except for three occasions when he used New College Chapel, while William Paul used <sup>BRIGHTWELL</sup> <sup>BALDWIN</sup> church where he was Rector. During the two short episcopates of Parker and Hall ordinations were held by letters dimissory in Magdalen and St. Peter's-in-the-East.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps strangely, the University Church, St. Mary's, so often the venue for ecclesiastical courts and for visitations, was only used three times for ordinations in the whole century.<sup>2</sup> London ordinations were comparatively rare with Oxford and Hereford bishops; Philip Bisse (1713-21) held only one of his 11 and James Beauclerk (1746-87) only one of his 57 ceremonies before 1760 in London.

Even in the case of Benjamin Hoadly, despite a generally accepted view to the contrary, the Hereford tradition was maintained at least once.<sup>3</sup> Hoadly's crippled condition had always made it difficult for him to perform ceremonies or indeed to travel great distances. In spite of Sykes' suspicions there is definite evidence that Hoadly did make the journey to Hereford during his short episcopate there (1721-23); he conferred orders on 14 deacons and 4 priests in the cathedral on 1st July 1722 and later also carried out a Primary Visitation.<sup>4</sup> According to the subscription books, Hoadly also conferred orders on 3rd November 1722, 19th January 1722/3, 16th June and 22nd June 1723, but we have no means of knowing the venues.<sup>5</sup> By 1751, however, when he was Bishop of Winchester, his condition was clearly worse, for in February of that year he seemed genuinely grateful

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1. The ordinations were usually carried out by Baptist Levinz, Bishop of Sodor and Man.
  2. By Skinner once and Potter twice.
  3. S.L. Ollard says that Hoadly "never visited Bangor, nor apparently Hereford". S.L. Ollard in Confirmation or the Laying on of hands (S.P.C.K. 1926) I 173, 187 quoted by N. Sykes Church and State 144. The mistaken idea is perpetuated, for instance, by R.E. Davies in Methodism (1963) 29, and in B. Williams The Whig Supremacy (OUP 1939) 78.
  4. Hereford Episcopal Register (1709-23) 93.  
H.R.O. Visitation Boxes. Return for 1722.
  5. H.R.O. Subscription Book 10 (1722-45).



to Beauclerk for offering to perform in his stead, because he was "now indeed utterly unable to perform the office myself". He sent his chaplain to present the ordinands in person.<sup>1</sup>

At Oxford there were difficulties for bishops who wished to confer orders in the cathedral. Capitular statutes governing bishops' rights in relation to their respective cathedrals varied from see to see; in some cases bishops were able to visit a cathedral as of right; in others they could not. It seems clear that by the eighteenth century bishops of Oxford had to obtain leave from the Dean and Chapter before carrying out an ordination in the cathedral. This was because Christ Church Cathedral was primarily a collegiate chapel; unlike in other sees, the Bishop was not even the Visitor and it was the King who enjoyed that position.<sup>2</sup> For instance,<sup>3</sup> in September 1711 we find the then Dean of Christ Church, Francis Atterbury, refusing to travel to Oxford so as to avoid any difference with the bishop, William Talbot, whom he feared might claim his right to ordain without leave. The Dean and Chapter had become particularly jealous of their preserve after William Laud, Bishop in 1628, had sided with the students and had thus fallen out with the authorities at Christ Church. Fears in 1711 that there might be no ordination that Michaelmas turned out to be unjustified; the ceremony took place as planned on 23rd September.<sup>4</sup>

In spite of this most eighteenth century ordinations in the two dioceses were carried out in the cathedrals. If we include ordinations extra tempora, Egerton held 90% and Beauclerk 98% in Hereford Cathedral. At Oxford Talbot held 86%, Potter 65% and Secker 74% in Christ Church; each of the last two ordained 17 times at Cuddesdon, but these were mostly private ordinations outside the canonical times.<sup>5</sup>

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1. Hoadly to Beauclerk 28th February 1750/1.  
H.R.O. Ordination Box 1. 1751 Bundle.
  2. H.L. Thompson Christ Church 277-80.
  3. Stratford to Edward Harley 15th September 1711 H.M.C. Portland MSS VII 57.
  4. Bodl. MS Oxf Dioc. c.266. 25<sup>v</sup>.
  5. Oxford Episcopal Registers.

As we have already seen, bishops were sometimes away from their dioceses or otherwise unavailable to perform ordination ceremonies. On these occasions they could devolve their duties to a fellow bishop by Letter Dimissory, but there were dangers in allowing this to happen too freely, for it would be only too easy for poorly qualified or unsuitable candidates to slip through the net. There is no doubt that this did happen on occasion, for instance in the episcopate of Trelawney at Exeter.<sup>1</sup> Stringent regulations had been made by Canon 34 of 1603; no bishop was allowed to ordain any person from another diocese except if he were a member of one of the universities or if he had the necessary Letters Dimissory. A Bishop infringing this could incur from the Archbishop suspension from the right to ordain for two years.<sup>2</sup> The Archbishop as Metropolitan could not issue Letters Dimissory except in time of metropolitan Visitation, but if a bishop was in "parts remote" his Vicar-General could grant these Letters for him.<sup>3</sup> In Hereford during Croft's episcopate William Johnson, his chaplain, appears to have had this authority during the bishop's absence. In December 1674 Ralph Fenton, Rector of Ludlow, asked him for Letters Dimissory for "Mr. Rocke"; "I know nothing that can hinder but you may grant them".<sup>4</sup>

Letters Dimissory were granted quite freely in the period. Archbishop Sharp of York ordained frequently for his colleagues; White Kennett of Peterborough performed for Hoadly, Egerton, Potter and others.

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1. M.G. Smith op. cit. 294.
  2. Gibson Codex I 164. According to Gibson, graduates of New College and of King's College, Cambridge, had this privilege granted by the Pope in the Middle Ages.
  3. When a see was vacant, the right to grant Letters Dimissory passed to the Guardian in Spirituals who might either be the Archbishop or the Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral. Gibson Codex 164-5.
  4. Fenton to Johnson 14th December 1674.  
H.R.O. Visitation Box 15.  
This could have been for Ambrose Rocke of Merton, Oxford, who in 1677 became Rector of Hopesay.
  5. A.T. Hart Sharp 166-167.  
G.V. Bennett White Kennett 230.



Bishops of Hereford in particular took part in this system. Beauclerk, for instance, frequently performed for others. On 4th March 1750/1 he ordained 2 deacons and 5 priests for Hoadly of Winchester, two deacons and one priest for Matthew, Archbishop of York, three priests for Thomas Secker, then Archbishop of Canterbury, and a deacon for the Bishop of Bath and Wells.<sup>1</sup> Similarly he conferred orders for the Archbishops of York and Canterbury and the Bishops of Carlisle and Salisbury in 1758, and in 1759 he ordained three from Worcester.<sup>2</sup> Beauclerk himself used other bishops when he needed to do so.<sup>3</sup>

Ordination was not the only function that a bishop was unable to delegate; confirmation of the laity was also a purely episcopal duty and as such caused even more problems than ordination for the eighteenth century bishop who had to spend so much time in London attending Parliament. Ordinations had to take place at only one centre, often the cathedral, but a conscientious bishop would feel the necessity to journey out into the corners of his diocese to administer the rite of confirmation. Furthermore, ordination as we have seen could be passed by Letters Dimissory to another bishop; this was most unlikely, in fact, well-nigh impossible, in the case of confirmation. The 60th Canon decreed that "every bishop ..... in his accustomed visitation do in his own person carefully observe the said custom" every third year at the time of visitation; if he could not do this

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1. Secker to Beauclerk 1st March 1750/1.  
 Archbishop of York to Beauclerk 2nd March 1750/1.  
 Hoadly to Beauclerk 28th February 1750/1.  
 Willes to Beauclerk 28th February 1750/1.  
 H.R.O. Ordination Papers Box I. 1751 Bundle.  
 Hereford Episcopal Register (1723-54) 125<sup>v</sup>.
  2. Archbishop of Canterbury to Beauclerk 18th February 1758.  
 Archbishop of York to Beauclerk 17th February 1758.  
 Bishop of Salisbury to Beauclerk 16th February 1758.  
 Bishop of Carlisle to Beauclerk 16th February 1758.  
 Bishop of Worcester to Beauclerk 7th June 1759.  
 H.R.O. Ordination Papers Box I. 1758 and 1759 bundles.  
 Hereford Episcopal Register (1755-71) 28. This was especially for ordinands from other dioceses and was held in Spring Gardens, Westminster.
  3. In November 1752 Beauclerk was asked to give Letters Dimissory for Robert Cooper either to the Bishop of Oxford or the Bishop of London. Servis to Pearson 13th November 1752.  
 H.R.O. Visitation Box I. 1752 Bundle.

he had to perform it in the following year.<sup>1</sup> An aging bishop, or an infirm one like Hoadly, would have great difficulty in fulfilling this duty, even if he was keen to do so. The timing of the confirmation tour was circumscribed by non-ecclesiastical events such as the shortness of the bishop's residence in the diocese, the condition of the roads which would only be fit for speedy travel in the summer months, the timing of market days in the towns visited and of the harvest season when most country folk would be too busy in the fields.<sup>2</sup> It should be remembered in defence of the infrequency of confirmation that neither the Prayer Book nor much current opinion, at least in the seventeenth century, considered it to be a necessary preparation for Communion. In fact in the Exeter diocese there were two lists of confirmands, those who had been catechised and those who had previously received communion and wanted confirmation. There was also the practical difficulty in getting children to the visitation centres for the rite.<sup>3</sup>

Infrequency led to crowding when the ceremonies did occur. Wake, as Bishop of Lincoln, confirmed 12,800 in 1709 and 18,330 in 1712.<sup>4</sup> In 1743 Herring at York claimed to have confirmed 30,000 in one year and later, in 1764, over 65,000 were confirmed in the Exeter diocese.<sup>5</sup> Sometimes bishops like Nicholson at Carlisle found a considerable backlog when succeeding to an aging or incapacitated prelate.<sup>6</sup> Thus Kennett in 1720 spent three days confirming many thousands both young and old.<sup>7</sup> But some bishops carried out their confirmation duties more frequently than was absolutely necessary. For instance, there is evidence that

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1. Gibson Codex 998.
  2. Sykes Church and State 115-6.
  3. Whiteman op. cit. 126-7.
  4. Sykes "Episcopal Administration" 438-9.
  5. Warne op. cit. 32-3.
  6. A.T. Hart Sharp 170.
  7. G.V. Bennett White Kennett 227.



both Trelawny at Exeter and Hooper at Wells confirmed at times other than visitations.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, Sharp at his regular confirmation ceremonies tried to lay hands on each individually or at least on no more than two at one time, which was not customary during the period.<sup>2</sup>

Unfortunately confirmation records in both dioceses of this study are scanty and nowhere do we find the statistical detail available in some other dioceses at the time.<sup>3</sup> The best records belong to Secker's episcopate. It is clear that he held confirmations annually, more frequently than the triennial visitation. This may not have been popular. At Lincoln Gibson's intention to confirm at a different time from his visitation was disliked by the clergy who were not keen to have their diocesan in their midst on two separate occasions.<sup>4</sup> Plans at Oxford were laid carefully and in his usual methodical way Secker sent an official notice of confirmation soon after his translation from Bristol.<sup>5</sup> Beginning at Oxford on July 17th he spent a week covering the northern half of the diocese with confirmations at Witney, Burford, Chipping Norton and Bloxham. Then he started again on July 24th at Bicester and confirmed at Haseley, Watlington, Henley, Ewelme and Bampton. Furthermore, it is clear that he was allowed by the authorities at Lincoln to extend confirmation to their peculiars in Oxfordshire. In 1738, early in his episcopate, he showed his keenness to do so and again, on 16th June 1745, he had plans to confirm at Banbury.<sup>6</sup> Secker expected all clergy with candidates to attend the ceremony and present their own people. Certainly in 1741 he declared that Sunday would be the "time I shall usually pitch upon". When this occurred, he allowed the incumbent to miss either Morning or Evening Prayer in the Church.<sup>7</sup>

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1. M.G. Smith op. cit. 277.  
W.M. Marshall Hooper 118.
  2. A.T. Hart Sharp 170-171.
  3. Thomas Wilson, Bishop of Sodor and Man, kept a careful record of his confirmations, but the numbers were not large.  
Keble College MSS "Private Memorandum Book of Bishop Wilson of Sodor and Man".
  4. Sykes 'Episcopal Administration'. 440.
  5. Dated 30th May 1738. (Bodl. reference - Gough Eccles. Top. 82. 14).
  6. Willes to Secker 28th June 1738. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.651. 3.  
Burton to Secker 21st April 1745. *ibid.* c.652. 67-8.
  7. Secker Works IV 86.

On his tour he could expect hospitality; he was asked to have dinner at Charlbury with Dr. Heywood on 22nd July 1739.<sup>1</sup> William Freind, Rector of Witney, asked him to spend the night with his family, "for it will be very troublesome for you to come from Cuddesdon or even from Oxford hither on Sunday morning."<sup>2</sup>

In his notice of 1738, issued at the same time as the Articles of his Primary Visitation (30th May 1738), he requested the incumbent to encourage all unconfirmed parishioners over 14 years of age to present themselves. Nor was there to be any perfunctory learning of the baptismal vow and the catechism; they were to understand the "doctrines and precepts of the Christian Religion and come with a serious resolution to take upon themselves the profession and practice of them."<sup>3</sup>

As far as administration was concerned, incumbents were required to deliver a signed list of candidates to the bishop before the beginning of morning prayer; any others would be rejected. The candidates who were gathered in the confirmation centre of the area were to be presented by parishes; after being confirmed themselves they were to wait while others were receiving confirmation before leaving the church after a blessing. The church wardens of the confirmation church were to put up bars to enclose a large enough space round the communion rails and to keep entrance and exit passages open for ease of movement and "in all respects use their best endeavours to prevent noise and confusion that so this Holy Rite may be performed in a most solemn and edifying manner."<sup>4</sup>

There seems to have been good reason for Secker's last instruction, for, when Bishop Potter confirmed in St. Mary's, Oxford, in June 1732 Thomas Wilson reported that the ceremony was disorderly, "young and old without any certificate of them, great noise the whole time, highly

1. Arrowsmith to Secker 9th July 1739. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.651. 44.
2. Freind to Secker 30th May 1742. *ibid.* c. 651. 117.
3. 1738 Confirmation Notice - as before.
4. *ibid.*

Bishop Keppel wanted the same system to operate in the Exeter diocese. Warne *op. cit.* 33.

Secker also hoped that with frequency of confirmation it would become the usual practice to send candidates by parishes. Secker Works IV 86.



indecent."<sup>1</sup> Similar disconcerting scenes are reported from other dioceses. Because of this Bishop Bradford in his Primary Visitation of the Carlisle Diocese in 1719 did not confirm at all "believing it could not be done in so orderly and decent a manner as he desired". Instead he promised to go through the diocese again confirming at a few parishes at a time.<sup>2</sup> Part of the trouble was caused by the great crowds who attended, often including men and women who had already been confirmed and who returned for a second or third time. To overcome such an abuse of the sacrament many dioceses had by Secker's time adopted a system of tickets. We have already seen that Secker demanded a certified list of candidates from the incumbent on the Sunday morning preceding.<sup>3</sup> It is clear that the ticket system was in operation as well; Henry Whitfield of Bradwell entrusted the confirmation tickets to his curate.<sup>4</sup> In July 1754 Secker noted that ten on the Lewknor list did not come but "five not in the list had tickets and came."<sup>5</sup>

No doubt the ceremonies were often long and uncomfortable. Some decades later in 1828 the Bishop of Oxford recorded his impressions of the different churches where he confirmed; Bampton with 241 candidates was "not large enough for so great a number but not otherwise inconvenient." Banbury on the other hand could hold about 4,000 and was "excellently suited for confirmation". Woodstock, though not large, was satisfactory and the chancel had a useful door to the churchyard. Cropredy was "extremely convenient for the purpose and was very full". Charlbury church where he confirmed 148 was "convenient for the purpose though in a bad state and the people by no means orderly"; the ceremony there began at 11.30 and ended at 1.15. Several others were much longer; at Oxford it ended at 2.45.<sup>6</sup>

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1. This was a busy day for Wilson for, as we have already seen, he had assisted at the ordination in the morning and in the evening dined at St. John's.  
Wilson MS Diary 32-3.
  2. Sykes "Episcopal Administration" 442, citing Bradford to Wake 22nd June 1719.
  3. Sykes Church and State 133-5.
  4. Whitfield to Secker n.d. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.653. 35<sup>v</sup>.
  5. Mather to Secker 18th July 1754. *ibid.* 119<sup>v</sup>/120.
  6. MS Oxf. Dioc. e.33 Notebook 3, 4, 7, 10, 12.

Preparation for confirmation included not only a knowledge of the catechism and the baptismal vow, but, as we have seen, an understanding of the doctrines of the Church. Gilbert Burnet was dissatisfied with the preparation afforded by many of his parish clergy and devoted a week in each area to catechising confirmands himself before their confirmation.<sup>1</sup> Secker at Oxford at his own expense used to send round tracts before each confirmation circuit. In 1748 he had 10,200 sent to the diocese and a further 3,900 to the parish of St. James', Piccadilly, where he was rector; in June 1752 he spent £45.6s. for 15,000 for the Oxford diocese.<sup>2</sup> In May 1754 Sampson Letsome, the incumbent of Thame, promised to have his children prepared "against your confirmation" and asked his curate, John Newborough, to distribute the tracts Secker was about to send.<sup>3</sup> In July 1754 John Mather, Vicar of Lewknor, who was also distributing Secker's tracts, sent the bishop his list of names for confirmation; his problem was that many had not learnt to read and had to have their friends' help. He had, nevertheless, instructed them in a simple way in the chief points of their duty "particularly in the nature of that vow they will take upon themselves when they appear before your Lordship." Furthermore, as they were keen to be confirmed "without requiring from all of them an exact and satisfactory account of their faith in the words of the Church Catechism I have ventured to recommend them under a promise of their constantly attending the service of the Church and frequenting the Communion".<sup>4</sup> Secker disapproved of children being confirmed too

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1. Sykes op. cit. 117.

