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Abstract of a Thesis submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in the University of Durham, 1995.

Gerald Lane.

The Clergy of the Deaneries of Rochester and Malling in the Diocese of Rochester, c. 1770 - 1870.

This is a study of the concerns and life-style of the clergy of the established Church in two Kent Deaneries throughout the hundred year period, 1770 -1870.

How far, it is considered, were episcopal hopes, which were expressed in the Charges of Bishop and Archdeacon, fulfilled in the parishes, especially in the matters of residence and education. The extent of non-residence is deduced from such evidence as is available for the earlier part of the period and after 1830 from Visitation and other returns. The provision of Sunday Schools is used as an example of clerical response to a diocesan policy in the field of education.

The exercise of patronage, residence, plurality, the length of incumbencies, the employment of curates and their prospects, are looked at throughout the period. The provision of new churches, agrarian unrest, tithe and clerical emoluments, church rate, relationship with dissent, worship provision, the visitation process, the clergyman's role in society, the differing demands of town ministry and rural ministry are examined as events bring them to the fore.

The priorities of successive bishops are noted and the lives of sample clergymen are taken for each period, both to flesh-out the statistics and to illustrate the evolving pattern of ministry.

The CLERGY of the DEANERIES OF ROCHESTER and MALLING in the

DIOCESE of ROCHESTER, c. 1770 - 1870.

Gerald Lane.

A thesis submitted to the University of Durham for the degree of
Master of Arts, researched within the Department of History.

1995.

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30 APR 1996

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PREFACE

Between 1770 and 1870 about 390 incumbents and at least an equal number of curates were responsible for the care of the 70 parishes in the Deaneries of Rochester and Malling. For many, a name is their only memorial; for some of the curates not even a name has been recorded.

What can we know of them, of their aspirations, of their *way of life*, of their material rewards and how they envisaged their role in society; or how they fulfilled their duty as they saw it? How far did they respond to the exhortations and desires of their diocesan and his archdeacon? It might be possible to give some answer to these questions by extrapolation. Clergy returns to episcopal visitations, which are available from other dioceses in the south of England, could be used to provide by inference what was likely to be so in this small area of Kent. What I wanted to do, however, was to gather such information as was available and see what picture it was possible to paint from that.

For the first half of the period documentation is admittedly sparse. No answers to Articles of Enquiry from the Bishop to Clergy have survived. Indications need to be found elsewhere, so only an impressionistic picture is possible. But a picture can be painted or, to change the metaphor, a story can be told. However, the imprecise nature of the earlier material means that comparisons with, for instance, work on Wiltshire⁽¹⁾ and the Visitation returns from other dioceses, which have been painstakingly edited, is not really feasible. It seemed, therefore, best to let the Rochester and Malling clergy speak for themselves through their own published writings; to gather what can be known of their careers; to see how they responded to enquiries from parliament and ecclesiastical commission; and to consider what the various archives reveal (knowing full well that more is to be found, but time has its constraints).

In these deaneries we are fortunate to possess the names of more curates than is sometimes the case, so curates have received particular consideration. The story as a whole has been divided into three periods (1770 - 1800, 1800 - 1835, 1835 - 1870), but there is inevitable overlapping between these artificial time divisions. In each period some matters common to all have been reviewed and updated (residence, clerical deployment, patronage, curates). Each period has also thrown up its distinctive concerns and opportunities. The parishes harboured a fascinating variety of clerics; children of their age, of course, and moulded by contemporary social pressures, but richly individualistic and a joy to contemplate.

This dissertation owes its genesis to Professor W. R. Ward. When he took on this M. A. student, he could not have imagined that it would take the said student so long to complete his studies. But increasing work pressure meant that the telling of the tale had to await his retirement. Professor Ward told me where to look for material. What I have done with such as I have found can not be laid at his door, although his gentle questioning and his wise remarks have meant that some grosser errors may have been avoided and new lines of enquiry considered.

In my search for material I met unfailing courtesy. The Registrar of Rochester Diocese, Mr Owen Woodfield, let me into his inner sanctum to work on documents kept in his safe. He also allowed my wife and me to transcribe visitation material (since transferred to Kent County Archives), permitting us to take it to the near-by Cathedral Chapter Room and Library. A succession of canon librarians has given us access and encouragement. Many a "day off" my wife and I spent in that august environment - and also at Kent Archives, where Mr. Nigel Yates and his staff were unfailingly helpful. The archivist at the Church Commissioners, Mr. D. A. Armstrong, allowed me to spend several weeks searching the files of relevant parishes. He could not have been more caring. Awaiting me each morning was a spacious room with a large desk, heaped with the files I had asked

to see. Dictaphone facilities were also at hand and I am more grateful than I can say to Mrs Adrienne Bishop who typed up the large amount of material recorded from the files.

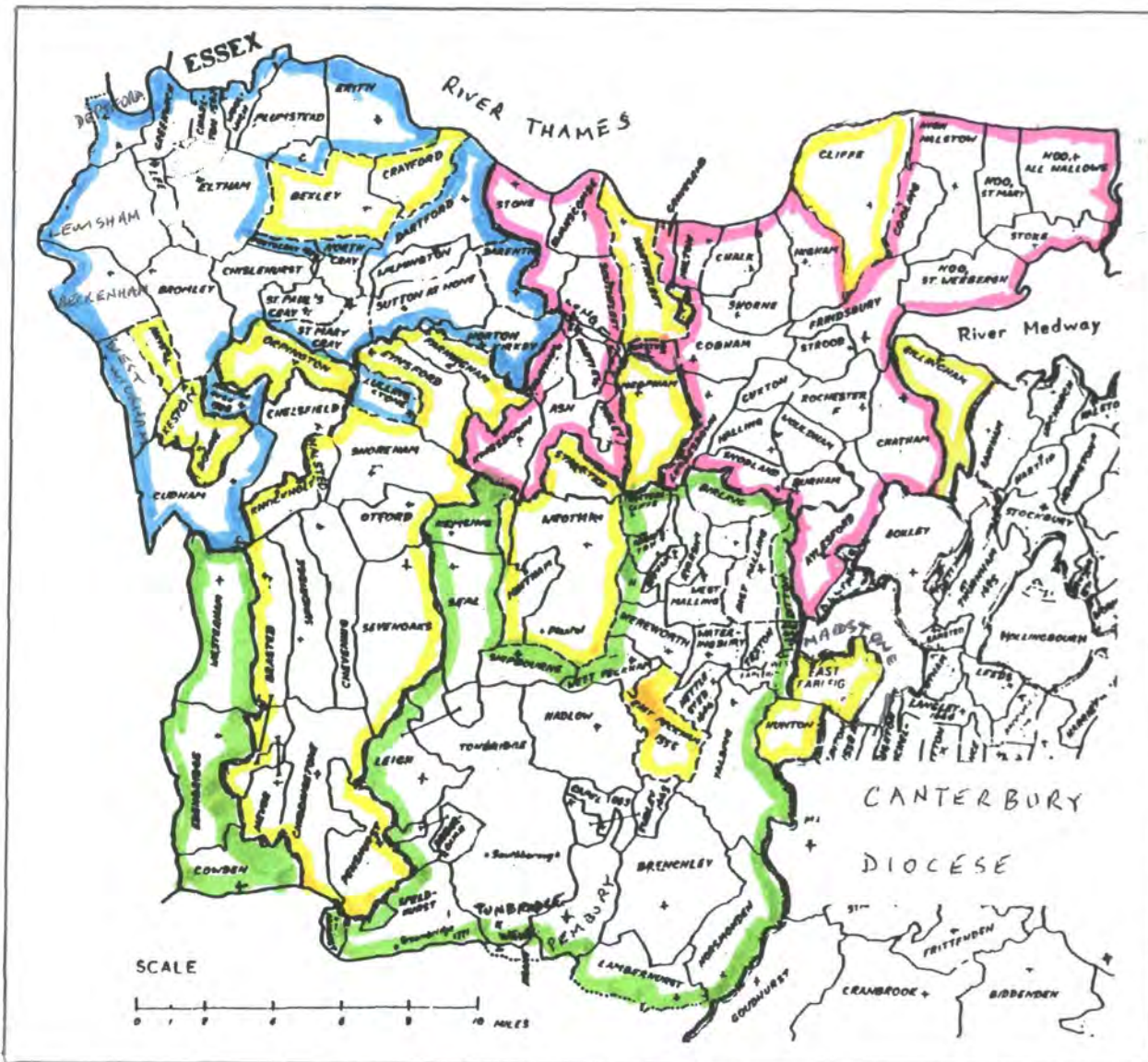
I met with smiles from many a library staff including those at the British Library, Sion College Library, London University Library, Kent County Library, and local libraries at Maidstone, Chatham, Tonbridge and Sevenoaks. The London University Institute for Historical Research welcomed me, providing easy access to works of reference and a pleasant environment in which to work.

A thank you is, therefore, due to so many people, but especially to my wife, who not only helped in the task of transcribing bundles of documents, but persuaded me to stick at it and to lock myself away for the first months of retirement in an attempt to make sense of all that had been gathered. Herewith are the fruits of those labours.

Gerald Lane.

September 1995.

A SKETCH MAP TO INDICATE THE EXTENT AND POSITION OF THE DEANERIES OF ROCHESTER AND MALLING WITHIN THE DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER AS WELL AS THE SHOREHAM PECULIAR.



- Rochester Deanery.
- Malling Deanery.
- Dartford Deanery.
- Shoreham Deanery:
A Peculiar of the
Diocese of Canterbury.

The Bishops of Rochester 1756 - 1874

1756 Zacharias Pearse
1774 John Thomas
1793 Samuel Horsley
1802 Thomas Dampier
1809 Walker King
1827 Hugh Percy
1827 George Murray
1860 Joseph Cotton Wigram
1867 Thomas Legh Claughton

The Parishes in the Deanery of Rochester in 1770 (modernised spelling):

Allhallows, Ash, Aylesford, Burham, Chalk, Chatham, Cobham, Cuxton, Cooling, Fawkham, Frindsbury, Gravesend, Halling, High Halstow, Hartley, Higham, Hoo St. Werburgh, Kingsdown-with-Mappiscombe, Longfield, Luddesdown, Rochester St. Margaret, Rochester St. Nicholas, St. Mary Hoo, Milton, Nurstead, Ridley, Shorne, Snodland, Southfleet, Stoke, Stone, Strood, Swanscombe, Wouldham.

The parishes in the Deanery of Malling in 1770 (modernised spelling):

Addington, Allington, Ashurst, East Barming, West Barming, Bidborough, Birling, Brenchley, Capel, Cowden, Ditton, Edenbridge, West Farleigh, Hadlow, Horsmonden, Kemsing, Leybourne, Lamberhurst, Leigh, West Malling, Mereworth, Nettlestead, Offham, Paddlesworth-near-Snodland, West Peckham, Pembury, Ryarsh, Seal, Shipbourne, Speldhurst, Teston, Trotterscliffe, Tudely, Tonbridge, Wateringbury, Westerham, Yalding.

The Dartford Deanery consisted of 26 parishes and the Shoreham Peculiar of Canterbury Diocese numbered 33 parishes.

1770 - 1800

Chapter 1

PROLOGUE: A RECTOR'S VISION

In 1760 there appeared a tract by the rector of Cuxtone (or Cuxton), Caleb Perfect (sometimes called Perfect) entitled "The constant residence of the clergy upon their livings shown to be absolutely necessary."⁽¹⁾ He was early in the field.