2. St. Edmund Hall MSS. Secker's Account Book (1746-58) 55 and 106.

3. Letsome to Secker 12th May 1754 & 17th May 1754.  
MS Oxf. Dioc. c.653. 112-113.

4. Mather to Secker 18th July 1754. MS Oxf. Dioc.c.653 119<sup>v</sup> - 120.  
Bishop Wilson of Sodor & Man was particularly insistent that candidates should become regular communicants & asked them not to turn their backs on the Lord's Table "as the way of too many is". He disapproved of confirmation too early, for then children are "too apt to fling off the yoke of obedience to their patron and they will then not come to be instructed. It was the parents' responsibility to see their children say their prayers morning and evening. Ultimately, however, he felt religious life was the responsibility of the clergyman or else he would have "a congregation of thoughtless, undevout hypocrites who worship God...."  
Keble College MSS Miscellaneous Box.  
Bishop Wilson's personal annotated copy of Principles and Duties of Christianity for use in the Isle of Man Annotations opposite page 4.



early and criticised ministers and parents who brought them forward before they were ready. He felt they should be of years of discretion, probably 14 was the best, though the age varied with individuals.<sup>1</sup> Sometimes incumbents had to prepare unbaptised parishioners for confirmation. For instance, in May 1742, William Freind of Witney asked for the customary permission for adult baptism at a week's notice, as he had a twenty-five year old Quaker woman he wanted to have confirmed, when the bishop visited shortly afterwards.<sup>2</sup>

It is clear that Secker was far from satisfied with the answers he received as a result of his Articles and with the turn-out at the confirmations in his first year. He, therefore, followed his circuit with a series of letters to incumbents asking the reasons for the poor numbers sent by some parishes. The cause seems not always to have lain, as Secker suspected, with the idleness of the clergy or laity, but ironically with the conscientiousness of earlier incumbents.<sup>3</sup> Charles Huggins of Chinnor, writing on 14th September 1738, complained that it was due to no neglect in him "for upon the first notice of a confirmation I sent my clerk round the parish to tell them it was the duty of the parents and sponsors to see that children took upon themselves their baptismal vow .... I also exhorted them from the pulpit" but none came near him to add their names to the list.<sup>4</sup> At Godington in 1744 Stephen Richardson reported that there were none of sufficient age who had not been confirmed "or else I should have sent your Lordship a list of them last visitation". There was also the problem of literacy which Richardson tried to combat by handing out catechetical books and offering each child sixpence as soon as he had learnt them. But parents were "very neglectful of giving their children education though they must greatly miss it themselves".<sup>5</sup> Again at Witney William

1. Secker Works IV 85. Charge of 1741.
2. Freind to Secker Whitsunday 1742. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.651. 118.
3. For some it may have been revulsion at the rite. Benjamin Ropier of Leominster in 1716 was cited into court for saying that "confirmation signifies no more than the barking of a dog". He was admonished and dismissed. H.R.O. Act Book 109. 29.
4. Huggins to Secker 14th September 1738. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.651. 21.
5. Richardson to Secker 22nd June and 6th July 1744. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.652. 42, 42<sup>v</sup>, 51.

Freind reported that he could find few unconfirmed; previous incumbents had been so conscientious that "I found a girl who was confirmed at five years old and several before they were ten."<sup>1</sup> Even as late as December 1757 Secker was still belligerently seeking out parishes which produced few confirmation candidates. One such enquiry produced a reply from Henry Powell, presumably curate of Witney. He had read the notice of confirmation not only for four Sundays up to the confirmation date, but he had also visited the most promising houses. Powell suggested that Secker had so frequently confirmed at Witney, Burford and Bampton that there were none left of the right age, "a very just but undesigned compliment, for it's well known that no Bishop takes greater care of his diocese."<sup>2</sup>

Another important duty of the bishop was the visitation of his diocese. Canon 119 provided for this to be held triennially by the bishop and for lesser visitations by the vicar-general and archdeacon in intervening years.<sup>3</sup> Episcopal visitations were usually held in May, June or July. Visitation records at Hereford are only spasmodic before 1701, but it is clear that there was an episcopal visitation of at least parts of the diocese in 1662.<sup>4</sup> The Vicar-General carried

1. Freind to Secker 28th May 1748. *ibid.* c.652. 123.
2. Powell to Secker 9th December 1757. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.653. 195. In August 1738 Thomas Kemp of Hanborough reported to Secker that he had catechised children and could not say why so few presented themselves for confirmation. The six who did appear were, as far as he knew, all that were unconfirmed. Two had gone to Witney for a similar ceremony. He had given the parish due notice by fixing a notice of dates and times and on the Sunday before confirmation he had explained the nature of the sacrament before his sermon. Kemp was curate at Hanborough for William Holmes, President of St. John's and Regius Professor of Modern History. Kemp to Secker 29th August 1738. Lloyd-Jukes *op. cit.* 71.
3. Gibson Codex 998 and 1003.
4. There are 12 visitation returns extant for May 1662 from different parts of the diocese (6 from Wenlock Deanery, 1 from Ross, 1 from Stottesdon, 1 from Frome, 1 from Leominster, 1 from Clun Deaneries), but the relevant Visitation Book (12) records a visitation to Weobley deanery only. H.R.O. Visitation Box 18 and Visitation Book 12.



out a visitation in 1663 and 1664.<sup>1</sup> Bishop Croft himself held a full visitation of the whole diocese in September 1665. He visited the deaneries of Pontesbury, Wenlock and Ludlow in Ludlow Church on 12th September and the remaining three Shropshire deaneries in Ludlow on 14th September. He then moved to Leominster on 19th September for the deaneries of Leominster, Frome, and Weobley and then on to the cathedral for Archenfield, Ross and Weston on the 20th.<sup>2</sup> Full visitations occurred in 1671, 1674, 1677 and 1680. There is some evidence of visitations in 1683, 1689 and 1692.<sup>3</sup> The triennial episcopal visitation became regular practice in the eighteenth century; there was, however, a gap between the last of Humphreys' visitations in 1710 and Bisse's Primary in 1716.<sup>4</sup> Bisse intended to hold his Primary Visitation in 1714, just over a year after his translation, but it was postponed.<sup>5</sup> Some of the printed articles were in fact printed and circulated in 1714 and were used in 1716 by some incumbents. It looks as though the Chancellor held a visitation instead.<sup>6</sup> The Hereford records also have a gap between 1722 and 1740.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, we know that, contrary to his traditional reputation, Hoadly did carry

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1. H.R.O. Visitation Box 18.
  2. H.R.O. Visitation Book 21 (The Deanery of Hereford does not seem to have been visited on this occasion).
  3. H.R.O. Visitation Books 22, 23, 25, 27, 29.
  4. H.R.O. Visitation Book 33 ends with the 1710 visitation. Book 34 begins with 1716.
  5. "Bishop Bisse this year (in which he intended his primary visitation but did not hold it) ...."  
Parish Register of Weston-under-Penyard II (1671-1740).  
After the entry for 4th February 1713/14.
  6. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28. 1716 Visitation Return.  
For instance, at Brilley, Weobley and Willersley (in the last the date was altered in ink).
  7. H.R.O. Visitation Books 34 (1719) and 35 (1743).  
Visitation Box 32 has some presentments for the bishop's visitation in 1725; Box 34 has a few presentments for 1734, Box 53 has returns for 1740.  
There is a similar gap in the Act Books.

out a visitation in Hereford in June 1722, but there is no visitation book. We have 25 returns of his Primary Visitation, mainly for the Weston and Ross Deaneries.<sup>1</sup> Thomas Bisse, brother of the late bishop, reported that Hoadly had given "a smooth charge upon the tenor of what has been printed which he declared he would stand to as being, if rightly understood, the principles upon which the Church of England must be supported at length."<sup>2</sup>

The bishop would normally go on tour and hold his visitation in certain selected churches, usually the biggest or the most central in the area. In the Hereford diocese St. Lawrence's, Ludlow, was the usual visitation centre for the whole Shropshire archdeaconry, though the deaneries attended in groups of two or three a day. Occasionally, though, other churches were used; Richard's Castle was twice used by Humphreys for the Pontesbury and Clun Deaneries.<sup>3</sup> In the Hereford Archdeaconry two centres were often used in the seventeenth century especially; Leominster church was the venue for the Leominster, Frome and sometimes the Weobley Deaneries and the Cathedral was used for the rest. Occasionally the visitation was held at Bromyard - for Frome, Leominster and Weobley in 1701 and for Frome alone in 1707.<sup>4</sup> In the south, Ross Church for Ross and Archenfield was used once, at Bisse's Primary Visitation in 1716.<sup>5</sup> By 1743 the pattern of having two visitation centres, the Cathedral and Ludlow Church, one for each archdeaconry, seems to have crystallised. The strategy of visitation adopted in 1750 by Beauclerk was fairly normal. On 17th July he began at Ludlow by visiting Burford, Clun and Ludlow Deaneries and on the following day completed the Shropshire visitation in the same church with Pontesbury, Stottesden and Wenlock. A week later on 24th July in the Cathedral he visited Ross, Archenfield, Weobley and Weston Deaneries and on 27th July Leominster, Frome and Hereford.<sup>6</sup>

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1. H.R.O. Visitation. Returns of 1722.
  2. Wotton to Wake 20th June 1722.  
Wake MSS 22. 144b.
  3. 30th June 1703 and 18th July 1710.  
H.R.O. Visitation Books 31 and 33.
  4. Visitation Books 31 and 33.
  5. Visitation Book 34.
  6. Visitation Book 35.



The custom in the Oxford diocese was different and probably followed more closely the pattern of other parts of England. The bishop, or at some stages his vicar-general, usually toured the diocese more extensively and stopped at five centres; no doubt with a diocese only half the size of Hereford it was easier for him to reach personally the corners of his jurisdiction. The five centres were St. Mary's, Oxford, for the Oxford and Cuddesdon Deaneries,<sup>1</sup> Bicester<sup>2</sup> (occasionally Islip) for the Bicester Deanery, Witney for Witney and Woodstock<sup>3</sup>, Chipping Norton for Chipping Norton and Deddington (very occasionally as in 1697 and 1725 Deddington)<sup>4</sup> and Henley was the venue for Henley and Aston (occasionally Ewelme or Watlington was used; the Archdeacon usually visited at Watlington).<sup>5</sup>

The triennial visitation was an important occasion legally, for while it was in process the bishop resumed all his delegated jurisdiction and there was an inhibition on all courts. For instance, it was then that the Bishop of Lincoln at least could override his commissary by revoking licences.<sup>6</sup> This could extend to peculiars; for instance, on 15th April 1756 James Beauclerk as a matter of form issued his inhibition to John Egerton, the Dean of Hereford, to the two Archdeacons and to the canons and prebendaries of Hereford inhibiting their jurisdiction which might arise from the dignity of office they held.<sup>7</sup> Usually the bishop conducted the triennial visitation himself, though sometimes his vicar-general might deputise for him as in 1719 in Oxford.<sup>8</sup> On other occasions the bishop might appoint a commission

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1. Bishop Talbot held a visitation at St. Mary's on 9th June 1707. His sermon was much commended especially by the Whigs. Hearne op. cit. II. 19.
  2. The Archdeacon usually visited this Deanery at Islip.
  3. The Archdeacon usually visited this Deanery at Woodstock and the Bishop occasionally did so as in 1679 and 1697.
  4. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.130. 16<sup>v</sup> (31st May 1697).  
MS Oxf. Archd. c.145. 16 (26th July 1725).
  5. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.131. 1 (Ewelme 17th October 1715).  
MS Oxf. Dioc. c.129. 37<sup>v</sup>. (Watlington 25th September 1685).
  6. M.G. Smith op. cit. 256-7.
  7. Hereford Episcopal Register (1755-71) 10<sup>v</sup>. Egerton was son of the Bishop and had been Dean since 1750, when he was 28. He later became Bishop successively of Bangor, Lichfield and Durham. Foster.
  8. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.132. 18-24<sup>v</sup> (1719).  
Another example is in 1666 when Henry Alworth carried out at least part of Bishop Walter Blandford's Primary Visitation.  
MS Oxf. Dioc. e.3. 30.

under seal; in July 1710 a Commission carried out Bishop Humphrey's visitation for Clun and Pontesbury at Richard's Castle.<sup>1</sup> In 1680 a series of surrogates acted for the bishop.<sup>2</sup> Some bishops kept notebooks regarding their visitations for easy reference. Good examples are those of Bishops Fell and Hume of Oxford. At a glance it was possible to see the name of the incumbent, the parish charities, patrons and other details.<sup>3</sup>

The right of bishops to carry out visitations of their cathedrals had been contested, particularly in secular, as opposed to monastic cathedrals during the Middle Ages. As the 13th and 14th centuries progressed the chapters of Lincoln, Wells, Chichester, Salisbury and Lichfield had all surrendered to their respective Bishops. Hereford was the last secular cathedral to resist episcopal visitation and it was not until the end of the seventeenth century that it was finally enforced there. There are records of visitations of the cathedral under Croft (1680), Humphreys (1701, 1703, 1710), Bisse (1716) and Beauclerk (1765). At Oxford there is no record of such a visitation of the cathedral, because the King, not the Bishop, was Visitor there.<sup>4</sup>

Attendance at Triennial visitations was far from complete, at least in the Oxford diocese, but a bishop could expect a better turnout than the vicar-general or the archdeacon. A random check at different points in our period indicates that a vicar-general or archdeacon at his own visitation could normally expect a turnout of just over 50%. The bishop himself could expect just over 75% attendance. In 1679 John Fell had 77% of clergy present with nearly 9% absent without good reason or unexcused; in 1725 John Potter had a similar turnout of 76% with 16% excused and 8% absent without excuse. The

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1. The Commission consisted of John Davies, Rector of Bucknell, Samuel Billingsley and Charles Fenton, Rector of Ludlow. H.R.O. Visitation Book 33.
  2. Thomas Broad, Thomas Tyrer, Thomas Martin, Thomas Wootton and John Boraston. H.R.O. Visitation Book 23.
  3. Fell's Notebook. MS Oxf. Dioc. d.708.  
Hume's Notebook. MS Oxf. Dioc. d.759.
  4. K. Edwards The English Secular Cathedrals in the Middle Ages (Manchester 1967) 127 - 133.  
Hereford Dean and Chapter Archives 1568, 1569 and 1574.  
H.R.O. Visitation Books 34, 36.  
H.L. Thompson Christ Church (1900) 279.  
At Exeter in 1678 there was great opposition from the Cathedral to Lamplugh's visitation.  
M.G. Smith op. cit. 269.



1725 figure is of interest because only the Michaelmas before the archdeacon had carried out a visitation over the same area and only 53% attended, 18.75% were absent without excuse.<sup>1</sup> Sometimes journeys to and from Visitations could be unnerving especially in the remoter parts of the Hereford diocese. Herbert Pye, Vicar of Monmouth, John Wickens, and Richard Vaughan, Vicar of Dixton, were travelling back from Visitation when they were waylaid by a smith from St. Weonard's. "He told us we were all priests-boys and called us buffing oafs and fools." When they called him an honest fellow, he replied that a liar was worse than a thief and that they were both. They could not move on quickly, as their borrowed horses had lost their shoes. They felt it was worth reporting the matter to the Register, for it was an abuse of "the sacredness of our function."<sup>2</sup> Various excuses would be offered and an efficient and overbearing bishop like Secker would not be afraid of enforcing discipline. In July Thomas Leigh of Harpsden and William Stockwood of Henley asked for leave of absence from the triennial visitation at Watlington on July 20th, as it clashed with their duties as magistrates. As Leigh explained, the visitation coincided with "the day of appeal upon the land and window tax, which if I should omit I believe there would not be commissioners enough to do duty." A week later, after the visitation, back came the bishop's reply to Stockwood. He had excused him, but in his view the reason was insufficient; "appearing before your diocesan is somewhat more in the way of your profession than sitting upon appeals for the Land tax; my citation I conceive carries somewhat more authority than the summons of a clerk; there are other commissioners of that tax and but one rector of Henley."<sup>3</sup> Stockwood replied lamely that he had told the clerk that he could not attend the tax commission, but the other

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1. Oxford Visitation Books.

2. Pye et al. to Reynolds 6th July 1680. H.R.O. Visitation Box 13.

3. Leigh to Secker 19th July 1750. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.653. 24.

Stockwood to Secker 20th July 1750. *ibid.* 25.

Secker to Stockwood 26th July 1750. *ibid.* 26-27.

Stockwood to Secker 7th August 1750. *ibid.* 28.

members living further away could not get there and without Leigh and himself there would have been no land tax business done. If there was a reply from Secker, it no longer exists; it could hardly have been conciliatory.

Secker was especially tough with incumbents who seemed to him either to be slack in their duties or disrespectful to him. Writing to James Martin of Heythrop on 8th August 1738 he said; "The morning I left Chipping Norton I sent to speak with you.<sup>1</sup> But you did not come to me, though you came before I was gone to another person in the house where I was. Unless you can give some good account of this behaviour I must look upon it as an instance of disrespect."<sup>2</sup> James Martin excused himself; he had merely visited a gentleman "that knows and wishes me well; this I presume is not ill manners to your Lordship." For good measure, Martin added a quotation from Terence "Homo sum humani a me nihil alienum puto"; and "Remember you are a man, said the servant to King Philip by his own order."<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, Martin said he hated ill-manners, to superiors especially, as much as any man. There was another reason; there was another Martin, Hudson Martin, curate of Wiggington, living in the area and possibly the bishop's messenger had been sent to him. He had heard nothing of the visitation. Secker later replied that he accepted Martin's reasons for not attending on him. He continued "Whenever I charge any of my clergy with faults I will not fail to do it explicitly and to give them an opportunity of making their defence. But I shall always think myself at liberty to caution them privately against dangers without always telling them whether I apprehend those dangers to arise from anything in the persons themselves."<sup>4</sup>

Some incumbents became very sensitive about the bishop's enquiries. Joseph Butler of Alkerton wrote to Secker on 18th October 1745

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1. Presumably July 20th at the time of visitation or confirmation. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.133. 35<sup>v</sup>.
  2. Secker to Martin 8th August 1738. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.651. 4.
  3. Martin to Secker 24th August 1738. *ibid.* 7.
  4. Secker to Martin 15th August 1738. *ibid.* 6.



complaining of the intrusive nature of the examination by the visitor at the recent visitation; "I am afraid you have a very indifferent opinion of me." Secker replied that he did not imagine the visitor "would inquire in such a manner as to hurt." He was not prepared to give reasons for the enquiry, but "you are by no means the first clergyman in my diocese concerning whom I have given such directions nor probably will it be the last but ..... I shall never believe ill of any of them on slight grounds and shall constantly endeavour to do all of them as much justice .....<sup>1</sup>" as was in his power. Secker clearly meant to be master of his clergy, though a just one.

Preachers were appointed to preach the sermon at the visitation service. We have a complete list of such preachers for the Oxford diocese between 1672 and 1733 for both the episcopal and archidiaconal visitations.<sup>2</sup> Usually the man appointed was an incumbent from one of the deaneries; occasionally the archdeacon might himself preach at the archidiaconal visitation, as for instance in 1682, 1685 and 1733.<sup>3</sup> Sometimes, though it was rare, the Chancellor would preach as on 8th April 1743 at Bicester.<sup>4</sup> It is clear that many clergy tried to excuse themselves from this duty. William Holmes writing from Bath, where he was staying in 1738 for his health, explained that he had to be in London for a School election on June 11th and would not be back in Oxford until St. John the Baptist's Day, 24th June.<sup>5</sup> In March 1749/50 John Browne, the Master of University College, would not preach at a visitation because he had accepted a living from Peterborough and was giving up his incumbency of Brightwell; he became Vice-Chancellor of Oxford later in the same year.<sup>6</sup> There were other excuses. Writing in 1748, Andrew Baldwin of Coreley explained to Register Croft; "I am very badly seized with a reaching to vomit which

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1. Butler to Secker 18th October 1745. MS. Oxf. Dioc. c.652. 87-8.
  2. MS. Oxf. Dioc. c.128. 45-46.
  3. *ibid.*
  4. MS. Oxf. Dioc. c.136. 48<sup>v</sup>.
  5. Holmes to Secker 8th April 1738. MS. Oxf. Dioc. c.651. 2.
  6. Burton to Secker 20th March 1749. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.653. 1. Foster.

puts me quite out of order".<sup>1</sup>

In the intervening years in the Oxford diocese the Chancellor carried out his own visitation, usually in the late spring or early summer.<sup>2</sup> Certainly during Secker's time there was a close liaison between the Bishop and the Chancellor, as we can see from Chancellor Burton's letter to the Bishop on April 21st 1745. He reported that he had already completed his visitation at Witney and Chipping Norton, where there was a good attendance of 33 and 26 respectively. He had given notice of the bishop's intention to confirm at Banbury on 11th June and at Ewelme on the 30th. He had ordered the apparitor to attend the bishop at Banbury but "if you think it improper to make use of that officer there we can easily countermand it." Then follow reports on the two deaneries.<sup>3</sup>

Throughout most of the period when the bishops were not hindered by parliamentary duties, by physical disability or old age, they kept up a high standard of personal responsibility and seemed to expect it of others. This was certainly the case with the tests, the selection and other decisions regarding ordination; particularly in the Hereford diocese a high level of ordinand, both academically and morally, was expected by both Croft and Beauclerk about whom we know most in this respect. Likewise the evidence we have available with regard to confirmation and episcopal visitation points to the same conclusion; Secker, in particular, was forthright and authoritative where these were concerned. In the next chapter we shall consider the backgrounds, the educational and personal qualifications of the prelates of the two sees.

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1. Baldwin to Croft 18th April 1748. H.R.O. Visitation Box 38 (1748-51).

Thomas Croft was Register to the Archdeacon of Salop. H.R.O. Act Book 158 (25th February 1745).

2. In 1782 the Chancellor gave up his right to visit. "Having prepared this book so far for the Easter Visitation in the year 1782 I received this note from the Chancellor who gave up his right of visiting." The Archdeacon took his place at the Spring Visitation in future.

MS Oxf. Dioc. c.138. 111<sup>v</sup>.

3. Burton to Secker 21st April 1745.  
ibid. c.652. 67-8.



CHAPTER IXTHE BISHOPS

At the head of the diocesan administration was the bishop, appointed by the Crown and responsible for the general discipline of the clergy and for the pastoral oversight of the diocese; also in his hands lay the appointment of the archdeacons, the vicar-general and other officials. At a time when there was no diocesan synod or conference to ~~make~~<sup>limit</sup> his powers, the bishop's personality, conscientiousness and qualifications, both academic and spiritual, were all-important to the welfare of the Church under his care; on the other hand, as we have already noted, the legal and judicial machinery had a pronounced tendency to act independently of the bishop, if he was not particularly vigilant.

As we analyse the background of the men appointed to the sees of Hereford and Oxford in the century after the Restoration it is worthwhile to provide a bigger sample by including two other western dioceses as well, those of Bath and Wells and Worcester. Of the 39 bishops of these four dioceses appointed in the period 1660-1760 69.2% (27) were preferred in the first half of the period up to 1710 and only 30.8% (12) afterwards. This tendency was particularly marked in Oxford where 77% were appointed before 1710 and Worcester 75%; Bath and Wells had 71.4% at this time, but Hereford only 50%. The reason for this will emerge in the following paragraphs.

In the whole century after the Restoration, if we include Robert Skinner of Oxford (1641-63) and William Piers of Bath and Wells (1632-70)<sup>1</sup>, Oxford had the greatest number of prelates, 13, Worcester 12 and Bath and Wells and Hereford eight each. Because of its comparative poverty Oxford was usually a first appointment for a bishop; of the twelve bishops appointed to the see ten were newly consecrated and only two were translated from another diocese, in each case the still poorer see of Bristol.<sup>2</sup> At Hereford the numbers of newly consecrated bishops and

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1. Both of whom were appointed before the Interregnum, but survived late into the Restoration period.
  2. Robert Skinner who was appointed to Oxford in 1641 also came from the bishopric of Bristol, but this falls outside our period. For a table of bishops see Appendix I.

those translated from elsewhere were the same. At Worcester and at Bath and Wells there was a significant change in pattern. Before 1710 4 out of the 9 at Worcester were new bishops and at Bath and Wells 4 out of 5, but after 1710 all the bishops appointed to the two sees, 3 in Worcester and 2 in Bath and Wells, were from elsewhere; the Hanoverian ladder of preferment, whereby a prelate had to earn his higher promotion to a wealthier see, perhaps by parliamentary loyalty, was becoming usual. By contrast at Hereford the equal proportion of new consecrations to translations remained the same, but this was because the two new consecrations to Hereford in the Hanoverian period, Egerton and Beauclerk, were both aristocratic and courtly rather than political, as we shall see later.

More significant, perhaps, is a comparison of the numbers moving from the sees in question to more important and remunerative ones.<sup>1</sup> Only four of Oxford's thirteen bishops died in that office and one of these, Timothy Hall, was hardly regular.<sup>2</sup> The rest all moved elsewhere; two, Potter and Secker, moved straight to the see of Canterbury, though after unusually long tenures at Oxford; Skinner and Blandford became Bishops of Worcester; two, Crewe and Talbot, moved to Salisbury and one, Compton, to London. At Hereford on the other hand only one was translated; Hoadly moved to Salisbury and thence to Winchester. Similarly, only one Bishop of Bath and Wells, Mews, moved on, also to Winchester. At Worcester two of the twelve were translated, Morley to Winchester in 1662 and Earle to Salisbury in 1663. Thus, in common with other poorer bishoprics, Oxford was but a stepping stone for most prelates, whereas the more lucrative sees of Hereford, Worcester and Bath and Wells were usually at the peak of a cleric's career; if they

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1. The annual values of sees were respectively as follows:-
- a) Canterbury and York - £7,000 and £4,500.
  - b) London, Durham and Winchester - £4,000, £6,000 and £5,000.
  - c) Salisbury and Worcester - £3,000.
  - d) Hereford, Exeter and Lichfield - between £1,400 and £1,000.
  - e) Bath and Wells - £885.
  - f) Oxford and Bristol - £500 and £450.

N. Sykes Church and State 61.

P.M. Hembry The Bishops of Bath and Wells 1540-1640 (London 1967) 254.

2. Appointed by James II, he was refused installation by the Canons of Christ Church.

D.N.B.



did move from there it was only to the top rank of bishoprics, such as Salisbury and Winchester.

Perhaps because of its comparatively junior position in the hierarchy Oxford on the whole had younger appointments. Six of the twelve appointed after 1660 were under 45 and another five were under 55. The three more wealthy sees had none in the younger age group until after 1710 and even then the only two under 45 were the two aristocratic appointments to Hereford that we have already mentioned.

At the upper end of the age range no less than five of the Bishops of Worcester were 65 or over at the time of appointment; four of them who were in their seventies, Skinner, Fleetwood, Thomas and Lloyd dated from the first half of the period. This was unusual. In the other three sees all the bishops were under 65 except Robert Creighton (1670-72) who was 73. In fact, at Hereford the two oldest were Croft and Ironside who were both 59 and at Oxford, apart from William Paul who was 64 when appointed in 1663, the oldest were Fell (50), Hall (51) and Hume (52). As we have already noted, this is perhaps predictable in a junior see such as Oxford.

If we turn from an investigation of age to a study of academic qualification we see a regular pattern emerging. Though we should be wary of the academic worth of doctorates in this period, all 41 bishops in these dioceses, with the exception of Timothy Hall at Oxford, held doctorates, thirty-five in divinity; four, including Secker, held the degree of D.C.L. which required less standing.<sup>1</sup> Even so, the Oxford bishops were far more closely associated with the university and had held university posts. Five of them were Heads of Colleges, some of whom continued to hold college positions during their episcopates; one, Potter, had been a Regius Professor of Divinity. Hereford had little

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1. A D.D. degree was not necessarily a sign of academic achievement at this stage. It could be obtained by men with wealth or influence provided they had first obtained an M.A. degree, had completed the requisite number of years standing or "on the books" since the M.A. and had obtained any necessary dispensations from the statutory requirements for the degree.  
ex info. Keeper of the Archives, University of Oxford.

to match this, though Philip Bisse had been a Fellow of New College and Nicholas Monck was Provost of Eton. Bath and Wells could show two heads of Colleges, Mews and Wynne, and one Regius Professor of Greek, Creighton; Worcester diocese had one Head of a College, John Hough, President of Magdalen.

Another aspect of interest is the social background of the bishops. Warburton's often quoted comment, referring to the aristocratic nature of the episcopate in 1752, that "our grandees have at last found their way back into the Church. I only wonder they have been so long about it"<sup>1</sup> is only partly true. As Cobban has noted, whereas the French episcopate under Louis XVI was entirely noble by birth the English bench in the eighteenth century was a mixed body of men; Potter was the son of a draper, obtained his education as a servitor at Oxford and yet became Archbishop of Canterbury; Secker, as we shall see, came from small landowning, dissenting stock. But there was a change in our period, as Ravitch has noted. In his study of the 176 years from 1660 to 1836 the proportion of English bishops from plebeian families dropped from 25% of those nominated up to 1688 to 9% in George II's reign and eventually to none at all in the 1820's and 1830's. He also noted a rise from 25% from gentry origins in Charles II's reign to 32% under George II. The proportion from aristocratic classes rose from 7% under Charles II to 14% under George II and then 15% and 28% in the first and second halves of George III's reign respectively.<sup>2</sup>

In the four dioceses of this study a roughly similar pattern emerges. Eleven of the 41 bishops in our survey were sons of the clergy and one, Ironside of Hereford, was the son of a Bishop of Bristol; seven came from the ranks of the nobility or knighthood; twelve from the gentry and as many as ten from the lower orders.<sup>3</sup> It was therefore

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1. Warburton to Hurd 5th July 1752 cited by N. Ravitch in "Social Origins of French and English Bishops in the Eighteenth Century" The Historical Journal VIII 3 (1965) 310.

The information in this paragraph comes from the article quoted above 309-325.

2. *ibid.* 319.

Ravitch's assessment is questionable because of the large proportion of "uncertain status" - 40% under Charles II and 45% under George II. As this is very nearly half the sample, the validity of his conclusion is dubious. Nevertheless it is broadly true that the English episcopate was at all times in our period "something of a cross-section of the population". *ibid.* 321.

3. Foster.



very much a socially mixed bunch. If we compare the period before and after 1710, the proportion from the nobility and knightage is roughly the same at 17% or 18%; from the gentry there is an increase from 28% to 36%; predictably perhaps as in the case of Ravitch's study there was a similar distinct decline in the numbers of those from poorer backgrounds from 32% to 9%.<sup>1</sup> There was also a rise in the number of those from clerical families from 21% to 36%.<sup>2</sup>

One criticism of the eighteenth century episcopate has been their preoccupation with parliamentary duties and with life in London generally; it has been said that they were thus unable to attend sufficiently to their episcopal duties within their dioceses. Professor Sykes has shown this to be only partly true and that, even when bishops were regular at the House of Lords, they were often punctilious and exacting in their diocesan duties once they reached the country. An analysis of the bishops' attendance at the Lords will help us gauge the distraction caused by their political duties to the nation.<sup>3</sup>

Of the four dioceses concerned it is significant that only in Oxford, the poorest of the sees, were there few years of total absenteeism by its bishops from the Lords; in the other dioceses years of complete absence were more numerous.<sup>4</sup> This could be explained by the greater proximity of Oxford to the capital, but the poverty of the see and the need for its bishops to seek preferment elsewhere and thus to ingratiate themselves with their political masters was probably as much a reason. In the period from 1660 to 1700 the only Bishop of Oxford to miss a year when Parliament was in session was Robert Skinner and this was in the year of the Restoration when the situation was far from stable. Crewe in one year, 1672, only attended once. In the

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1. This assessment is subject to the reliability of descriptions given in the University records, which may not always have been accurate. 'Gentry' is itself a vague term.
  2. Ravitch does not specify 'sons of clergy' except for bishops' sons.
  3. The purpose of this survey is not so much to establish the conscientiousness of a bishop's parliamentary, and even less, of his party obedience; it is rather to find out how many days he was absent from his diocese on parliamentary duties. We are concerned here with the damage done to his diocesan duties by his attendance at Westminster.
  4. Figures for attendance in the House of Lords have been taken from Journals of the House of Lords Vols. XI - XXIX.

eighteenth century up to 1760, William Talbot did not attend at all in 1709, nor did John Potter in 1732; otherwise Bishops of Oxford attended at least once and usually many times a year. Sometimes they attended far more than many of their contemporaries; in 1662 Skinner was there on 92 separate days; in 1701 and in 1712 Talbot attended on 78 and 77 days respectively and in his first year as Bishop of Oxford Potter attended as many as 70 days, but, as we shall see later, both Potter and Secker were, at best, reluctant parliamentarians. If we take the average number of days missed each year because of parliamentary duties the Oxford average varied from Skinner with 55.7<sup>1</sup> to Secker with 17.4.

Bishops of Hereford left their diocese for the House of Lords rather less than the Oxford bishops, especially in the seventeenth century. In his thirty years as Bishop, Herbert Croft failed to attend parliament at all in 10 of the years, when there were parliamentary sessions.<sup>2</sup> Humphreys did not attend in 1704 and ceased making the journey altogether after 1706; he died in 1713. On the other hand eighteenth century bishops attending the Lords were more punctilious in attending at least a few times or once a year. Philip Bisse missed in the last year, 1720, of his seven-year episcopate; James Beauclerk only missed in 1759; Hoadly and Egerton, both keen parliamentarians, missed none. Hereford's average annual rate varied from Egerton with 40.7 to Croft, right at the beginning of the period, with 10.5<sup>3</sup> and Humphreys with 16 days a year.<sup>4</sup> At the end of the period up to 1760 James Beauclerk attended less, proportionately, than any of the other Hereford bishops - 8.2 a year. Though he only missed one year, 1759, he clearly was not a keen House of Lords man.

Bishops of Bath and Wells on the whole were less assiduous in their parliamentary duties than those of either Hereford or Oxford; Piers missed 8 of the first 10 years after the Restoration; Hooper missed 12

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1. 55.7 if we do not count the year when Skinner did not attend at all; 41.75 overall. Fell's average of 12.9 gives a false picture, as there were no parliaments in the last years of Charles II.

2. During 8 years of Croft's episcopate there were no sessions of Parliament.

3. Croft's average is 33, if we do not count the 18 years when he did not attend at all.

4. Humphrey's average is 35.2 if we do not count the years he did not attend.



of his 24 and Willes 8 of his 16; Willes, the last in the period, attended more regularly. Mews attended as many as 147 times in one year, 1673; Creighton did not attend at all in his two years as bishop. Mews had the highest annual rate with 62 a year for the seven years when Parliament sat in his time at Wells, but in general the yearly average was below the other dioceses.