Perfect is scathing about the way livings were advertised. Ecclesiastical benefices were put on sale with immediate resignation and the delights of the neighbourhood extolled in best advertising manner, as, for example, a "fine open and sporting country". "There is" he writes, "a poor Vicar, in my neighbourhood, that has a Vicarage but of 40l per year, that was forced into one of these Bonds to obtain it, and his patron takes from him Tithes of half the value of the Church; and he dares not question him for them." He quotes Blackwell and the Charge of "a late prelate" that the constant attendance of clergymen on their several cures is the foundation of all other duties. The Golden Age will have come when every patron appoints carefully without simony or bond, and when clerical poverty is cured by the restoration of tithes to the church through Act of Parliament, revenues being vested in the Bishop and the Diocese. This would obviate the need for pluralities ("Strange! that such Pluralities, as had their rise in the most corrupt ages of Popery, should ever get such Footing in a Protestant Church") by providing adequate income for residence and the support of a caring clergy who could perform duty, rule their households for good example, and comfort the poor. In the course of his argument he considers the difficulties of populous towns and incidentally gives a picture of what he considers to be good clerical practice. "Is it to be credited, that a worthy man, a scholar etc (amiable in every Character of life) should be Vicar, Thirty years or more, of a Market



Town, (of about 801 a year) with a Chapel of Ease and Three Sermons every Sunday and all the Summer, and Two in Winter, with constant Prayers on Holidays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and all performed with the utmost care and Assiduity, and yet pass and die unregarded?" (The respect in which the said paragon was held by his friends and neighbours was well testified by the fact that they collected above 200 pounds to provide a good, substantial vicarage house.) Caleb cannot refrain from adding that insufficient clergy provision leaves towns open to popery.

This work witnesses to concerns which vexed nation and church for many a decade and provides a helpful prologue to this consideration of the clergy of the Deaneries of Rochester and Malling within the Diocese of Rochester from 1770 to 1870. Caleb died in 1770. He had pinpointed the seemingly intractable difficulties of fulfilling the Anglican Dream at its best - providing a well-read pastor resident in every benefice, caring for his flock, and providing an example to them; a vision vitiated by the vagaries of patronage and resignation bonds, by the haphazardness of income, the poverty of many livings with consequent plurality and the need to employ curates, also by the appropriation of tithes and the increasingly vexatious and contentious business of their collection - not to mention greed or any inadequacies in the clerical gentlemen themselves. He proposed a radical plan for episcopal management of tithe. Would that have created a hollow laugh in remote country vicarages? How effective was and could be episcopal administration, when bishops came and went, whilst livings could be and often were for life? All matters to look into, but answers not always to be found from the documents which have survived.

What of Caleb Parfect himself? It would be good to report that he was an exemplary resident cleric. However, in 1760 when he wrote, he himself held two of the parishes in the Deanery of Rochester (Shorne and Cuxton) in plurality, having been granted a dispensation so to do when presented by the Dean and Chapter to Shorne in 1733, and having held Cuxton (likewise a Chapter living - he had been a minor canon)

since 1719. He vacated both by death at the age of 84.⁽²⁾ Shorne was given to the Archdeacon. Cuxton went to Charles Moore, who wrote to the Bishop requesting dispensation from residence on the grounds that the parsonage house was uninhabitable for much of the year because of its low damp situation. "On which account" he continued, "the rectors and their curate, when they had any, have always been indulged by their Diocesan with a permission to reside at Rochester, where I now live - an indulgence which I hope your Lordship will continue to grant me - the parish and its Distance from Rochester being small and the occasional Duty of course very little."⁽³⁾ Since Caleb Parfect was the only incumbent most would remember, having been vicar for fifty years, he presumably likewise resided at Rochester during the inclement seasons of the year and it is difficult to envisage how his ideals could have been put into practice. Rochester is some four miles away and the journey not easy. The road rises steeply from the River Medway. Parfect was seventy-four when he wrote. Of course, the population would not have been large (about 200?) and the occasional duty not arduous (although funerals would be the more likely at the times when the parsonage house was at its most damp), but it is difficult to see how he could have been, for example, of comfort to the poor, certainly in emergency.

1770 - 1800

Chapter 2

ROCHESTER AND MALLING DEANERIES AND THEIR CLERGY

The Deaneries of Rochester and Malling have been chosen for consideration because at least some Archdiaconal Visitation Returns have survived on a regular basis for the latter part of the period and these parishes provide a cohesive, yet diverse, portion of the Archdeaconry and of the Diocese. Indeed Rochester was the smallest of the English dioceses, having only ninety-seven parishes and one Archdeaconry, (The other deanery, to the west, was that of Dartford, for which no Visitation records seem to have survived. Rochester and Malling were separated from this westerly part of the Archdeaconry by the Shoreham Deanery, a Peculiar of Canterbury, which also encroached in places into natural Rochester territory.)⁽¹⁾ We are, therefore, looking at a strip of parishes, stretching from the estuaries of the Thames and Medway in the north to the Sussex border in the South. Rochester Deanery consisted of 34 parishes in 1770 and Malling of 37. Not included in Archdiaconal Administration within this strip were Cliffe, which was a Peculiar of the Rector of Cliffe, as well as Gillingham, East Farleigh, Hunton, East Malling and East Peckham, which were all pockets of the Shoreham Peculiar. In the 1846 reorganisation of diocesan boundaries the Malling Deanery passed to Canterbury Diocese (but as far as is practical continues to be part of this study).

Topography⁽²⁾

From the northernmost parish of Allhallows in the Grain Peninsular to Speldhurst on the southern border is some thirty-three miles. A journey between them would have taken you, in the late eighteenth century, through a rich variety of countryside with diverse

agricultural usage as well as through or near such disparate communities as the dockyard and garrison town of Chatham, the Cathedral City of Rochester, handsomely spacious Malling and genteel Tunbridge Wells (which was in fact part of Tonbridge parish with its public (grammar) school and castle).

The Grain Peninsular riverside parishes were marshy and low lying. The air, polluted by marsh gas, was considered to be unhealthy, but the clay soil not infertile. Allhallows was remote in the extreme, the village leading to no-where except the marshes, "altogether a most unfrequented and dreary situation". Cooling, so called from its cold and bleak situation, was as unhealthy as it was unpleasant. Roads in the peninsular were deep with mire and full of water, inclosures were small and hedgerows thick.