At Worcester there was a marked tendency for Parliamentary attendances to be low, partly, it is true, because of the age of the bishops concerned, but the fact that Worcester was the wealthiest of the four bishoprics must have been a factor. Skinner after his translation from Oxford in 1663 at the age of 72, attended the Lords for three years and then, after 1665, ceased to attend at all. Blandford, Fleetwood and Thomas barely attended at all, though it must be borne in mind that the last two were holders of the see during the 1680's, when parliaments were less frequent. Stillingfleet after the Revolution began very assiduously with 104 attendances in 1690 but tailed off after 1695 until his death in 1699. Lloyd ceased to attend after 1707; Hough attended infrequently in the first four years after his translation but gave up altogether for the last 21 years of his episcopate after 1721 when he was 70. Maddox attended faithfully every year of his episcopate with an annual average of 25.5; he was 46 at his appointment and only 62 at his death.

It is significant that right at the end of the period James Beauclerk at Hereford and Secker at Oxford both had low annual rates, 8.2 and 17.4 respectively, compared with their predecessors; this was in spite of the fact that Beauclerk only missed one year and Secker missed none. On the other hand their contemporaries at Wells and Worcester were more regular parliamentarians with averages of 31.5 and 25.5 respectively; neither missed a whole year. This could mean that Beauclerk and Secker were keener diocesans, but this is not necessarily the case. As we have seen, bishops who were assiduous in their attendance of the Lords, could also be effective in their dioceses during the summer months.

In the Hereford diocese the bishops who made the most notable impact during the century after the Restoration were Croft (1662-91), Beauclerk (1746-87) and to a lesser degree Bisse (1713-21).<sup>1</sup> Of the

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1. Material in this section is taken from D.N.B. and other parts of this thesis.

remainder Monck died within a year of taking office and perhaps never set foot in his diocese; Gilbert Ironside (1691-1701) had previously been important as Warden of Wadham and particularly as the Vice-Chancellor who had resisted James II's imposition of a new President of Magdalen; as Bishop, Ironside was a frequent attender of the House of Lords, but we know very little of his impact on the diocese.

Humphrey Humphreys (1701-12), reputedly the best Celtic scholar of his time, barely attended the House of Lords and certainly carried out all his ordinations within the diocese, but we know little of him as Bishop. Benjamin Hoadly (1721-23) was Bishop of Hereford only for two years, though we know that he did visit the diocese in that time.

Henry Egerton (1724-46) had a long spell as Bishop, spanning almost a quarter of the period, and therefore deserves consideration. The son of the Earl of Bridgewater who was Speaker of the House of Lords under William III and also a Lord Justice of England, he was recommended for the see of Hereford by Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London, Walpole's chief adviser on ecclesiastical matters;<sup>1</sup> but it also seems likely he obtained his promotion through the influence of his brother, the first Duke, who was high in court circles and Lord of the Bedchamber to George I from 1719-1727. Certainly Egerton as Bishop seemed more assiduous in his parliamentary duties than in the work of his diocese. He frequently attended the Lords and was made Clerk of the Closet in 1735.<sup>2</sup> Hearne, perhaps predictably, was scathing about him. At the time of his elevation to the bishopric Hearne remarked that Egerton, "a nobleman of New College", was "young and hath no learning".<sup>3</sup> In January 1727 Egerton preached before the House of Lords; Hearne was as critical as before: "The sermon begins with 'And'. It is a most strange stupid thing, surely nothing can hardly be worse."<sup>4</sup> One may, perhaps dismiss Hearne's remarks as those of a biased Jacobite; another

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1. N. Sykes Edmund Gibson (OUP 1926) 84.

This was part of a general re-shuffle of sees in 1723.

2. Foster

J.E. Doyle The Official Baronage of England 1066-1885 (London 1886) 226-7.

3. Hearne op. cit. VIII (1722-25) 171.

4. *ibid.* IX (1725-8) 284.



Tory, William Stratford writing to Edward Harley in July 1724 told of a revealing confrontation between the Bishop and the driver of a loaded cart near Whitchurch, Herefordshire. When the carter refused to give way to Egerton "the bishop was dormant in him and the nobleman alert and predominant". He swore at the carter "like a dragoon and beat and bruised the poor fellow with the butt end of his whip." Egerton apparently offered two guineas in compensation, but the carter through his attorney demanded one hundred guineas. The hazard of a public trial was in Stratford's view possibly not enough to overcome the bishop's love of money.<sup>1</sup> This tale, coupled with an earlier one of 1720, recounting his amorous adventures with Lady Betty Bentinck gives us a picture of the nobleman and courtier rather than that of a bishop.<sup>2</sup> It is unfortunate that we have only Tory views of Egerton on which to rely.

As far as the diocese was concerned, he only ordained once a year, but it is perhaps notable that he did so nearly always<sup>3</sup> in the Cathedral and never in London as some of his contemporaries did. Visitation books for the period 1719 to 1743 have been lost, but Egerton was certainly present himself at the visitations on 7th, 13th and 14th July 1743.<sup>4</sup> As far as we can gather, his friend, Samuel Croxall, Archdeacon of Salop and Chancellor of the Cathedral, bore the burden of the diocese especially in his later years.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, the bishop's palace chapel was demolished under his orders.<sup>6</sup> Appointed at the age of 35 Egerton was not old, when he died in 1746 after a spell of 22 years.

Philip Bisse (1713-21) was another "politician-courtier" bishop but, though his tenure of the see was only a short one, he made a notable impact on the diocese. The son of a Gloucestershire parson, he was educated at Winchester and New College where he became a Fellow.<sup>7</sup> His marriage to the daughter of the Duke of Leeds and his political support for and friendship with the Earl of Oxford no doubt accounted

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1. H.M.C. Portland VII. 380 (22nd July 1724).
  2. Irwin to Ingram 21st December 1720. H.M.C. Var. Col. VIII 102.
  3. 18 out of 22 times.
  4. H.R.O. Visitation Book 35.
  5. See p 30 of this thesis.
  6. A.L. Moir Bishops of Hereford (1964) 57.
  7. Foster.

for his preferment to the see after less than three years at St. David's.<sup>1</sup> It is true that he spent much time in the Lords at least until 1719<sup>2</sup> and certainly a year after his translation he seemed to be angling for the Archbishopric of York; "Our friend the Bishop of Hereford never at first desired a bishopric so much as he now does a better." He with the Bishop of Chester was the the main contender for the northern archbishopric. Nevertheless we also have glimpses of a man determined to take his episcopal duties seriously. The articles of his Primary Visitation, postponed from 1714 to 1716, were thorough and had sections on charities, on peculation and overzealousness on the part of diocesan officers. The special form used had to be completed by the incumbent and churchwardens; it was followed by him in 1719 and by Hoadly in his Primary Visitation of 1722.<sup>4</sup> In 1718 he instituted a special enquiry into the use and abuse of charitable investments in the diocese.<sup>5</sup> Though he did not have a high rate of ordination a year, an average of 1.55, all but one took place in the diocese.<sup>6</sup> Bisse also made his mark in refurbishing the two palaces and the cathedral.<sup>7</sup> He appointed his brother Thomas as Canon Chancellor of the cathedral; though this smacked of nepotism, Thomas was active in the diocese and is reputed to have been the founder of the Three Choirs Festival.<sup>8</sup>

The two bishops who impress one most with their activities in the diocese are Herbert Croft and James Beauclerk. Croft's career is full of interest. He belonged to the old Herefordshire family whose seat was at Croft Castle.<sup>9</sup> His father had several times been M.P. for the

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1. D.N.B.

Sykes 'Queen Anne and the Episcopate' E.H.R. L (1935) 453-4.

2. Journals of House of Lords XIX - XXI.

3. H.M.C. Portland VII 178. (5th February 1713-4).

4. H.R.O. Visitation Box 28.

5. H.R.O. Charities Box.

6. Hereford Episcopal Register (1709-23).

7. Wotton to Wake 7th September 1721. Wake MSS 22. 55<sup>v</sup>.

8. D.N.B.

A.L. Moir Bishops of Hereford 56.

9. Herbert Croft's eldest brother, William, was a colonel in the royalist army and was shot after the capture of Stokesay Castle in 1645. He was succeeded by the second son, James, also a colonel, who died in 1659 and was succeeded as head of the family by Herbert, the future bishop.

Burke's Peerage, Baronetage and Knightage (1970) 687.



county, but was converted to Roman Catholicism, went to France, became a ~~conventual~~ lay brother at Douai and died in 1622. The future bishop followed him to France where he studied for the priesthood at the English Catholic College at St. Omer. In November 1626 he was admitted to the Jesuits' College at Rome.<sup>1</sup> Two years later he returned to England to attend to family matters and was re-converted to Anglicanism. He went to Oxford in 1634 and was ordained. Because of his long spell of theological studies abroad he was granted the degree of B.D. in 1636. After being Chaplain to Charles I, Canon of Worcester and then of Windsor, he was appointed Dean of Hereford in 1644. He showed considerable physical courage by preaching defiantly to Parliamentary soldiers as they set about the desecration of the cathedral. He was deprived of his preferments, but was restored to the Deanery in 1660 and 18 months later became Bishop in succession to Monck.

His 30 years as Bishop were vital ones, for during that time he had to preside over the see during its resettlement after the Interregnum, through the Bartholomew's ejections of 1662, the scares of the Popish Plot and through the traumatic reign of James II. In his first year and under his guidance Hereford was one of the earliest dioceses to hold an episcopal visitation despite the death of Monck.<sup>2</sup> It is possible that he was active in the subscriptions of 1662, and we know that he showed personal interest in the administration of charity briefs.<sup>3</sup> He was lucky to have such good administrators as his Chancellor, Timothy Baldwin, and the Register, Griffith Reynolds, ~~who were both his appointments~~, but he did not allow efficiency to obscure the care that a bishop should show for his people; at times, as we have seen, he was ready to rebuke Reynolds for his lack of Christian charity towards poorer people who had been cited before the courts.<sup>4</sup> Likewise, he was prepared to break through the bureaucratic

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1. Records of the English Province of the Society of Jesus. VI. (The Diary of the English College, Rome, from 1579-1773) 312. The record states that the future bishop "behaved well here, but afterwards basely apostasised in England and now (1666) is a Protestant Bishop". See R. E. Ham, The County and The Kingdom: Sir Herbert Craft and the Elizabethan State. Washington 1977. See also D.N.B.
  2. On 2nd May 1662 he visited the Wenlock Deanery. See page 12 of this thesis.
  3. See page 156 of this thesis.
  4. See page 46 of this thesis.

procedures to ensure those teaching the poor without licence were not unnecessarily harried by the legal officers.<sup>1</sup> His early Jesuit upbringing did not colour his vision and he was ruthless in his extinction of the Jesuit seminary at Combe in the parish of Llanrothall in 1678.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, as we have already seen, he showed great sympathy for at least some of those ejected in 1662.<sup>3</sup> Croft was not much interested in court life or in parliamentary attendance. He resigned his post in the royal chapel in 1669<sup>4</sup> and, though he attended the Lords in the 1660's fairly frequently, he did little in this respect afterwards;<sup>5</sup> this could have been because of age - he was seventy in 1673 - but he remained active in the diocese into the 1680's.

Though at first he carried out his ordinations in the small church adjoining Croft Castle, all after 1677 were held in Hereford either in the Cathedral itself or in the Bishop's chapel. As we have already seen, he expected a high standard of ordinand. His visitations were carried out in person until the 1680's, when no doubt because of age he delegated the duty to surrogates.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless in 1684 at Weobley he took a personal interest in the repair of the church there and was prepared to deliver some trenchant criticism of the condition of the building.<sup>7</sup> His letters show him in the 1680's actively engaged in the affairs of the diocese. In June 1682, in spite of infirmities due to his age, he wrote to the Lord Chancellor about the conduct of an usher at Monmouth School.<sup>8</sup> In November 1682 he again wrote to the Chancellor this time about the Rectory of New Radnor.<sup>9</sup> He was also involved in the Scudamore case, though because of palsy and gout he had to employ a scribe.<sup>10</sup>

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1. See page 73 note 3 of this thesis.
  2. Records of the English Province of the Society of Jesus (ed. 1878) X 464 et seq.
  3. See page 21 of this thesis.
  4. Compton to ..... 5th April 1669. MS Tanner 44. 101.
  5. Journals of House of Lords XI - XIV.
  6. H.R.O. Visitation Book 23.
  7. Weobley Parish Register II (1682-1731).
  8. Croft to Lord Chancellor 14th June 1682. MS Rawlinson A351. 43.
  9. Croft to Lord Chancellor 18th November 1682. Longleat Thynne MSS 37.200.
  10. See page 68 of this thesis.



Here was a Bishop of Herefordshire stock who was content to remain in the diocese and see to its welfare. When he died at the age of 88 in 1691 the diocese had recovered fully from the depredations of the Interregnum and was in good administrative trim.

At the other end of the period was James Beauclerk, the eighth son of the Duke of St. Albans and thus a grandson of the illicit union of Charles II and Nell Gwyn. His brothers included two Vice-Chamberlains of the Household, a colonel of the 31st Foot, a Lieutenant-Governor of Gibraltar and two sailors, one distinguished as Admiral of the Blue and the other a Captain and Judge of the High Court of Admiralty. His mother was First Lady of the Bedchamber to Caroline, Princess of Wales, and his eldest brother, the second Duke, was a Lord of the Bedchamber from 1738 until his death in 1751.<sup>1</sup> His lineage might lead one to suspect that he would be a courtier bishop, perhaps rather more like his immediate predecessor, Henry Egerton, but this did not turn out to be the case. In this there is a striking parallel with Frederick Keppel, Bishop of Exeter from 1762 to 1769, who was also an aristocrat, a young appointment and yet an outstanding diocesan.<sup>2</sup> At 36 Beauclerk was young at his elevation and he remained Bishop of the diocese and a bachelor until his death 41 years later in 1787; in this study we are principally concerned with his episcopate up to 1760. During the period up to 1760 it is true he did seek the Clerkship of the Royal Closet in 1747 and in 1752;<sup>3</sup> it is true also that up to 1760 there was only one year when he missed attendance at the House of Lords; nevertheless even so his attendance within each year was infrequent - an average of 8.2 days a year compared with 40.7 for Egerton, 36 a year for Bisse or even 33 a year for Croft in the 1660's.<sup>4</sup>

In contrast his performance within his diocese was impressive. He conducted four and sometimes more ordinations a year, all except one

1. The Complete Peerage 287-289.  
Burke's Peerage, Baronetage and Knightage (105th ed. 1970).
2. Warne op. cit. 26-27.
3. Beauclerk to Newcastle 22nd June 1752. B.L. Add 32728. 79-80.  
In 1763 Grenville refused Beauclerk's request for the Deanery of Windsor. The King did not want it to be held in commendam with a bishopric.  
Grenville to Beauclerk 18th October 1763. Grenville Papers (ed. W.J. Smith 1852-3) ii 136.
4. Journals of House of Lords seriatim.

in the Cathedral. As we have already seen, he was rigorous over the standard of ordinands some of whom, particularly non-graduates, clearly were daunted by his requirements. Furthermore, he was particular that all the documents should be there in time, three weeks before the date of ordination; he was reluctant to ordain under age and he refused to confer orders without a Si Quis and a certificate of title. Not only did he perform ordination ceremonies himself; he also frequently performed for others by Letters Dimissory. Regular ordinations, carried out in person, continued until a year before his death.<sup>1</sup>

He was lucky to have a competent Register, Thomas Clarke, though his Secretary, Edward Pearson, seems to have been less organised and earned a reputation for losing documents.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, behind this one senses that here was a bishop who was very much concerned in the life of the diocese. His visitations were carried out personally,<sup>3</sup> he ordained personally<sup>4</sup> and even signed schoolmasters' licences himself, which was unusual.<sup>5</sup> Again, on 21st June 1757, John Faile, Curate of Barrow, had to appear before Beauclerk himself in the Bishop's Palace, for neglect of duty, one of the few cases of a bishop taking part in judicial proceedings.<sup>6</sup>

Noble lineage may have brought Beauclerk early in life to the see, but he gives the impression of one who was conscientious and sincere, the example of an aristocrat who spurned the courtly life for that of his flock.<sup>7</sup> Certainly the Hereford Journal gave him glowing tribute at his death and spoke of his "humanity, benevolence and hospitality" which "endeared him to all orders of society."<sup>8</sup>

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1. See pages 203, 204, 211 of this thesis and Episcopal Registers 1755-71 and 1772-88.
  2. See page 204 of this thesis.
  3. H.R.O. Visitation Book 35.
  4. This was the case up to the year before his death. Hereford Episcopal Registers.
  5. See page 147 n.7 of this thesis.
  6. The case had been before the courts since 22nd September 1756 and after reference to the Chancellor, the case went to the Bishop himself. H.R.O. Box 41. Act Book 159.
  7. His brother, Admiral Lord Vere, solicited Grenville for the Bishop's promotion to London in 1764, but without success; there is no indication as to whether Beauclerk himself wanted the move, though, as we have seen, he had already asked for the Deanery of Windsor to be held in commendam with Hereford.  
Vere to Grenville 3rd May 1764.  
Grenville Papers (ed. W.J. Smith 1852-3) ii 311.
  8. Hereford Journal 25th October 1787.