Westwards from the Peninsular the Thameside parishes were little better, since the air was "very unhealthy and much subject to intermittents, a fatality which attends in general all those parishes which lie to the north side of the high London road" and "much subject to agues, particularly in autumn". It is probable that the true cause of fatalities was malaria, the mosquitoes breeding in the marshes. W. H. Ireland wrote of Cliffe in 1830 "There is scarcely a gentleman's house or even a clergyman living there, in consequence of the...unwholesome air issuing from the ancient marshes."⁽³⁾ Shorne had its pleasant orchards to the south of the high road and riverwards its 1796 battery of 24-pounders, erected for the defence of the Thames in the current French wars. Chalk pits had been dug into the countryside bordering the river at Swanscombe and Stone, the chalk being exported from local wharves.

Milton merged into Gravesend, which was a populous town - indeed the manure from its horses helped create rich and fertile ground around it. Unsightly and narrow-streeted, it contained about seven hundred houses. However, seabathing machines were, at the turn of the century, a recent novelty; there was a market twice a week, as well as a well-used ferry service to London along the Thames. The

hinterland included about seventy acres of market garden, which supplied London as well as the locality. (Its asparagus, known as Gravesend Grass, was considered to be the finest in England.)

Southwards from the Peninsular, the Medway Towns of Strood, Rochester and Chatham had grown up along Roman Watling Street around the strategic river crossing. The town of Strood (Stroud), which consisted of one main street, had recently been much improved as a result of a 1769 Act of Parliament for new paving, lighting and watching. Its inhabitants were mostly sea-faring men, fishermen and oyster dredgers. Rochester, with its Norman Cathedral and Castle, was also famous for its oysters. Being on the main road to Dover, it contained several large inns, which were experiencing hard times because of the French War. It had no industry of its own, but was a pleasant place to live for those whose business lay in maritime Chatham.

Chatham itself was a populous and quickly growing town with disagreeable and ill built housing, which was occupied by those connected with shipping, sea-faring and allied trades. The Royal Naval Dockyard went back to Tudor times. Chatham was also a garrison town with barracks to accommodate five regiments of soldiers ready to man fortifications, which were in process of being built to protect the town from the "common enemy". The Church was not large enough because of the rising population and was pulled down (except for the steeple) in 1788 and rebuilt on a much larger scale, the expense being defrayed partly by a brief and partly by a parochial contribution (a rare response at that time?). A dispute with a modern ring had engaged the townsfolk - a new road was built to bypass the High Street covered by that same Act of Parliament, which had beautified the main road of Strood. So fearful were the inhabitants of Chatham that this would be to the disadvantage of the High Street that they refused to include the High Street within the Act. As it turned out, travellers avoided this "unsafe and disagreeable thoroughfare" so Acts of Parliament were obtained in

1772 and 1776, which allowed the High Street to be paved and lit at the cost of a rate of up to ninepence in the pound.

All this was worlds away from the countryside to the south and west.

The parishes of the Rochester Deanery on the London side, but to the south of Watling Street, were for the most part hilly and pleasant, but remote and infrequently visited. Southfleet had no public thoroughfare or high road through it, gentlemen's seats had been left to moulder and, save for the rector, there was no gentleman residing in the parish; Fawkham was equally isolated; Hartley Church stood untroubled by any other near-by building, although there were several straggling houses a quarter of a mile northwards; Ash did possess some eighty residences, with a population of four hundred, but neighbouring Kingsdown had a church which stood by itself in an eighty acre wood about a quarter of a mile from the village. (Maplescome had been united with Kingsdown in 1633 - now its church lay in ruins in a cornfield in a very deep valley). Ridley had no village, but was dotted about with some eight dwellings, giving home to forty inhabitants. Nurstead contained only five houses, two of them cottages, but it was less than a mile each way in size. Of course it had its church.

From Strood, southwards, Wouldham, Cuxton, Halling and Snodland all suffered from their position on the River Medway and its marshes, but Burham was reckoned to be "less offensive and rather more healthy". Nor were they so remote, since the road from Strood to Larkfield ran through them. Once into Aylesford the river was bordered by pleasant fields and meadows, because its non-tidal waters had become "pellucid and fresh". Crossing the ancient bridge northwards the gently rising countryside was "beautifully picturesque" heralding the lush lands of Malling Deanery.

It is easy, in the light of this summary, to suggest why a clergyman could consider it unpropitious to be resident (apart from the question of adequate income and housing): marshy ground a danger to

health; the situation so remote as to be intolerable; the parish so tiny or the population so sparse, as scarcely to warrant full-time cure. On the other hand the Gravesends and Chatham were crowded, dirty and unappealing.

Apart from a few exceptions, the parishes of the Malling Deanery did not present such immediate excuses. The area was well crossed with roads (eg. London, Wrotham, Maidstone; Dartford to Malling; Wrotham to Westerham; Maidstone to Tonbridge; Tonbridge to Lamberhurst and Sussex; Tonbridge to the Wells; Maidstone to Yalding, Lamberhurst and Sussex; Maidstone to Sevenoaks; Tonbridge through Brenchley to Goudhurst and southern parts of the Weald). Only five parishes were designated "unfrequented" and three "small" by Hasted. A dozen were given the accolade "pleasant" or even "beautifully situated". Much of the area was very fertile, producing both corn and an abundant crop of hops. Of Hadlow Hasted notes "the income of this vicarage greatly depends on the hop plantations, which have been some years so advantageous as to increase the income of it up to £240 per annum". Well-wooded, oak was despatched by barge from Yalding and Tonbridge, primarily for use by the Navy at Chatham and Sheerness. On the return journey Yalding received coal, which was processed in a local kiln into coke for hop drying. If town dwelling were preferred Malling was small with about 140 residences, Tonbridge (with the Wells) and Westerham were spacious, gracious and "with many genteel houses".

Let us, therefore, take the years 1770, 1780, 1790 and 1800 and, as far as we have information, attempt to discover what the residence situation was in Rochester Deanery and compare it with its sister Deanery. (We can also consider how the clergy came to be presented to their livings, how long they had been there, how many curates there were and how the two deaneries compared: even how far clergy responded to the exhortations of Bishop and Archdeacon.)

Non-residence

The extent of non-residence is very difficult to determine with any accuracy as early as this. Hasted and Fielding list the incumbents. Archdiaconal Visitation Processes confirm their accuracy. Hasted, Venn and Foster give indications as to livings held in plurality.⁽⁴⁾ Records of licences for non-residence do not begin until the year 1818. As an expedient, such parochial registers as are available at Kent County Archives have been searched for indications as to who actually read the banns of marriage at Sunday worship or conducted the marriage services and these figures are used as a rough and ready indication. At least on these occasions we know who was there, but this, of course, does not mean that they were resident during the week or anything like every Sunday.

In 1770 in Rochester Deanery parish registers are available for 25 of the 34 parishes. Some do not have details of banns for this year, but of the 20 which do, 6 were called by incumbents, 11 by curates and 2 by "ministers" - one was illegible. In 1780 22 registers record the requisite information: incumbents read the banns in 6 cases, curates in 15, and at Snodland both vicar and curate read them during the year. In 1790 of the 21 with banns information, 7 were in the hands of incumbents, 1 was shared between vicar and curate, 12 were read invariably by curates and 1 had a variety of ministers. Finally 1800 figures are available for 23 parishes and in this year the duty was performed by the incumbent in 7 parishes, by the curate in 15 and Cuxton still had a variety of ministers. The data is also to hand for 1776, 1786 and 1796. Looking at the parishes individually and for all seven years it can be ascertained that in 2 parishes the incumbent was on hand in each of the seven sample years and in another all but one. In 10 parishes it is always a curate; 12 show a mixture of varying proportions. So in Burham the vicar is there in 1770, but then is found in the family living of Ditton, at Chalk the Vicar was present 6 out of the 7, although he was also rector of Ifield and Nurstead, at Gravesend a change of rector seems to have brought a change of practice (an example which

other new appointees do not seem to have followed, although for the years following 1777 when he became rector of Halling John Leach officiated there as well as in the neighbouring parish of Wouldham, which he held in plurality from 1781).

It can be tabulated as follows:

Year	No. of registers available from the 34 parishes	normally signed by:-			
		Incumbent.	Curate.	"Minister."	Both or a Variety of Ministers
1770	20 (1 illegible)	6	11	2	-
1776	21 (1 ditto)	3	14	2	1
1780	22	6	15		1
1786	23	7	14		2
1790	21	7	12		2
1796	22	7	14		1
1800	23	7	15		1

(The information for 1770 is erratic, so to obtain this year's figure, '71 and '72 have been taken into consideration when the register is blank in '70. Strood and Chatham have been treated as livings although they were technically perpetual curacies.)

All in all, it would appear that the Deanery had only a handful of resident incumbents and this conclusion is born out by such information as Hasted and Venn give us about plurality. Taking the same years it looks like this:

	Numbers with other livings/appointments	Their other appointments nearby in the archdeaconry so that duty could be done
1770	20	11
1780	23	8
1790	24	8
1800	20	5

There could, of course, have been other pluralities, of which no record has been discovered. There is a disturbing trend in the third column of figures. The number of pluralities has steadied but the cases are more blatant. Only five are near enough to serve all their various incumbencies and there are more "professional" pluralists.

Aylesford, for instance, was held by the Provost of Oriel, who was also a prebend of Rochester (it was a Dean and Chapter living); Archdeacon Law of Rochester, strong in his Charges on the necessity for residency (and of whom more later), added neighbouring Chatham in 1784 to Westhill (Hertfordshire) and Much Eaton (Essex); Kingsdown was part of the empire of Thomas Willis - he was canon of Rochester, prebendary of Lincoln, prebendary of St Pauls and rector of St. George's Bloomsbury; Milton, together with Trotterscliffe in Malling Deanery, had fallen to the Archdeacon of Carmarthen; the vicar of Frindsbury was also rector of Orlestone and curate of Minster-in-Sheppey; Beadon of Strood (Master of Jesus College Cambridge and Chaplain to George III) held livings in Lincolnshire and Hertfordshire.⁽⁵⁾ Perhaps the age, remoteness, or fear that the Napoleonic Wars would spill over into Kent via the banks of the Medway or the Thames, really had frightened them! Perhaps there was no parsonage house, a common excuse. However, let us now compare the situation in Malling Deanery, which can be tabulated thus:

Year	No. of registers available from the 37 parishes	Normally signed by			
		Incumbent.	Curate.	Minister.	Both.
1770	20 (1 illegible)	10	9	1	0
1776	20 (1 ditto)	9	9	1	0
1780	20	8	12	0	0
1786	20	7	13	0	0
1790	21 (1 illegible)	9	11	1	0
1796	20 (1 ditto)	7	11	1	0
1800	21 (1 ditto)	8	10	2	0

A look at the parishes individually shows that the incumbent was invariably the officiant in Brenchley and Ryarsh and in all but one of the years at East Barming. The curate was always the signatory in Addington and Edenbridge (but Edenbridge was considered a chapel of Westerham, so this could, perhaps, count as an incumbency) and in every year save one at Horsmonden, Hadlow, Trotterscliffe and Wateringbury.

The situation, as far as can be gathered, with regard to pluralities looks like this:

	Numbers with other livings/appointments	Their other appointments nearby in the Archdeaconry
1770	11	6
1780	15	9
1790	17	9
1800	17	7

Of the 37 Malling parishes it must be noted that West Barming had been united with Nettlestead since the days of Henry VII, Capel had been united with Tudely since 1597, Paddlesworth was a sinecure and an appendage to the manor, Seale had long been in the cure of the Vicar of Kemsing and Edenbridge was a chapel of Westerham. (Tunbridge Wells does not figure, it being a private district Chapel within the parish of Tonbridge.)