Of the thirteen Oxford bishops during the period four stand out as worthy of special attention, Robert Skinner (1641-1663), John Fell (1676-86), John Potter (1715-37) and Thomas Secker (1737-58). The remaining bishops made little impact on the diocese by comparison. This was partly because of the brevity of their sojourn in the post. As we have already seen in the first half of the period especially, episcopates were normally short, sometimes very short. William Paul (1663-5), Nathaniel Crewe (1671-4), Henry Compton (1674-5), Samuel Parker (1686-88) and Timothy Hall (1688-90) all had episcopates of less than four years. Of these some were important later, Nathaniel Crewe as Bishop of Durham (1674-1722) and Henry Compton as the much respected Bishop of London from 1675 until his death in 1713. William Paul died in office after only two years. The two proteges of James II were only briefly in the see. Samuel Parker, who was the President of Magdalen imposed by the King on the Fellows, died in 1688. He was followed by Timothy Hall who, though he was consecrated, was refused enthronement by the Chapter of Christ Church and consequently did not function. At the other end of the period John Hume (1758-1766), later Bishop of Salisbury, was Bishop for too short a time within our period for him to have much impact. His primary visitation of 1759 was thorough; he made his own notes on all the parishes in his charge in much the same way as John Fell had done.<sup>1</sup> He was a man of some spiritual depth as may be seen from his advice to the Duke of Newcastle whose spiritual director in some senses he was.<sup>2</sup>

We know little of Walter Blandford's (1665-71) work as Bishop of Oxford; in the six years before his translation to Worcester he does not seem to have made much impact. John Hough (1690-99) doubled the post of Bishop with that of President of Magdalen and most of his ordinations were held in the College Chapel. He became Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield in 1699 and was again translated to Worcester

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1. MS Oxf. Dioc. d. 759.

2. Sykes "The Duke of Newcastle as Ecclesiastical Minister" 78.

in 1717. In more than half a century as a bishop from his consecration in 1690 until his death in 1743, his nine years at Oxford were unspectacular. William Talbot (1699-1715) was not an academic unlike most of his predecessors. Hearne did not care for him; he had, he said, been a young rake in his early days and even after ordination had been much addicted to gaming.<sup>1</sup> His Whiggish views expressed in the Lords at the time of the Sacheverell case drew fierce criticism from Hearne.<sup>2</sup> Likewise his coronation sermon in 1714 was condemned as "very poor, silly flattering stuff unbecoming a Christian and a scholar and shows him to be a cringing time-serving man and a great rebel and a rogue."<sup>3</sup> On the other hand he did carry out visitations in person in 1701, 1704 and 1707<sup>4</sup> and was regular with his ordinations three or four times a year. His appointment of his son, Charles, as Chancellor of the diocese may have been nepotistic, but he was efficient and became Lord Chancellor of England in 1733.<sup>5</sup> William Talbot was translated to Salisbury in 1715 and to Durham in 1721 where he remained until his death in 1730.<sup>6</sup>

Of the four bishops we have chosen to study more closely Skipner is the first and, though his tenure after the Restoration was only short, three years, his clandestine and risky work in the diocese during the Interregnum did much to make the task of rebuilding the Church in the diocese easier when the King returned. Furthermore, it was he who was most responsible for getting the diocese onto its feet once the King had returned. As we have seen in Chapter I, he carried through a massive series of ordinations to supply the ministry of the church and rapidly filled the vacancies of livings in his own gift. Like Croft, he too had to deal with the complications and confusions surrounding the St. Bartholomew's ejections of 1662; there is evidence of his giving non-episcopally

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1. Hearne I 106.
  2. *ibid.* III 11 (8th June 1710).
  3. Hearne IV 422.
  4. MS Oxf. Dioc. e.6, e.7, e.8.
  5. See page 37-38 of this thesis.
  6. D.N.B.



ordained men a chance to be re-ordained in special ceremonies before the deadline of August 24th.<sup>1</sup> It is true that at first he frequently took time off from his diocese to attend the House of Lords, but it should be remembered that at this stage religion was an important issue in the highest political circles and he probably felt it was incumbent on him to be there for that reason alone. An efficient, dedicated and courageous pastor of his diocese in the most difficult period of its history, he certainly deserves an important place in its annals.

John Fell was already a notable figure in Oxford before he became Bishop in 1676 at the age of 50. Since 1660 he had been Dean of Christ Church, a post held previously by his father from 1638 to 1647.<sup>2</sup> As Vice-Chancellor between 1666 and 1669 he had done much to raise the academic standards of the University. Certainly Wood regarded him in his academic capacity as a man of considerable strictness about standards.<sup>3</sup> The same conscientiousness seems to have been evident in his work as a bishop. His correspondence reveals a deep interest and care for the diocese, but at the same time a reluctance to put up with lower standards.<sup>4</sup> He was reported to have been responsible for the re-introduction of rural deans into the diocese.<sup>5</sup> He himself ordained regularly four times a year always in the cathedral.<sup>6</sup> On the other hand he did not take his parliamentary duties seriously; he attended the Lords infrequently except in November and December 1678 and in November 1680 when he was there most of the time.<sup>7</sup> John Fell was an efficient bishop and certainly made an impact on the diocese, as he did on the University.

The remaining two bishops, John Potter and Thomas Secker, presided over the see for 43 years of the period of this study which is a remarkable length of time for a diocese usually considered as

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1. See page 20 of this thesis.

2. D.N.B.

3. Wood op. cit. I 348.

4. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.650 23-61.

5. Secker Works IV 145. Charge of 1753.

6. See Oxford Episcopal Register. MS Oxf. Dioc. d.106. 50-105<sup>v</sup>.

7. Journal of House of Lords XII - XIV.

a stepping-stone to other bishoprics. John Potter (1715-37) was of humble stock; his father was a linen draper of York. He went to University College, Oxford, became Fellow of Lincoln and Regius Professor of Divinity, a position he held until his elevation to the Archbishopric of Canterbury in 1737.<sup>1</sup> We have no means of telling how efficiently or conscientiously he carried out his episcopal duties. He conferred orders regularly three times a year, 60 of them in Christ Church with some additional ones at Cuddesdon and in London.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand he did not usually carry out his visitations in person. Even his Primary Visitation, for instance, was carried out by a surrogate, John Irish;<sup>3</sup> in later triennial visitations this pattern seems to have continued, except in 1728 when Potter visited in person.<sup>4</sup>

The administration, however, worked well under him. It is perhaps worth noting that Herbert Beaver, the dynamically efficient Registrar of Secker's episcopate first made his mark under Potter. It was during his episcopate, too, that the dispute between the episcopal and archidiaconal courts came to a head, but this was not of his making.<sup>5</sup> One can, perhaps, discern an interest in standards of ordinand by his disapproval of some college testimonials, particularly Cambridge ones, for their formal nature and lack of personal knowledge of the candidates.<sup>6</sup>

Like Fell, Potter did not take his Parliamentary duties seriously; he certainly regarded his university work and perhaps that of his diocese as of greater importance; on one occasion, as we have seen, he was prepared to write a letter to Archbishop Wake to this effect.<sup>7</sup> After the first two years when he appeared in the Lords frequently - on 70 occasions in 1715 and 56 in 1716 - his attendance was rather less than average, 35.4 a year compared with Talbot at 40 and Hough at 46.<sup>8</sup> He

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1. D.N.B.
  2. Oxford Episcopal Register. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.266.  
The Cuddesdon ordinations were inserted in the register apparently after the regular cathedral ones had been recorded.
  3. Primary Visitation of 1716. MS Oxf. Dioc. c.131. 10 et seq.
  4. *ibid.* c.132, c.133, c.134, c.135.  
1728 Visitation c.134. 1-11.
  5. See page 59 of this thesis.
  6. See page 207 of this thesis.
  7. Potter to Wake 2nd December 1718 and 23rd October 1720.  
Wake MSS VIII 54 and 307.
  8. Journals of House of Lords.



had Whiggish inclinations; Hearne vehemently called him "our present sneaking poor-spirited cringing Whiggish Bishop of Oxford."<sup>1</sup> Yet according to Sykes he was an opponent of Hoadly in 1717 and allied with Wake against the Whig ministry's domination over the Church.<sup>2</sup> Hearne also regarded him as ambitious, for in 1727 he believed that "the white-livered Bishop of Oxford" had declined the bishopric of Bath and Wells vacant after Hooper's death because he aimed "mightily" for the Primacy of Canterbury, if he survived Wake. His favour with George II and Queen Caroline seemed to have been underlined by the choice of him to preach the Coronation sermon, "poor enough I do not doubt" being a very indifferent preacher.<sup>3</sup> Neither Potter's parliamentary record nor his long tenure of the Oxford bishopric support Hearne's strictures of Potter as a toady to the Whigs. Even so, it seems likely that his eventual elevation to Canterbury in 1737 was rather the result of his mediocrity than the reward for good service or efficiency. Lord Hervey's advice to Walpole at the time of Wake's death in that year was "to take some Greek and Hebrew blockhead that had learning enough to justify the preferment and not sense enough to make him repent of it." Hervey commented that Potter was one whose "capacity was not so good nor his temper so bad as to make Walpole apprehend any great danger from his being there."<sup>4</sup>

Another criticism was meanness. Hearne mentioned Potter's lack of hospitality at Cuddesdon and in particular his prevention of the poor people there from catching hares.<sup>5</sup> Hearne regarded Potter's treatment of the charitable recusant, Thomas Stonor, as typical of his suspicious "stingy" mind, when in fact the diocesan authorities may well have had good reason to fear the increase in recusancy in the diocese and that Stonor's extensive charity was suspect.<sup>6</sup> He was also

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1. Hearne op. cit. V 122 (29th September 1715).

2. Sykes Wake II 110.

3. Hearne op. cit. IX 360 (24th October 1727).

4. Sykes Wake II 260.

Sykes Gibson 376, citing Hervey Memoirs of the Reign of George II II 108.

5. Hearne op. cit. X (21st December 1728). 78-9.

6. See page 143 of this thesis.

accused of nepotism; Potter showed favour to his son who was given his Professor's rooms in Christ Church while Potter himself lived at Cuddesdon.<sup>1</sup> There may be some truth in this, for soon after his translation to Canterbury Potter exercised his archiepiscopal option in promoting his son to the archdeaconry of Oxford.<sup>2</sup>

In general therefore one's judgement of Potter as Bishop must remain inconclusive; the diocese was indeed fortunate in having a good administrative staff headed by Beaver. Certainly in Sykes' view Potter was an ineffective Primate when at the age of 63 he moved to Canterbury; it soon became apparent that he was unequal to that position and the King once again had to turn to Gibson of London who had temporarily been out of favour. Sherlock had little time for Potter; his policy seemed to be "to go on with everything as he had found it *et non movere quieta*." Later George II twice submitted him to the indignity of refusing him an audience and then abused him as "a man of a little dirty heart." For some he was the "poor-spirited old man of Lambeth"<sup>3</sup>. Likewise at the time of 1745 rebellion when he should have given the lead in giving the Hanoverian dynasty the support from the Church that it needed, he barely galvanised himself into action.<sup>4</sup> There is little in Potter's tenure of the see of Oxford that allows us to feel that he was any more vigorous there.

The last Bishop of Oxford, with the exception of John Hume, was quite different. Thomas Secker was probably the most remarkable holder of the see in the whole century after the Restoration. His origins were unpropitious. His father was a dissenter and wanted his son to enter the dissenting ministry. In 1716 he went to Leyden University where he studied medicine and gained a doctor's degree in medicine there before also studying in Paris.<sup>5</sup> He wrote a notable

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1. Hearne *op. cit.* X 70 (24th November 1728).

2. See page 32 of this thesis.

3. Sykes Gibson 379-383, especially 379.

4. *ibid.* 380.

5. Oxford clearly did not recognise the Leyden D.Med. as equal to its own doctorate. Secker only received a B.A. by incorporation on account of his Leyden doctorate.

ex info. Keeper of the Archives, Oxford University.



medical dissertation De Medicina Statica published at Leyden in 1721. In 1722 he was ordained by Bishop Talbot, whose son had been a personal friend before his death in 1720. Secker was not an academic like Potter and had held no university posts; it is noteworthy that he could only qualify for D.C.L. and not D.D., because of lack of standing in the university;<sup>1</sup> a D.D. had to have eleven year's standing after M.A. and a D.C.L. only seven.<sup>2</sup> Bishop Gibson of London, the effective power in the episcopate had him presented to the Rectorship of St. James', Piccadilly. After impressing Queen Caroline with a printed sermon she, through Gibson, secured for him the bishopric of Bristol in 1734.<sup>3</sup> He apparently was not keen to move from Bristol to Oxford three years later, but was eventually persuaded to do so by Sherlock who wanted Bristol for his brother-in-law. As Rector of St. James, Secker became popular with Frederick, Prince of Wales, and baptised all but two of their children, including the future George III. His consequent unpopularity with George II, his poor attendance record at the House of Lords and episodes such as his vigorous opposition to the Government's Bill to remove duty from spirits in 1743 did not endear him to those in authority.<sup>4</sup> Thus his appointment to the rich Deanery of St. Paul's in 1750 was only achieved after strong persuasion from his friends, Archbishop Herring and Hardwicke, the Lord Chancellor.<sup>5</sup> Secker ceased to oppose the Ministry and consequently his translation to Canterbury in 1758 was pressed by both Hardwicke and Newcastle. As a result, while and whenever the Duke was in power Secker's advice as Primate was sought.<sup>6</sup>

If we return to his episcopate at Oxford, we find him outstanding for his firmness, even a just toughness at times, his meticulous attention to detail and his efficient administrative ability. As at

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1. D.N.B.
  2. ex. info. Keeper of the Archives, Oxford University.
  3. Beilby Porteous 'A Review of the Life and Character of Archbishop Secker'. (New York 1773) xi, xii.
  4. *ibid.* xvi - xvii.  
Sykes "Newcastle as Ecclesiastical Minister". 67.
  5. *ibid.* 68.
  6. *ibid.* 69.

Bristol<sup>1</sup> he was regular with his visitations and as we have noted he followed them up, especially after his Primary of 1738, with a string of correspondence to make sure that his wishes were carried out and to discover why they were not, if they had not been.<sup>2</sup> He was keen to carry out the confirmation of the laity at times other than the normal visitation seasons.<sup>3</sup> He held regular ordinations three times a year, most of them in the cathedral.<sup>4</sup>

As far as administration was concerned he was ably and closely assisted by his Chancellor, Daniel Burton, whom he appointed and by the Register, Herbert Beaver, but at all times the Bishop's own impress is on the machine. There are constant directives and queries to the Chancellor, to Beaver or to the clergy. In the voluminous correspondence that remains extant there are a large number of draft letters written in his own hand and corrected by him; some of them are in cipher.<sup>5</sup>

This correspondence together with the official records and his Charges give us a very good idea of the man. He was meticulous and conscientious; he took infinite care with detail of life in the parishes. He showed interest in the fabric of the church buildings and set a good example himself at Cuddesdon.<sup>6</sup> He encouraged monthly communions, a high standard of catechising and of preaching for which he advocated more training for the clergy, and later at Canterbury urged imitation of the Methodists.<sup>7</sup> Trained medically himself he saw the hazard to health in continuing the practice of burying within churches. He had the good sense to acknowledge privately the boredom endured by many in the services of the church, but was powerless to do much about it. Nevertheless he demanded a high standard of discipline and obedience from his clergy and in doing so he was a strong upholder of the Bishop's authority;

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1. Sykes Sheldon to Secker 217.
  2. MS Oxf. Dioc. c. 651-653.
  3. See page 218 of this thesis.
  4. See page 194 of this thesis.
  5. Draft letter at MS Oxf. Dioc. c.651. 4 and 76.
  6. See page 162 of this thesis.
  7. Sheldon to Secker 221-2.



"I am your Bishop" rings through his correspondence by insinuation at every page. He was, however, prepared to be humane; he was prepared to rebuke an over-zealous Beaver for lack of justice or even avarice in his judicial and legal dealings.<sup>1</sup> Though he upheld bureaucratic procedures, when necessary, he was quite prepared to bypass formalities of faculties, for instance, during an interregnum of the Chancellorship.<sup>2</sup> In his charges to the clergy we see a man of strong personality endeavouring to raise the standard of his diocese.

In his private life he attended his wife personally during her several long illnesses.<sup>3</sup> His wife's friend, Catherine Talbot, widow of his own companion of earlier years, lived with them and Secker adopted her daughter. His housekeeper's private journal shows her very high regard for him. She gives us a picture of a man who was devout and conscientious; he rose at 6 every morning all the year round and as Dean of St. Paul's he always attended prayers there even when officially he was not in residence. When at Cuddesdon he preached in his own church every Sunday and himself conducted the catechism.<sup>4</sup>

In the last decade of our study the dioceses of Hereford and of Oxford were presided over by two conscientious bishops of widely differing origins, the one the grandson of Charles II and very much an aristocrat, the other the son of a dissenter of much less remarkable lineage. Neither had children, the one a bachelor and the other the husband of a sick wife.

Thus the bishops of Oxford and Hereford throughout the period form a good cross-section not only socially, but also in respect of efficiency. At Oxford at least until the Hanoverian period there was more mobility, but both dioceses had men of noble

1. See pages 44-45, 229, 230 of this thesis.

2. See page 168 of this thesis.

3. Secker to wife 26th February 1736/7.

BL Add. 39311. 33.

Porteous op. cit. xx.

4. *ibid.* xxiv - xviii, lxvi - lxvii.

Journal of the Housekeeper of Archbishop Secker 1744-45.

D.N.B.

and of poorer background. Some of the bishops were political in their inclinations; Egerton perhaps approximates most to the traditional view of the eighteenth century bishop and yet even he held regular ordinations in his cathedral at Hereford. What is, perhaps, more notable is the fact that there were more bishops keen to run their dioceses efficiently and to forgo political duties than might have been supposed; Croft, Skinner, Fell in the first half of the period, possibly Potter and Bisse, and certainly Beauclerk and Secker towards the end. Even in the more dubious cases there was always an efficient administration to fill the gap or an archdeacon, like Croxall, to bear the burden.