The figures are not really sufficient to discuss in terms of percentages, but there would appear to be in Malling a similar upward trend in the number of parishes in the hands of the "professional" pluralist. By 1800 the Provost of Oriel had added Lamberhurst to Aylesford thanks to the Dean and Chapter (he was prebendary of Rochester and in 1770 the Dean himself had held it); Thomas Willis (see above p. 11) had obtained Wateringbury; Shipbourne had become the base for the Headmaster of Tonbridge

School, who also was rector of two Essex parishes. Such indication as the parish registers give suggest a similar level (perhaps slightly greater) of involvement in marriages by incumbents in Malling coupled with less pluralism than in Rochester Deanery. It is also to be noted that there is a generally greater (slight but significant) use of curates in Rochester. Perhaps the attractions of Malling did persuade a few more incumbents actually to reside in their livings, than was the case in Rochester. The fact remains that in many a parish the day-to-day work was in the hands of a curate. But presumably a good curate could make up for an absentee incumbent.

It so happens that in his primary Visitation Charge (1776) Bishop Thomas was much concerned with assistant clergy.⁽⁶⁾

After fulsome praise for his predecessor (Zachary Pearce) he commented on his good fortune in being appointed to a diocese where, from some personal knowledge of the clergy and from answers to his queries (would that we had them) ministerial duty appeared to be very ably and diligently discharged. In some parishes it would be still more so if there were a residing incumbent living an exemplary life or (where there is necessary and legal dispensation) a resident and licensed curate. A recent trial had over-ruled the pleas that the want of a parsonage house was sufficient excuse for non-residence and another recent case had pointed out that the giving of a title was in the nature of a contract and that the yearly stipend was payable until the curate gained some other preferment or was lawfully removed for some fault (and that could be an expensive legal process) even though the incumbent performed the whole duty. However, this should help prevent the giving of pretended titles and encourage incumbents to take more care when giving real ones. He warns incumbents never to sign Letters Testimonial unless he knows the candidate well and that he is duly qualified. He expects that any curate, who is to be employed on a regular basis, should be approved by himself, his salary likewise approved and paid by the incumbent and that he be licensed. He finishes: "I have the

satisfaction to find, among the answers to my inquiry on this article, instances of liberality, which, if generally practised, will supersede the necessity of any interposition on my part."

Curates

Unfortunately information concerning curates is sparse. From 1776 the Archdiaconal Visitation processes give names of curates, so, in so far as these are accurate (and legible) it is possible to give an indication as to numbers, their deployment and, through the good offices of Foster and Venn, their graduate status, as well as a career outline for some.

Visitation processes⁽⁷⁾ are extant for the years 1776, 1780, 1796 and 1803 in the early part of the period and the number of curates named is as follows:-

	In Rochester Deanery	In Malling
1776	2 (probably 14 see below)	14
1780	14	13
1796	15	17
1803	18	18

There would seem to be something wrong with the Rochester figures in the first year, although the names are recorded in the same manuscript process volume as those for Malling. We have already seen that in 1776 14 curates signed in the 22 registers available in Rochester. A quick comparison of names in the process and in the register in Malling show that in the 12 cases in 1776 and 1780 where information is available in the registers the names correspond in 10 instances, in one case a curate signs a register who is not in the process and one name is different. It is evident, however, that curates come and go very quickly and this could well account for the

discrepancy. It would seem that names have been omitted in the process for Rochester for 1776 and the true figure is probably about 14. The Malling figures (9, 12 and 11) are close in 1780, nearer in 1776, but there is a wider discrepancy in 1796. However in every instance but one in 1796, where a curate signs in the registers, the name corresponds with the process. There is, as we have seen, a tendency in some parishes for the vicar to officiate more often, so then the curate's name does not appear; but this does not necessarily mean there is no curate!

Bishop Thomas was anxious that no pretended titles be given and that curates be fairly treated. What was the background of these hopefuls? Here we seem to have drawn a surprising blank. Hasted did not worry himself about curates (any more than he did about dissenting places of worship!), but one would expect to find them recorded among the university alumni. Taking the names recorded on the processes for the four years we find a total of 39 names in Rochester (one year missing) and 49 in Malling. Of this total of 88 curates 21 definitely appear among the alumni of Oxford and Cambridge, 26 possibly could, but there is not sufficient information to tally (these vary in my notes from "possibly" to "just possibly" to "very doubtful"), 12 fall in the category "can't say" (eg. they have a name like Jones and there is no forename or initial, or the name is illegible) and of 14 there is no trace. There would seem to be a surprising number of non-graduates. Where did they come from? Did they just present themselves in hopes to a bishop for ordination, having got the necessary Letters Testimonial, or prevail upon an incumbent to use his good offices with his Lordship? Did they remain as curates because they were non-graduates and so considered to be unqualified for a living? Presumably the well-connected would have enjoyed their three or four years in one of the universities, the majority of whose graduates entered Holy Orders. Are the alumni lists incomplete?

There are four special cases. The Medway Towns of Chatham and Strood were perpetual curacies in the gift of the Dean and Chapter. Chatham

was given to Archdeacon Law in 1784 and he held it for 43 years. Strood in 1770 had been in the hands of the Master of Jesus College Cambridge for fifteen years and was to continue to remain so for another twenty-one. Both parishes employed sub-curates on occasions. In Malling Deanery, Edenbridge was a chapel of Westerham and attracted long-serving ministers (two covering the years 1776 - 1830); Tunbridge Wells was a chapel-of-ease built by private subscription in the late seventeenth century with its management and appointment of ministers under trustees. The ministry was to the many fashionable visitors to the spa town and the chaplains tended to stay for periods of only three to four years in the seventies and eighties. Then, with the growth of Tunbridge Wells as a residential community, came the 43 years of Benson from 1786, which was followed by the 50 years of Pope.

Looking at the names, which appear in the processes, there are a considerable number, which do not reappear. So in Malling Deanery the 1780 list is completely different from that of 1776 four years before. Rochester process is defective, but a look at the register signing would suggest more stability in that in four cases the 1780 signatory is the same as for 1776. Of the 18 curates mentioned in the 1803 Rochester process 5 were in situ seven years earlier and in Malling of the 18 1803 curates, 5 had been there in 1796. Of the 46 Malling curates mentioned between 1770 and 1803, 25 occur only once and there is no further information available about them. In Rochester (other than the perpetual curacies) a total of 34 curates are mentioned in the processes during the same years (remembering that 1776 is incomplete) and of these 13 appear only once. However these figures need to be amended, because, among those not further mentioned as curates are some who were also incumbents.

Identification is not always possible, but it would seem that 6 of the 38 curates mentioned only once in the processes were in fact incumbents who were also acting as curate at the time. Cuxton, of Caleb Parfect fame, was served by the vicar of Halling one year, another year by the vicar of Hoo and yet another by the vicar of Frindsbury, Higham by the vicar of Hoo (who was also Headmaster of

Rochester King's School), Shorne by the vicar of West Malling, Trotterscliffe by the vicar of Offham, but they were all designated curates, presumably with stipend. One of the 1796 bunch became vicar of the parish (Tudeley-cum-Capel) five years later. Given that their most likely career moves would be within the neighbourhood, the fact that 31 out of 80 do not emerge again in either Deanery is significant, as is the fact that many seem to be untraceable in the alumni lists.

In contrast, there are those for whom a curacy is just one source of income among several, as with the incumbents already mentioned. Three other curacies were held by incumbents of the Archdeaconry - Fawkham by Bradley of Hartley, Halling by the pluralist Browne of Wouldham (he was later to add Hartley to his list of incumbencies), Addington by Thurston of Ryarsh. Then there is the case of William Gordon who was curate at Speldhurst from 1796 through to 1816, when he becomes vicar thereof. Promotion? No. It would seem he was perpetual curate of Darlington in Durham from 1797 until 1830 as well. It is likely that John Bousanquet Polhill, curate at West Malling in 1803 was rector of Hadleigh in Essex. In addition Peter Elers, who was curate at Birling, Trotterscliffe and Addington (to become vicar there in 1805) was already patron and rector of a Suffolk parish as well as being domestic Chaplain to the Duke of Clarence, afterwards William IV. Ranworth, curate of Cowden (1780-1803), was vicar of a Canterbury parish. Thornhill, variously curate of High Halstow, St. Mary Hoo and Lee, became Master of Colfs Grammar School, but all the time was rector of Horton in Gloucestershire, although he never actually resided there.

Beyond these, the fortunates for whom there is record of an upward career move and for whom a curacy provided a springboard, number six. Moreland of Horsmonden began his curacy about 1796 and became its rector in 1819. The curate of Stone went on to be vicar of Darenth and curate of Wilmington, Fielden of Swanscombe became vicar of Shepherdswell in Canterbury Diocese; Richard Barthurst seems to have begun his successful progress in the Diocese as curate of

Lamberhurst; and another Lamberhurst curate began a stint there in 1803 until he became rector of Spridlington, Gloucestershire in 1822. The curate of Ridley, who also first appears in the 1803 process, quickly progressed to be rector of Lympsfield in 1806 - but he was the nephew of Lord Newhaven.

However, such information as we have would suggest that by far the greater proportion remained in curacies. Of the quality of their ministry, who can say?

The expressed hopes of Bishop Thomas are not in doubt. Indeed throughout the thirty years there was plenty of episcopal admonition delivered in Visitation Charges. The Archdeacon regularly added to these; so we turn to their Charges in order to discover just what were the aspirations of Bishop and Archdeacon for the Diocese and what it was they expected of their clergy.

1770 - 1800

Chapter 3

EPISCOPAL POLICY AND THE EXERCISE OF PATRONAGE

Bishop Thomas put a high value on the gathering of clergy together to hear his Visitation Charges. They were, he considered, occasions for mutual encouragement and provided opportunities for clarification in matters of law affecting the clergy.⁽¹⁾

We have seen his concern for the status of curates in 1776. In the same Charge he considers the manner of life of the clergy and in particular the younger clergy. He is anxious that they be proficient in Scripture. Given the contemporary syllabi at the Universities perhaps he was wise. He desires them to read the Bible in regular progression, consulting a learned commentary whenever they come to a difficult or obscure passage. This will enable the clergyman to fulfil his duty to lead his flock to drink from the deep well of Holy Scripture, and it will help him to combat "fanaticism", which, he complains, accounts all literary acquirements and sound criticism as nothing compared with "gifted powers" of discernment. The young clergyman must set himself to collect evidence for the truth of Christianity with say the help of Grotius and Locke. Pearson is suggested on the Creed, Burnet on the Articles and Secker on the Catechism. "Judicious Hooker, acute Chillingworth, and the learned Bishop Stillingfleet" would provide a sound understanding of the reasons for the church's separation from Rome and from Protestant Dissent. All this should be topped up with a competent knowledge of ecclesiastical history - he recommends Dr Mosheim. He admits that differing talents and opportunities make such study difficult for some. Good health, leisure, the companionship of men of letters, and easy access to books is not the lot of all, "but a few books well chosen and well studied, like a small income well managed, would set us all above a state of intellectual poverty."⁽²⁾

It is equally necessary to study men, to consider human nature in all its variety, to penetrate the secret recesses of the heart with its virtues, vices and sin and to be ready both to commend and to rebuke. So the clergyman must look to his own life style, and constantly endeavour to "give no offence in anything that the ministry be not blamed".

Clergy are to be proficient in the things of God and to live a life of example, as they had promised at their ordination. This was the answer, be it to "fanaticism" or to the strictures of an "observing and critical" age. It is a message which permeates the exhortations of both Bishop and Archdeacon. Exhorting both himself and his hearers Bishop Thomas rehearses their duties:-

In worship to be punctual and to conduct the service in such a manner that all are led to the throne of grace. To explain the doctrines of Christianity through pertinent discourses and to enforce their precepts with becoming zeal. To cultivate a sense of sobriety, justice and piety in their parishioners, and particularly in their own households, being regular in the practice of family devotion. To visit the fatherless and widows. To give themselves wholly, and to bend all their care and study to the fulfilling of these duties that they "may render us acceptable to God, affectionate to one another, and instructive to those committed to our charge".