## C O N C L U S I O N

In general the two dioceses of Hereford and Oxford, different though they were in character from each other, followed the general trend of Church life that has come to be recognised as the pattern in other sees during the period. Like many other dioceses they had settled down to the normal round of administration and spiritual life by the end of 1663, though the legislation of 1662 had made matters more difficult for those in authority. The courts, for instance, despite the upsets of that year, had largely resumed the role they had been expected to play in the years before the Interregnum, and the parishes and diocesan offices had been for the most part adequately re-staffed.

Throughout the century that followed, the bishops had archdeacons, often active, certainly on the whole well-qualified to fill their role, and chancellors who likewise were conscientious and competent. The key-men in the administration were the Registers who ran the central bureaucracy in each diocese. These were often men of ability; men, like Griffith Reynolds of Hereford and Herbert Beaver of Oxford, were keen and meticulous and had a competent staff to keep the machinery of day to day administration and of the courts in good running order. Below them the apparitors plied their way to remote outreaches of the dioceses; they were unpopular but necessary parts of the machine. The courts, both episcopal and archidiaconal, enjoyed their ancient customary powers for the first two and a half decades of the period, but their authority was dealt a devastating blow by the Declaration of Indulgence of 1687 and the subsequent Toleration Act of 1689. The number of cases dropped away markedly especially in the 1690's. By the mid-eighteenth century the courts had ceased to have a real impact on the daily lives of the people. For instance, where church attendance had been a matter of major concern at the beginning of the period, it ceased to be so after the turn of the century, though the rapidity of the decline was more marked in the Hereford diocese. Moral, especially sexual, offences, became matters of particular importance, but by the middle of the century even these were of less concern. By 1760 the Church, at least as a judicial authority, had lost its grip on the lives of the people.

Incumbents were increasingly drawn from the more privileged sections of society, but by no means exclusively so, and were normally of graduate status by the end of the period. More than half the diocesan clergy in the Hereford diocese were local men, whereas less than 20% of Oxford clergy were born within that diocese. Pluralism had increased, but the damage it caused was not as great as some have suggested for many of the pluralists and non-residents lived close to their livings or supplied curates.

Spiritual life in the parishes is always difficult to evaluate. Certainly enforced worship, or rather attendance at church, led to boorishness and misbehaviour in the services, but this was not due to inactivity on the part of incumbents. Both morning and evening prayer was said in over 80% of parishes in the Oxford diocese and in the Archdeaconry of Salop which compares well with the figures for double-duty in, for instance, the dioceses of York and London. Preaching was carried out weekly even in most chapelries. On the other hand, celebrations of Holy Communion remained at the statutory minimum of three or four times a year in as many as 70% of the parishes, but, increasingly, monthly communion, encouraged by bishops like Secker, was becoming the rule. Even so, attendance at these was low; probably only 5% to 15% of the population made their communion. Baptism was at a good level; catechism was regularly carried out except in about 10% of the parishes, where various excuses were given. In all this, of the three roughly equal geographical areas of the Hereford and Salop Archdeaconries and the Oxford Diocese, the Salop Archdeaconry led the way.

As far as social welfare was concerned, there was often considerable concern, at the highest levels of the diocese especially, to see that the terms of trusts were justly kept. There was an increasing involvement in education and there was a large number of monetary charities for the poor. Nevertheless, there were still between 25% and 50% of parishes without charity of any kind. There was clearly need for a greater involvement and it perhaps took the stimulus of Wesley and of the later Evangelical Movement to generate more.



The fabric of the local parish churches was fairly rapidly restored from the depredations of the Interregnum. There is evidence throughout the period of continuing interest in church buildings shown by incumbents and often by local patrons; certainly the more vigorous bishops constantly checked that all was in repair. In some parishes where the church was in a state of collapse a new one was built; sometimes an increase in population would stir people to build a new one. All this and the constant beautifying of the buildings raised the general standard well above that of the immediate post-Restoration era and this is perhaps a reflection of the growing prosperity of the age.

In charge of all this activity in each diocese were the bishops who continued to emerge from a cross-section of social strata; they also continued to be variable in their efficiency and dedication to their task. There were still bishops from poorer backgrounds even in the mid-eighteenth century; there were more bishops keen to perform their episcopal tasks well than might have been expected. There are signs that many of them were particularly concerned to admit only the best qualified to Holy Orders; the ordination ceremonies were carried out at normal seasons and, by and large, visitations and confirmations were regularly held.

Overall therefore the picture in the two dioceses was much the same. The leadership, whether in the person of a bishop himself, like Croft, Fell, Bisse, Secker or Beauclerk or in that of his subordinates, was active and conscientious. The courts may have lost their grip on the people by the end of the period; yet there are many examples of good, dedicated parish clergy, like Daniel Renaud at Whitchurch or Thomas Leigh and William Bradley of Lower Heyford; the spiritual life of the parishes may have been dull and perhaps out of touch with many of the local people, but it was far from dead. Social action, which should follow from Christian discipleship and liturgical worship, was there to be seen, but perhaps it lacked the fire and dynamism that could only be provided by a Wesley.

The study of these two dioceses in the period "from Sheldon to Secker" certainly lends credence to the view that the Church was often well led by men who saw its weaknesses; in places the Church was very much alive and even vigorous. Its worst failings were in its social welfare and in the tedium of its worship for the mass of the people, but it was neither asleep nor decadent.



	Dates as Bishop	Approx. date of Birth	Father	Approx. Age on apptmt.	College	Degree	Early Career	Later Career	Academic Posts
Nicholas NONCK 1.	Jan. 1660/1-1661	1610	Arm. (afterwards a Knight)	50	Wadham	MA 1633 created DD 1 Aug. 1660	Living in Devon & Cornwall 1640, 1652, 1653.	Died 17.12.1661 buried Westminster Abbey.	Provost of Eton 1660
Herbert CROFT 2.	1662-1691	1603	Knight 3rd son	59	Christ Church	BD 1636 DD 1640	R. Uley, Glos 1638 R. Harding, Oxon. 1639. Canon Worcester 1640. Canon Windsor 1641 D. Hereford 1644.	Died 18.5.1691.	
Gilbert IRONSIDE 3.	1691-1701	1632	Bp. Bristol 1660/1-1671 death.	59	Wadham	MA 1655 BD 1664 DD 1666	R. Winterbourne 1663. Canon York 1664. Ep. Bristol 1689.	Died 27.8.1701.	Fellow of Wadham 1656. Warden 1665-89. Vice-Chancellor 1687-9
Humphrey HUMPHREYS 4.	Nov. 1701-1712.	1648	Pauper Merioneth	53	Jesus	MA 1672/3 BD 1680 DD 1682	Chap. to Lloyd. Bp. Bangor. Living in Merioneth & Carnarvon. D. Bangor 1680 Bp. Bangor 1689.	Died 20.11.1712.	

APPENDIX I (continued)

	Dates as Bishop	Approx. date of Birth.	Father	Approx. Age on apptmt.	College	Degree	Early Career	Later Career	Academic Posts
Philip BISSE 5.	Feb. 1712/13 1721	1667	Cler. Glos.	45	New College (& Winchester)	MA 1693/94 B & DD 1705/6. FRS 1705/6	Bp. St. Davids 1710.	Died at Westminster 6.9.1721 aet. 54.	Fellow New College.
Benjamin HOADLY 6.	1721-1723	1676	Cler.	45	Cath. Hall, Camb. 1691. (lost 7 terms because of illness).	MA 1699 DD Lambeth	R. in London. R. Streatham 1710 Royal Chaplain 1717 Bp. Bangor 21.12.1715.	Oct. 1723 Bp. Salisbury. 1734 Bp. Winchester. Died 17.4.1761 aet 85.	
Henry EGERTON 7.	1724 - 1746	1689	Earl of Bridgwater	35	New College	BCL 1711/ 1712. DCL 1717.	Canon Ch. Ch. 1716. Livings Yorkshire and Salop. Clerk of Closet in 1735.	Died 1.4.1746.	
James BEAUCLERK 8.	1746 - 1787	1710	8th son Duke of St. Albans	36	Queen's	MA 1733 B & DD by Diploma 1744.		Canon of Windsor Died - unmarried - 20.10.1787.	



	Dates as Bishop	Approx. date of Birth.	Father	Approx. Age on apptmt.	College	Degree	Early Career	Later Career	Academic Posts
Robert SKINNER 1.	1641 - 1663	1591	Cler.	50	Trinity	MA 1614 BD 1621 DD 1636	Chap. Charles I R. Pisford 1626-55 R. Launton 1631 Bp. Bristol 1637-41 & in Northants 1636 - seq. 1643.	Bp. Worcester 1663  Died 14.1.1670.	Fellow Trinity 1613.
William PAUL 2.	1663 -1665	1599	Butcher London.	64	All Souls'	MA 1621 BD 1628/ 1629. DD 1631- 1632.	R. in Staffs. R. Baldwin Bright- well 1632. R. Chinnor 1662. Chaplain Charles I and II. Canon Chichester. Dean Lichfield.	Died 24.5.1665.	Fellow All Souls' 1618.
Walter BLANDFORD 3.	1665 - 1671	1619	pleb. Dorset.	46	Servitor Ch. Ch. & Wadham.	MA 1642 DD crea- ted 1660	1660 Canon of Gloucester. 1660 Chaplain to Charles II and Dean Chapel, Royal 1665 R. Witney.	Bp. Worcester 1671.  Died 9.7.1675.	Fellow Wadham 1644. Warden 1659-65. Vice-Chancellor 1662-4.
Nathaniel CREWE 3rd Baron 4.	1671 - 1674	1633	arm.	38	Lincoln	MA 1658 DCL 1664	Gray's Inn 1652 Member of Inner Temple 1674. R. in Lincs. D. Chichester. Clerk of Closet. R. Witney 1671.	Bp. Durham 1674-1722	Fellow Lincoln 1652. Rector Lincoln 1668-72.

APPENDIX I - Bishops of Oxford (continued)

	Dates as Bishop	Approx. date of Birth.	Father	Approx. Age on apptmt.	College	Degree	Early Career	Later Career	Academic Posts
Henry COMPTON 5.	Nov. 1674 - 1675	1632	Earl of Northants	42	MA Camb. 1661 incorporated MA at Ch. Ch. 1666.	BD 1669 DD 1669	Canon Ch. Ch. 1669 Cornet in Royal Regiment. Master of St. Cross Winchester. Dean of Chapel Royal 1675-85.	Bp. London 1675-86. 1688-1714. Acted as Archbishop of Canterbury 1689. Died 7.7.1713.	Canon Christ Church 1669.
John FELL 6.	Feb. 1675 - July 1686	1625	Dean of Ch. Ch.	50	Christ Church	MA 1643 DD 1660	Dean of Christ Church 1660-86 Chaplain to King.		Dean of Christ Church 1660-86 Vice-Chancellor 1666-1669.
Samuel PARKER 7.	Oct. 1686 - 1688	1640	gent.	46	Wadham and Trinity.	MA 1667 (DD Camb. 1671 & D. Med.) FRS 1665	Chap. to Archbishop of Canterbury 1667. Archd. Canterbury 1670. Canon Canterbury 1672-85. R. in Kent.	Died 20.3.1687/8 aet 47.	President Magdalen College 1687-8.
Timothy HALL 8.	7.10.1688 - 1690.	?1637	pleb. woodturner London.	51	Pembroke	MA 1657-1658.	R. Norwood & Southam. Horsenden 1668. PC Princes Risborough 1669-1677. R. All Hallows, London 1677.	Died 9.4.1690.	



APPENDIX I - Bishops of Oxford (continued)

	Dates as Bishop	Approx. date of Birth	Father	Approx. Age on apptmt.	College	Degree	Early Career	Later Career	Academic Posts
John HOUGH 9.	May 1690-99	1651	Gent. London	39	Magdalen	MA 1676. BD 1686/7. DD 1687.	R. North Aston, Ox. 1678-87. R. in Bedfordshire 1687. Canon Worcester 1686	Bp. Coventry and Lichfield 1699. Bp. Worcester 1717.  Died 8.5.1743 aet 93.	Fellow Magdalen 1674-8 President Magdalen April-June 1687, and 1688-1701.
William TALBOT 10.	Sept. 1699 - 1715	? 1659	gent. Staffs.	40	Oriel	MA 1680 DD (dip) 1699. DD Lambeth 1691.	R. in Berkshire 1682. D. of Worcester 1691.	Bp. Salisbury 1715-21. Bp. Durham 1722-30. Gov. Charterhouse 1721  Died 10.10.1730.	
John POTTER 11.	May 1715 - 1737	1674	linen draper Wakefield, Yorks.	41	Servitor University College.	MA 1694 BD 1704 DD 1706	Canon Ch. Ch. 1707-37. Chap. Hough. Bishop Coventry. Chap. to Archbishop Tenison 1704. R. in Northants, Lincoln, Bucks. R. Newington, Ox. 1708-37. Chaplain to Anne.	Archbishop of Canterbury 1737-47.  Died 10.10.1747.	Fellow Lincoln 1694- 1706. Canon Christ Church, 1707-37. Regius Professor of Divinity 1707-37.

APPENDIX I - Bishops of Oxford (continued)

	Dates as Bishop	Approx. date of Birth	Father	Approx. Age on apptmt.	College	Degree	Early Career	Later Career	Academic Posts
Thomas SECKER 12.	April 1737-1758	1693	gent. Notts dissenter.	44	Exeter	BA 1721 (by decree) MA 1723/4. DCL 1733. D.Med. at Leyden.	Preb. Durham 1727. R. St. James, Westminster 1733. Bp. Bristol 1735-1737.	Dean of St. Paul's 1750. Archbishop of Canterbury 1758. Died 3.8.1768.	
John HUME 13.	April 1758-1766	1706	cler. Devon	52	Merton and C.C.C.	MA 1727 BD 1743 DD 1743	Bp. Bristol 1756-1758.	Bp. Salisbury 1766 Died 26.6.1782.	



APPENDIX IIaCOMMONWEALTH CONFORMISTS CONTINUING AFTER 1660MINISTERS CONFIRMED IN THEIR LIVINGS BY ROYAL PRESENTATION  
(those subsequently ejected in 1662 are marked by an asterisk)BATH AND WELLS

<u>Minister</u>	<u>Living</u>	<u>Date of original appt.</u>	<u>Date of pres. by King</u>
Robert Baskett	Ditcheat R <sup>1</sup>	1655 ?	20 August 1660
* Sam. Craddock	N. Cadbury R <sup>2</sup>	November 1654	29 August 1660
John Hill	Combe Florey R <sup>3</sup>	1645 or 1646	24 July 1660
* Alex. Robinson	Porlock R <sup>4</sup>	1648	25 June 1660

OXFORD

Ralph Brideoake	Witney R & V <sup>5</sup>	1657	30 July 1660
* James Farren	Middleton Stoney <sup>6</sup>	1650	4 Sept. 1660

HEREFORD

John Elmhurst	Linton <sup>7</sup>	c 1652	25 August 1660
Thomas Good	Culmington <sup>8</sup>	1648	23 November 1660

CONFORMING ELSEWHEREBATH AND WELLS

<u>New Living</u>	<u>Previous History</u>	
Matthew Paul	Rympton <sup>9</sup>	At Wadham 1652

OXFORD

John Dale	Standlake <sup>10</sup>	1649 to have BD
Robert Hawkins	St. Martins <sup>11</sup>	Balliol MA 1653
Peter Wentworth	Oxford, R. <sup>11</sup>	
	Haseley (Nov 50) <sup>12</sup>	R. of Buriton, Hants 1650.

HEREFORD

Edward Betham	Ganarew <sup>13</sup>	Chap. New Coll, V. of Orcop 1655.
Wm. Carpenter	Stainton on Wye <sup>14</sup>	Professor Moral Philosophy, Oxford 1657.

1. 46th Report 24. Reg f80, 83<sup>v</sup>. According to Walker (WR 128) Baskett was sequestered from Bryanston in the Interregnum and then perhaps was presented to Ditcheat in 1655.
2. 46th R. 41. Calamy Revised 140-1.
3. 46th R. 65. Reg 83<sup>v</sup>. see also Foster.
4. Calamy Revised 412-3. Reg 79<sup>v</sup>. 46th R. 101.
5. 46th R. 31. WR 229.
6. 46th R. 50. Foster (probable). Calamy Revised 191.
7. 46th R. 48. WR 193.
8. 46th R. 56. WR 305.
9. 46th R. 92. Piers Reg. 91. Foster.
10. 46th R. 43. Reg. 10 - 11 Foster
11. 46th R. 63. Foster WR 24.
12. 46th R. 120. Reg. 9. WR 104.
13. 46th R. 26. WR 31.
14. 46th R. 35.

APPENDIX IIbROYAL PRESENTATIONS TO PARISHES IN JUNE-SEPTEMBER 1660 WHO HAD 'SUFFERED'  
UNDER COMMONWEALTH(from 46th Report - with cross references to Walker Revised)

<u>Minister</u>	<u>Parish seq. by Commonwealth</u>	<u>Commonwealth Conformity</u>	<u>Royal Presentation</u>
<u>BATH &amp; WELLS</u>			
* Robert Baskett <sup>1</sup>	Bryanston R	R. Ditchat 1655	Ditchat R
* Henry Dutton <sup>2</sup>	Fellow of CCC Oxford	Yanworth Glos.1650	Curry Mallet R
<u>OXFORD</u>			
Ralph Brideoake <sup>3</sup>	Standish, Kent. R	Witney R. 1656	Witney R
George Morley <sup>4</sup>	Mildenhall, Wilts. R	-	Haseley R
* John Dale <sup>5</sup>	Fellow Magd. Oxford.	-	Standlake R
<u>HEREFORD</u>			
* Edward Betham <sup>6</sup>	Chap. New Coll. Oxford	Orcop V. 1655	Ganerew
Rich. Dukeson <sup>7</sup>	St. Clement Danes R.	-	Ledbury V
John Elmhurst <sup>8</sup>	Fell. Univ., Oxford.	Linton V.1652-62	Linton V.
	Aston Ingham R.1635		
William Evans <sup>9</sup>	Hampton Bp. R.	-	Hampton Bp. R.
Thomas Good <sup>10</sup>	St. Alkmund, Shrews- bury.	Coreley 1647 Culmington 1648 Bp's Castle 1654 Wistanstow R.1657	Culmington R
William Owen <sup>11</sup>	Pontesbury and Pulverbach R.	-	Pontesbury R.
John Tyler <sup>12</sup>	Upton Bp and Moccas	-	Kentchurch R..

\* Not a parochial sequestration

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1.	<u>WR</u> 128, 309.	<u>46R</u> p 24.
2.	<u>WR</u> 312, 26.	<u>46R</u> p 47.
3.	<u>WR</u> 229.	<u>46R</u> p 31.
4.	<u>WR</u> 377-8.	<u>46R</u> p 86.
5.	<u>WR</u> 28.	<u>46R</u> p 43.
6.	<u>WR</u> 31.	<u>46R</u> p 26.
7.	<u>WR</u> 46.	<u>46R</u> p 46.
8.	<u>WR</u> 193.	<u>46R</u> p 48.
9.	<u>WR</u> 193.	<u>46R</u> p 49.
10.	<u>WR</u> 305. Foster.	<u>46R</u> p 56.
11.	<u>WR</u> 306.	<u>46R</u> p 91.
12.	<u>WR</u> 196.	<u>46R</u> p 116.

N.B. In some cases there is more than entry in Walker for names given in the 46th Report. If there is doubt about identity, the name has not been given in the above list.



EJECTIONS OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S DAY 1662

Incumbents only (no lecturers or curates)

APPENDIX IIc.

PARISHES	EJECTED MINISTER	REPLACEMENT	DATE OF REPLACEMENT (in months)	PATRON
<u>HEREFORD</u>				
1. Aylton	John Barston, B.A.	Thomas Broad	22.10.63	Harley
2. Brampton Br.	Thomas Cole	John Norton	2.7.63.	Harley
3. Knill	John Weaver	John Watkins	23.1.62/3.	Walsham arm.
4. Leintwardine	Richard Hawes	Israel Tonge, D.D.	7.2.63.	Harley
5. Leominster	John Tombes, B.D.	William Whittle,	5.2.63.	King
6. Monmouth	Nicholas Carey, B.A.	Charles Goodwin.	29.9.63.	Henry Lord Herbert
7. Clun	Thomas Froysell, M.A.	Joseph Jackson,	6.7.63.	Walcott arm.
8. Coreley	John Rusbatch, M.A.	(recovered living)		Coleridge
<u>OXFORD</u>				
9. Bampton II	Samuel Birch, M.A.	Joseph Maynard, B.D.	23.12.62.	King
10. Banbury	Samuel Wells, M.A.	Thomas Matthew.	21.11.62.	Bishop
11. Bloxham	Christopher Newell, B.A.	Nicholas Page	24.8.63.	Eton
12. Broughton	Nathaniel Coney, M.A.	Richard White	15.6.63.	Saye and Sele
13. Deddington	James Wyar	Samuel Northcott	18.5.64.	Dean and Chapter, Windsor
14. Glympton	Nathaniel Staniforth, M.A.	John Robinson	6.2.62/3.	Thomas Wheat, arm.
15. Nether Heyford (Heyford Bridge)	John Dod, M.A.	William Ford	22.12.62.	Corpus Christi Col, Oxford.
16. Middleton Stoney	James Farren	Henry Gregory	8.10.62.	Bishop of Lincoln.
17. Soulderne	Thomas Hodges, M.A.	Brian Turner	18.3.62/3.	
<u>BATH AND WELLS</u>				
18. Abbas Combe	John Darby, M.A.	John Palmer	11.11.62.	Robert Jacob, arm.
19. Angersleigh	Lawrence Musgrave	Robert Gale	26.9.62.	Roger Gale & Robert Proctor
20. Bratten Seymour	Jerome Littlejohn	John Penny	4.9.62.	Rouse
21. North Cadbury	Samuel Craddock, B.D.	John Atwood, B.D.	16.1.62/3.	Emmanuel, Cambridge.
22. Cameley	Richard Batchelor, B.A.	John Gibbens	9.2.62/3.	Hipsley
23. Charlinch	Francis Cross, M.A.	John Bourne	2.3.63/4.	Warre and Mallett.
24. Ched. Fitzpaine	Edward Warre	Henry Warre (brother of Edw)	3.12.62.	John Warre, Kt.

APPENDIX II c (continued)

PARISH	EJECTED MINISTER	REPLACEMENT	DATE OF REPLACEMENT (in months)	PATRON
<u>BATH AND WELLS (cont.)</u>				
25. Clutton	Matthew Alflatt	George Brize	14.1.62/3. ( 5 months)	Lord Brook
26. Cricket Malherbie	John Turner, B.A.	James Vaux	24.2.62/3. (5½ months)	Jonathan Pitt, arm.
27. Cricket St. Thomas	John Langdale, B.A.	Edmund Saunders	30.12.62. ( 4 months)	John Preston, arm.
28. Croscombe	John Whitbourne	Samuel Lamfire	22.11.64. (27 months)	Fortescue, Esq.,
29. Doulting	Gracious Franklyn	Francis Harding	11.2.62/3. (5½ months)	George Horner, Knight.
30. Dulverton	Henry Berry	Walter Bickham	30.8.62. ( 7 days )	Dean and Chapter, Wells.
31. Frome	John Humphrey, M.A.	Joseph Glanvill	8.11.62. (2½ months)	Thynne
32. Martock	James Stephenson, M.A.	Richard Wall	8.12.63. (15½ months)	Bishop
33. Mells	Richard Fairclough, M.A.	George Nevill	23.2.62/3. ( 6 months)	George Horner, Knight.
34. W. Monkton	Robert Drake, B.A.	James Smith	30.8.62. ( 7 days )	Doble, arm.
35. Pitminster	Thomas Forward, B.A.	Thomas Blanchflower,	7.3.62/3. ( 7 months)	John Coventry, Knight.
36. Porlock	Alexander Robinson, M.A.	Hammett Ward	2.10.62. ( 2 months)	King
37. Shepton Mallett	Oliver Calderwood	Henry Allen	2.4.63. (7½ months)	King
38. Stoke Trister	John Batt, M.A.	William Parsons	11.9.62. (2½ weeks)	Hugh Windham
39. Batcombe	Richard Alleine	Robert Rood	24.12.62. ( 4 months)	John Bradford, gentleman.
40. Taunton St. Mary Magdalen.	George Newton, M.A.	Emmanuel Sharpe	11.11.63. (2½ months)	Alexander Hill, gentleman.
41. Ubley	William Thomas, M.A.	James Whiting.	3.12.63. (3½ months)	King.
42. Whitestaunton	Richard Smith	Thomas Ballett,	23.7.62. -	Brett, Knight.
43. Winsford	Joseph Chadwick, B.A.	Robert Farthing	30.3.64. ( 7 months)	Bishop, by lapse.
44. Winsham	William Ball, M.A.	Timothy Hilton	29.9.62. ( 1 month )	Dean and Chapter, Wells.
45. Wiveliscombe	George Day, M.A.	Thomas Kerswell	30.12.62. ( 4 months)	Preb. Wiveliscombe.



APPENDIX IIc (cont.)

1.	<u>Cal.</u>	31		Reg f 202	
2.	<u>Cal.</u>	125		Reg f 201 <sup>v</sup>	
3.	<u>Cal.</u>	515		Reg f 198 <sup>v</sup>	
4.	<u>Cal.</u>	253		Reg f 198 <sup>v</sup>	
5.	<u>Cal.</u>	487		Reg f 198 <sup>v</sup>	
6.	<u>Cal.</u>	103		Reg f 202	
7.	<u>Cal.</u>	215		Reg f 201 <sup>v</sup>	
8.	<u>Cal.</u>	420	John Rusbach recovered his living and attended visitation in 1665. He was succeeded by his son, Samuel Rusbach, who was Vicar in 1680, 1701 and 1719. Samuel had Letters Dimissory for ordination as deacon and priest in 1668, 20th May. ( <u>Cal.</u> 420 - Visitation Books for 1665 etc.)		
9.	<u>Cal.</u>	56	MS Oxf. Dioc. Papers d.106	(Reg 1660-1702)	f 16 <sup>v</sup>
10.	<u>Cal.</u>	520	"	"	f 15 <sup>v</sup>
11.	<u>Cal.</u>	363	"	"	f 22
12.	<u>Cal.</u>	131	"	"	f 18
13.	<u>Cal.</u>	550	"	"	f 22
14.	<u>Cal.</u>	458		Reg f 17	
15.	<u>Cal.</u>	165		Reg f 16 <sup>v</sup>	
16.	<u>Cal.</u>	191		Reg f 15 <sup>v</sup>	
17.	<u>Cal.</u>	270	Not in Register		
18.	<u>Cal.</u>	157	D/D/B Register 20 Piers		f 103 <sup>v</sup>
19.	<u>Cal.</u>	360	"	"	f 102
20.	<u>Cal.</u>	325	"	"	f 102
21.	<u>Cal.</u>	140	"	"	f 105
22.	<u>Cal.</u>	35	"	"	f 105
23.	<u>Cal.</u>	148	"	"	f 112 <sup>v</sup>
24.	<u>Cal.</u>	510	"	"	f 104
25.	<u>Cal.</u>	5	"	"	f 105
26.	<u>Cal.</u>	497	"	"	f 106 <sup>v</sup>
27.	<u>Cal.</u>	313	"	"	f 104 <sup>v</sup>
28.	<u>Cal.</u>	526	"	"	f 114 <sup>v</sup>
29.	<u>Cal.</u>	212	"	"	f 106 <sup>v</sup>
30.	<u>Cal.</u>	52	"	"	f 101 <sup>v</sup>
31.	<u>Cal.</u>	284	"	"	f 103 <sup>v</sup>
32.	<u>Cal.</u>	463	"	"	f 110 <sup>v</sup>
33.	<u>Cal.</u>	187	"	"	f 106
34.	<u>Cal.</u>	170-1	"	"	f 101 <sup>v</sup>
35.	<u>Cal.</u>	208	"	"	f 107
36.	<u>Cal.</u>	412-3	"	"	f 102 <sup>v</sup>
37.	<u>Cal.</u>	98-9	"	"	f 107 <sup>v</sup>
38.	<u>Cal.</u>	36-7	"	"	f 102 <sup>v</sup>
39.	<u>Cal.</u>	6-7	"	"	f 104 <sup>v</sup>
40.	<u>Cal.</u>	364	"	"	f 109 <sup>v</sup>
41.	<u>Cal.</u>	481	"	"	f 110 <sup>v</sup>
42.	<u>Cal.</u>	448	"	"	f 100
43.	<u>Cal.</u>	107	"	"	f 113
44.	<u>Cal.</u>	25	"	"	f 102
45.	<u>Cal.</u>	160	"	"	f 104 <sup>v</sup>

APPENDIX II

THE REPLACEMENTS OF 1662

PARISH	REPLACEMENT	DEGREE (1662)	CONFORMED TO COMMONWEALTH	'SUFFERER'
<u>HEREFORD</u>				
Aylton	Thomas Broad	MA	BA 1651/2. MA 1655 (Cambridge)	-
Brampton Bryan	John Morton	-	-	-
Knill	John Watkins	-	-	-
Leintwardine	Israel Tongue	DD	Fellow Durham College 1657-60.	-
Leominster	William Whittle	MA	-	-
Monmouth	Charles Goodwin	-	-	-
Clun	Joseph Jackson	BA	? several of this name	? commuer of Trinity, Ox.
<u>OXFORD</u>				
Bampton II	Joseph Maynard	BD	-	-
Banbury	Thomas Matthew	-	-	-
Bloxham	Nicholas Page	-	Corpus Christi College, Oxford. 1650 ?	-
Broughton	Richard White	MA	R. Wiggington 1652.	-
Deddington	Samuel Northcott	BA	Exeter, Oxford 1653. BA 1656-7.	-
Glympton	John Robinson	MA	Univ. BA 1654, MA 1657.	-
Nether Heyford	William Ford	MA	Corpus Christi Col, Oxford, BA 1651/2, MA 1655.	-
Middleton Stoney	Henry Gregory	MA	Christ Church, St. Mary Hall, BA 1650, MA 1653	-
Souderne	Brian Turner	-	-	-
<u>BATH AND WELLS</u>				
Abbas Combe	John Palmer	BA	-	-
Angersleigh	Robert Gale	BA	Wadham 1657	-
Bratten Seymour	John Penney	-	-	-
North Cadbury	John Atwood	BD	Emmanuel, Cambridge 1645/6. BA 1649/50.	-
Cameley	John Gibbens	BA	MA 1652. Fellow Emmanuel 1652. BD 1660.	-
Charlinch	John Bourne	BA	Emmanuel, Cambridge. 1656. BA 1660.	-
Ched. Fitzpaine	Henry Warre	-	-	-
Clutton	George Brize	BA	-	-



APPENDIX IIa (continued)

PARISH	REPLACEMENT	DEGREE (1662)	CONFORMED TO COMMONWEALTH	'SUFFERER'
<u>BATH AND WELLS</u>				
Cricket Malherbie	James Vaux	-	Matric. Magdalen, Oxford 1656.	-
Cricket St. Thomas	Edmund Saunders	-	-	-
Croscombe	Samuel Lamfire	-	-	1 Father a sufferer
Doulting	Francis Harding	-	-	-
Dulverton	Walter Bickham	-	Matric Lincoln 1657.	-
Frome	Joseph Glanville	MA	Matric BA 1655. MA 1658. Exeter, Oxford.	-
Martock	Richard Wall	-	-	-
Mells	George Neville	-	-	-
West Monkton	James Smith	-	-	-
Pitminster	Thomas Blanchflower	MA	Hart Hall BA 1659. Matric 1656.	-
Porlock	Hamnett Ward	D. Med.	-	-
Shepton Mallett	Henry Allen	-	-	-
Stoke Trister	William Parsons	MA	Corpus Christi College, Oxford. MA 1648. Fellow Corpus Christi College, 1649.	2 Yes
Batcombe	Robert Rood	-	-	-
Taunton St. Mary Magd.	Emmanuel Sharpe	-	-	3 Yes
Ubley	James Whiting	-	-	-
Whitestaunton	Thomas Ballett	BA	-	-
Winsford	Robert Farthing	MA	Peterhouse, Cambridge 1650. BA 1654, MA 1657.	-
Winsham	Timothy Hilton	-	-	-
Wiveliscombe	Thomas Kerswell	MA	-	-

The above information is taken from the Registers, Bannister and Foster.

1. Samuel Lamfire seq. C. of Dinder. Preb. of Wells 1650. WR 16.
2. William Parsons, Rector of Forscote 1637. Petitioned to secure profits 1660. Officiating at Heytesbury, Wiltshire 1657. WR 317.
3. Emmanuel Sharp, Rector of Batheaston 1649. Removed into Devon. Minister at Ugborough in 1650; at Townstall in 1652. According to Walker twice imprisoned at Exeter. WR 319.

APPENDIX IIIaARCHDEACONS IN THE DIOCESE OF HEREFORD (1660-1760)ARCHDEACONS OF HEREFORD

<u>Name</u>	<u>Apptmt.</u>	<u>End of Tenure</u>	<u>Background</u>	<u>Qualifications</u>	<u>Other Posts</u>
George BENSON	24.9.60	1684 (d.1692 aet. 78)	s. doctor Worcester- shire.	D.D. (Queen's)	1638 R. Chetton, Salop. 1672 D. Hereford - 92.
Samuel BENSON	1684	1690 deprived	s. George (Archdeacon)	M.A. (Ch.Ch.)	R. in Wilts. 1680 Canon Hereford. V. Sellack 1684.
William JOHNSON	1690	2.2.97/8 died.	s. pleb.	B & D.D. 1685 (Queen's)	Chapl. to Croft. R. Croft 1668. Canon 1669. 1675 R. Whitbourne, Hereford. 1690 V. Clifton, Worcestershire.
Brian TURNER	1697/8 but died pre-installation		s. husband- man.	originally St. John's, (Camb. D.D.(Oxon) in 1692.	R. of Suffolk and Oxford. Canon 1692.
Thomas FOX	June 1698	d. 1728.	s. pleb. Salop.	M.A. (Ch.Ch.)	V. Bromyard 1681. Canon 1682.
John WALKER	Feb. 1728/9	d. Nov. 1741	P.p.	Exact identifi- cation unknown.	
Robert BRETON	Dec. 1741	1768/9	arm.	M.A. (Oriel and Merton)	1724 Canon. 1738 Arch. Salop.



APPENDIX IIIa (cont.)ARCHDEACONS OF SALOP.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Apptmt.</u>	<u>End of Tenure</u>	<u>Background</u>	<u>Qualifications</u>	<u>Other Posts</u>
Thomas COKE	24.9.60.	d.6 Nov. 1669	fil. cler. Kent.	B.D. 1632-3. B.N.C.	V. Bampton, Oxon 1663.
Stephen PHILLIPS	May 1669	d. 20th 8.1684. aet 46.	fil. cler. Hereford.	B.D. 1669. D.D. 1677.	Stud. Lincoln's Inn 1657.
Francis WHEELER	Aug.1684.	died 1686/7	gent.	M.A. 1660. (Balliol and New College)	Rv Willey 1680.
Adam OTTLEY	Jan.1686/ 1687.	Bp.St. Davids 1713	?	Fell. Trin. Hall. D.D. 1691.	R. Prestbury II (Salop.) 1683. Canon 1686. Bp. St. Davids 1713. (died 1723).
Robert COMYN	July 1713	1726/7	cler. fil. Berkshire	M.A. (Balliol and Magd.)	V. Wigmore 1699. R. Brampton Bryan 1702. 1713-26 R. Pontesbury II. 1713-26 R.Presteigne
Richard CROSSE	Jan.1726/ 1727.	died 5.6.72.	gent. Somerset.	BCL (Oxford) 1695. LL.D. (Camb.) Fellow of New College.	1704. R. Broughton Oxon. 1724 Canon Hereford & of Winchester. 1731 R. Upper Ledbury
Samuel CROXALL	July 1732	April 1738. d.13.2. 1752.	cler. fil.	D.D. 1728 (Camb.)	1727 Preb. Hinton. 1730 Preb. Moreton Magna. 1738 Canon Chancellor of Hereford.

APPENDIX IIIa (cont.)ARCHDEACONS OF SALOP (Continued).

<u>Name</u>	<u>Apptmt.</u>	<u>End of Tenure</u>	<u>Background</u>	<u>Qualifications</u>	<u>Other Posts</u>
Robert BRETON	May 1738.	Archd. Hereford 1741.	arm.	M.A. (Oriel and Merton)	1724 Canon. 1741 Archdeacon of Hereford.
Egerton LEIGH	Jan.1740/ 1741.	d.5.2.60.	cler. fil. Cheshire.	LL.B. 1728. LL.D. 1743 Cambridge.	Preb. Hereford 1742

N.B. Hon. John Harley - appointed 1760 has not been included.



APPENDIX IIIa (cont.)ARCHDEACONS OF OXFORD

<u>Name</u>	<u>Apptmt.</u>	<u>End of Tenure</u>	<u>Background</u>	<u>Qualifications</u>	<u>Other Posts</u>
Barton HOLLIDAY	1625	d.2.10.61	pleb. Oxford.	D.D. 1642 (Ch. Ch.)	V Brize Norton 1623. V in Glos. 1623. R. Emmington 1638. R. Crowell. R. Chilton, Berks in 1656.
Thomas BARLOW	1662 (inst. 1664.	1675 Bishop of Lincoln.	pleb.	D.D. 1660 (Queen's)	Prov. Queen's 1657. Hd. Kpr. Bodleian Library 1652-60. Lect. Churchill. 1660-76 Lady Mgt. Professor. Preb. Worc. 1660. Bp. Lincoln 1675-91. DIED 1691.
Timothy HALTON	10.7.1675	died 21.7.1704	'ser'	D.D. 1674 (Queen's)	Prov. Queen's 1677-1704. Vice-Chancellor 1679-82. Preb. St. David's 1662. Arch. Brecknock 1672 R. Charlton-on-Otmore 1685.
Humphrey HODY	Aug. 1704	died 20.1.1706/7	cler. Somers- set.	D.D. 1692/3 (Wadham)	Fell. Wadham 1685. Reg. Prof. Gk. 1698- 1705. R. St. Michael Royal & St. Martin Vintry 1695. R. Monks Risborough 1702.

## APPENDIX IIIa (cont.)

## ARCHDEACONS OF OXFORD (Continued)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Apptmt.</u>	<u>End of Tenure</u>	<u>Background</u>	<u>Qualifications</u>	<u>Other Posts</u>
Timothy GOODWIN	Feb.1706/ 1707.	Appt.Bp. Kilmore & Ardagh 1714.	?	D.D. Utrecht 1692 D.D. Lambeth 1714	R. Rushock, Worcs. 1701. Chap. Bp. Ox. R. Heythrop 1710-14. Archbishop Cashell 1727-1729 (death)
William BAKER	14.2.1714 /1715.	1723 Bp. of Bangor	cler. Somerset.	D.D. 1707. (Wadham)	Fell. Wadham 1693. Warden 1719-24. R. St. Ebbes 1697. R. Padworth, Berks 1708-1715. R. St. Giles-in-field. 1715-32. R. Bladen 1712. Bp. Bangor 1723. Bp. Norwich 1727 (death 2.12.1732)
Robert COOKE	23.4.1724	died Aug.1724	arm.	M.A. 1687. (Lincoln)	V. Churcham. 1694. R. Bishop's Cleeve, Glos. 1696. Canon. Glos. 1707 and 1723.
George RYE	1724	died 4.7.1741	arm.	D.D. 1715 (Wadham & Oriel)	Fell. Oriel 1697. Canon Ch.Ch. 1734-41 Reg. Prof. Div. 1737- 1741. R. Adwell, Oxon. 1705. R. Islip. 1717. R. Ickford, Bucks, 1729.
John POTTER	Sept. 1741.	died 1767	John Potter Archbishop of Canter- bury.	M.A. 1734. B.D. 1741. D.D. 1745. (Ch. Ch.)	R. Elme, Ely 1738. V. Lydd, Kent 1742.



APPENDIX IIIbCHANCELLORS (1660-1760)HEREFORD

<u>Name</u>	<u>Apptmt.</u>	<u>End of Tenure</u>	<u>Background</u>	<u>Qualifications</u>	<u>Other Offices</u>
Timothy BALDWIN	24.1.60.	resigned 1691 d.1696.	s. of gent. Salop.	D.C.L. 1652. (Balliol)	Fell. All Souls <sup>1</sup> 1639-61. Princ.Hart.Hall 1660-63. Stud.Inner Temple 1635. Knighted by Charles II 10th July 1670. Master in Chancery 1670- 1682. DIED 1696.
Charles BALDWIN	30.4.91.	died 4.1.1706	s.Samuel arm. nephew of Timothy	B.C.L. (Queen's)	Inner Temple 1674. M.P. Ludlow 1681 and 1690-8.
Edward WYNNE	19 May 1707.	1754.	s.Earl of Anglesea	D.C.L. 1711. (Jesus)	Advocate Drs. Commons 1712.
Joseph BROWNE	11 April 1754.	died 11.6.67	pleb. Cumberland	B.D. 1737. D.D. 1743. (Queen's)	Fell. Queen's 1731. R. Bramshott 1746. Sedleian Prof. of Nat. Phil. 1741-67. Preb. 1746. Provost of Queen's 1756- 1767. Vice Chancellor 1759-65.

APPENDIX IIIb.(continued)CHANCELLORS (1660-1760) (continued)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Apptmt.</u>	<u>End of Tenure</u>	<u>Background</u>	<u>Qualifications</u>	<u>Other Offices</u>
<u>OXFORD</u> Henry ALLWORTH	1660	d.1699		B.C.L. 1647 D.C.L. 1660/1 (New College)	Fell. New Coll. 1642 ejected 1648. Lt. Univ. troop 1685.
Thomas AYLOFFE	1699	reason unknown 1713-4 d.1732.		LL.B. 1686. LL.D. 1696.	Reg.Prof.Civil Law, Cambridge 1702. Fell. Trinity Hall. DIED 1732.
Charles TALBOT	1714	Lord Chancellor or 1733	s.William Bp.Oxford	B.A. 1704. LL.B. (Lamb)1714 cr.D.C.L. 1735. (Oriel and All Souls').	Bar. Inner Temple 1711. Bencher Lincoln's Inn 1719. Sol.Gen. 1726-33. MP Durham City 1722 - December 1733. Lord Chancellor 1733-7. DIED 14.2.1737.
Thomas TENISON	11.3.33	died 7.5.1742	s.Edward Bp.Ossory	LL.B. Camb.1721 LL.D. 1726. (Clare Camb.)	Fell.Trin.Hall 1726. Archd.Carmarthen 1729. Preb. 1739. R.Chiddingstone, Kent 1734.
Daniel BURTON	5.6.42		s.Doctor, Hereford	D.D. 1735. (Ch. Ch.)	



COMMUNICANTS per house per parish

	No of parishes	Parishes with 1.5 & over.	Parishes with 1 - 1.49.	Parishes with 0.75 and over.	Parishes with 0.5 to 0.74.	Parishes with 0.25 to 0.49.	Parishes with up to 0.24.
Henley	15	2 (13.3%)	1 (6.6%)	-	6 (40%)	3 (20%)	3 (20%)
Aston	16	2 (12.5%)	4 (25%)	1 (6.25%)	4 (25%)	5 (31.25%)	5 (31.25%)
Oxford	11	1 (9.9%)	3 (23.07%)	1 (9.9%)	2 (18.18%)	5 (45.45%)	2 (18.18%)
Cuddesdon	13	1 (7.69%)	3 (23.07%)	3 (23.07%)	3 (23.07%)	1 (7.69%)	2 (15.38%)
Bicester	20	2 (10%)	3 (15%)	5 (25%)	7 (35%)	3 (15%)	3 (15%)
Witney	16		1 (6.25%)	1 (6.25%)	6 (37.5%)	6 (37.5%)	2 (12.5%)
Woodstock	16		2 (12.5%)		9 (56.25%)	4 (25%)	1 (6.25%)

APPENDIX IV (continued)

	No of Parishes	Parishes with 1.5 & over	Parishes with 1 - 1.49	Parishes with 0.75 and over.	Parishes with 0.5 to 0.74.	Parishes with 0.25 to 0.49.	Parishes with up to 0.24
Chipping Norton	14		2 (14.28%)	1 (7.14%)	3 (21.42%)	6 (42.85%)	2 (14.28%)
Daddington	10			2 (20%)	3 (30%)	1 (10%)	4 (40%)
Parishes	131	8 6.1%	16 12.21%	14 10.68%	43 32.82%	34 25.95%	16 12.21%
	100%						

NB. This can be converted to communicants percentage of population - If, for instance, we say that on average there were four people of communicant age per household then:

1 communicant per house = 25%  
 0.5 " " = 12½%  
 0.25 " " = 6¼%



APPENDIX V (see page 157 n.5)Surgeon's oath - Oxford

"You shall to be best of your skill and knowledge apply fit remedies for the respective ails or sores you shall do it for charity to the poor as often as need shall require without any difference or respect. So help you God. Kiss the book."

Bodleian MS Oxf. Dioc. e.22 (Subscription Book 1662-1730) xiii.

Midwife's oath - Oxford

"You shall swear that you will faithfully and truly execute the office of a midwife in those places where you shall be licenced (sic) and authorized. You shall afford your help as well to the poor for charity, as to the rich for reward. You shall not deliver any person privately or clandestinely to conceal the birth of the child. If you help to deliver any whom you suspect to be unmarried you shall acquaint the ecclesiastical court of this jurisdiction therewith and before you yield your assistance or help you shall persuade and by all lawful means labour with them to deliver truly who is the father of the child. This you shall do faithfully and truly. So help you God."

ibid. xi.

Testimonials for Butchers' licences (from H.R.O. Visitation Box 324)

These are to certify whom it may concern that there are in and about Much Wenlock very many persons of sick and weak constitutions of body who are not able to submit if confined to eating of fish but we conceive George Morrall of Much Wenlock aforesaid butcher a very fit man to kill flesh for the provision of such weak and sick persons which we attest by the subscription of our names this 17th day of February 1662.

Francis Smith .. Bailiff of Wenlock  
 Thomas Lockyer  
 William Ames .. Cler.  
 & two churchwardens.

APPENDIX VIA SET OF ORDINATION DOCUMENTS IN 1748 - Morgan PriceBaptism Certificate

Morgan the son of the Reverend William Price Clerk and Margaret his wife was baptised December 7th 1724.

We whose names are underwritten do attest this to be a true extract of the Register Book of the Parish of Llandaff in the County of Glamorgan.

Llandaff  
30 April 1748

William Harris .. Senior Vicar Choral  
James Philip .. Church Warden

College Testimonial

Whereas our well beloved in Christ Morgan Price Bachelor of Arts hath declared unto us his intention of offering himself a candidate for the sacred office of deacon and for that end hath requested of us our letters testimonial of his good morals and learning We the Master and Senior Fellows of the College of St. John the Evangelist in the University of Cambridge according to the ancient and approved custom of this university do hereby testify that the above-named Morgan Price hath behaved himself studiously and regularly for the space of four years and upwards the time of his residence with us ending the twenty fifth day of January 1747 Nor do we know that he ever believed or maintained any doctrine contrary to the Church of England In Witness whereof we have hereunto set our hands and seal this 24th day of February 1747

I. Newcome Mr.  
M. Burton B.D.  
J. Fogg D.D.  
etc. (5 others)

Title

To the Right Reverend Father in God James Lord Bishop of Hereford

These are to certify your Lordship that I Joseph Guest Vicar of Stanton upon Arrow in the County of Hereford and your Lordship's diocese do hereby nominate and appoint Mr. Morgan Price B.A. of St. John's College in Cambridge to perform the office of a curate in the church of Stanton aforesaid and do promise to allow him the yearly sum of £20 for his maintenance in the same and to continue him to officiate in my said church until he shall be otherwise provided of some ecclesiastical preferment unless by fault by him committed he shall be lawfully removed from the same. Witness my hand this 18 May in the year of our Lord 1748.

Joseph Guest  
Vicar of Stanton-upon-Arrow



An Example of a Si Quis - Other Philpott.

I am required by the Bishop of Hereford to give you notice that he is desired to ordain Other Philpott of this parish and that his Lordship is inclined to ordain him deacon on Sunday the fifth day of June unless there appear sufficient cause to the contrary.

The Bishop therefore desires you that know Other Philpott's conversation that it any among you know anything of him why he ought not to be ordained by reason of any vice that he is addicted to or any scandal that he has given you should give timely notice thereof to his Lordship or to some other person that may acquaint his Lordship therewith at least sometime before the ordination otherwise he declares that it shall not be his fault but yours and that your souls are to answer for it at the dreadful Tribunal of God for concealing that fault or that scandal that you know of and thereby betraying the Church to the mischiefs that may come upon it by this ordination But if you know no evil of the person nor have any thing to say against his being put into deacon's orders you are desired to recommend him to God in your prayers that God would be pleased to endue him with all those graces and gifts that are necessary for the discharging of that holy office and ministry.

We whose names are hereunto subscribed to certify that this Si Quis was read in the parish church of Pedmore in the time of Divine Service on Sunday 29th May 1748.

Tho: Philpott .. Rector  
William Turner .. Churchwarden

Geo. Pearpoint

## NOTE ON SOURCES

The bulk of the material for this thesis has been found in the diocesan archives of Hereford, located at the Diocesan Registry and the County Record Office in Hereford, and in those of Oxford to be found in the Bodleian Library. The Hereford archives, with the exception of the Registers which still remain in the Registry, have recently been transferred to the Record Office and have only been generally available since 1973. Much of this material has remained untouched since it was filed two or three hundred years ago and is thus of especial interest. There is a full range of act books, some court papers, subscription books and rolls. Among a large number of visitation returns, those for the three episcopal visitations of 1716, 1719 and 1722 are particularly useful because between them there is an almost full coverage of the whole diocese. Bishop Bisse's enquiry into the condition of charities in 1718 was useful for Chapter VII. Ordination papers filed in their original state are full, especially for the 1750's, and provide much information of interest regarding this important aspect of the bishop's activities. Re-cataloguing of the Hereford archives is currently taking place and some of the reference numbers are being changed.

Oxford diocesan records for the period are full in episcopal correspondence, especially for Secker's episcopate. Besides act books, registers and subscription books for the whole period there are notebooks of two bishops; but there is not the wealth of additional material that one finds at Hereford, nor has any newly come to light. In addition to diocesan and archidiaconal material the Bodleian Library's Tanner and Rawlinson MSS and the Wake MSS at Christ Church furnished additional episcopal correspondence.

Parish registers are available for both dioceses and are for the most part centrally housed at the County Record Offices at Hereford and Shrewsbury and at the Bodleian Library. The notebook, sermons and lectures of Daniel Ranaud, the Swiss-born incumbent of Whitchurch, Herefordshire, are to be found at Hereford and provide a helpful guide to the activities and beliefs of an eighteenth century parson in that diocese; the incumbent's notebook of Lower Heyford and the Diary of



James Newton of South Newington in the Oxford diocese, though not so useful, provide similar source material for the Oxford diocese.

The research for this work has been partly based on published versions of primary material. Amongst these are Lloyd-Jukes' edition of 1738 Visitation Returns and A.T. Bannister's Institutions of the Diocese of Hereford. Personal memoirs and notes include those of Wood, Hearne, Thomas Wilson and two sources for Secker, the Life written by his chaplain, Beilby Porteous, and his housekeeper's Journal, 1744-5. Information about diocesan administration and the working of the ecclesiastical courts for the period has been partly drawn from Gibson's Codex, and the contemporary handbooks of Ayliffe, Consett, Godolphin and Oughton. Catechetical handbooks by various divines provided a background for the study of confirmation training.

The present work depended mainly on manuscript material, but it has also been necessary to compare Hereford and Oxford with other dioceses. For this the theses of Dr. E.A.O. Whiteman, Dr. D.M. Barratt, Dr. I.M. Green, Dr. J.L. Salter and Rev. M.G. Smith have been of considerable help; in addition the published works of Professor Norman Sykes, in particular his Church and State in England in the Eighteenth Century, William Wake, Edmund Gibson and From Sheldon to Secker were particularly valuable. Other works and biographies used were White Kennett and Francis Atterbury by G.V. Bennett, Thomas Tenison and Edmund Compton by E. Carpenter, William Lloyd and John Sharp by A.T. Hart and Church and Society in Eighteenth Century Devon by A. Warne. For information on the Oxford diocese outside the period of this study Dr. Barratt's thesis on Oxfordshire clergy between the Reformation and the Restoration and Dr. McClatchey's Oxfordshire Clergy 1777-1869 were helpful.

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