A 1779 Charge by Archdeacon Law brought a sarcastic riposte from "A Kentish Curate".⁽³⁾ His pamphlet went on sale at a shilling a time. As is so often the case, the public controversy resulted in the Charge going to a second edition. As his Bishop was to do the following year, Law is calling for charity and deploring the hysterical reaction to the lifting of disabilities to Roman Catholics as witnessed in the Gordon Riots. "Let us not vainly strive to check the growth of error", he writes, "by any other means, than those which dispassionate reason and Christian charity will authorize". The chief danger, he tells the clergy, could well come from their

own supineness, or from the inconsistency of their lives, which do not match their Christian profession. It is the same argument - that the truth is to be commended by the quality of the parson's life.

This is an understandable and estimable hope. Let the parson and his household be an ever present witness to the truth. But it inevitably invites disparaging comment, both deserved and undeserved. Thus the Kentish Curate sarcastically referred to the people of fashion with whom Law kept company. There was no danger of them turning Papist - they were not likely to have any serious thought about religion at all - and certainly they would not embrace a faith which enjoined penance, confession, self-denial and abstinence! Dr. Law was the son of a Governor of Bombay and married to the daughter of Viscount Falkland. No doubt the Kentish Curate had the measure of Law's fashionable life-style, which was financed by his Cathedral emoluments, the valuable perpetual curacy of Chatham, and at least two other livings in Essex and Hertfordshire. The houses of the fashionable he may have visited. He certainly did not frequent the parsonages of his Archdeaconry. He was to admit in 1820⁽⁴⁾ (when he was 80 years of age and thought that he might well be giving his last Charge) that he had not visited the parsonages or churches since his initial round, which was made at Bishop Pierce's suggestion - that would have been more than fifty years before! But then the clergy were quite capable, in his estimation, of looking after their own churches and dwellings. Yet, of course, a reason often given for non-residence was the lack of a parsonage house, or at least the want of a habitable one. Bishop Thomas was well aware of the problem.⁽⁵⁾ One would have thought it was a matter of Archdiaconal concern.

There is also the other side of the coin, as Law himself recognised. If clergy by their manner of living did indeed shame their fellows, they would not be thanked for it. Reaction would be cruel and disparaging. "In an age of luxury, dissipation, and extravagance, those men will most probably be slighted, whose duty calls upon them to check these growing evils." ⁽⁶⁾

Six years on in his episcopate in 1780 Bishop Thomas professes himself satisfied with what he is finding.⁽⁷⁾ Nothing has required him to exercise his judicial authority, only in a few cases has friendly expostulation been necessary, and several instances have warranted well-merited commendation. The visitation returns lead him to believe that there will be in future much more to applaud than to complain of. Such optimism would indeed give mutual encouragement to the clergy of the Archdeaconry. Yet if the aim were to commend the gospel by quality of living and exemplary relationships with the local community, much would appear to ^{have been} wanting. Non-residency was endemic, curates may or may not have been competent and relationships with local farmers could not but be ambivalent. If the management of glebe brought common interest between parson and agriculturalist, the negotiation and collection of tithe was an annual irritant. Moreover in many an instance the parson was indebted to the local manor for his appointment. The parson's freehold gave him independence from Bishop and Squire, but which was the easier to resist? The Bishop might hope for this, that or the other, but the only real power he had (except through the cumbersome business of litigation and Church Courts) was when he came to reappoint - and in very few cases was the living in his hands. On the other hand the influential patron could be one's next door neighbour. The question of housing could also be very much in the hands of the patron. Moreover one would imagine that a watchful patron would have something to say if the curate were not fulfilling his obligations - the relationship of the assistant clergy with a resident patron must have been very difficult.

Thanks to Hasted,⁽⁸⁾ we have a good idea of the patronage situation in the Archdeaconry at the turn of the century.

Patronage

Looking at Rochester Deanery first, it can be noted that advowsons did not change hands all that frequently, if only because the

greater part of the patronage was not in private hands. From 1770 to 1796 the patronage remained unchanged in those livings held by the Bishop (8), the Dean and Chapter (9), the Crown (3) and Cambridge Colleges (2). The other 12 were in private patronage throughout (ie. just over 35%). 5 of these remained in the same hands, 2 of them being appendages of the Lord of the Manor. Of the other 7, Cobham was sold to Lord Darnley (but Pemble, who sold the advowson, kept 4/5ths of the tithe) and Hartley changed hands three times. High Halstow together with St. Mary Hoo was sold to the Rev'd Robert Burt, who presented himself to both.⁽⁹⁾

In Malling Deanery the picture was very different in that the Bishop was patron of only one parish (and that because he was Lord of the Manor of Trotterscliffe, which gave him the right of presentation); the Dean and Chapter was patron of 4 and the Crown of 2. No fewer than 25 were in private hands and of the others Edenbridge came under Westerham, Seale under Kemsing, Capel was united with Tudeley, and Paddleworth and West Barming were non-functional, meaning that 78% of presentations were in lay hands. This could have resulted in a considerable amount of instability, if the patronage ^{had} changed hands frequently and advowsons were sold every few years, but this did not happen. In 8 instances the patronage was an appendage of the Lord of the Manor (9 if you count the Bishop as such) and in fact in only 7 of these parishes did the patronage change hands during these years. Cowden, Hadlow, Leigh and Speldhurst were obtained by clerics, who presented themselves, the remaining 3 look as though they were passed on by bequest.

Between the years 1770 - 1800 in the two Deaneries the total number of presentations was 104. There was something of a differential between the two (57 in Rochester and 47 in Malling). The Bishop was patron in 16 instances (R. 14, M. 2), The Dean & Chapter in 25 (R. 18, M. 11), Crown in 6 (R. 4, M. 2), Cambridge Colleges 3 (R) and private 50 (R. 18, M. 32). As would be expected in a thirty year period all the Rochester livings changed hands, 14 of them more than once (and a couple, 3 times). In Malling, however, 5 had the same

incumbent as in 1770 (Addington, Kemsing-with-Seale, West Malling, Pembury and Ryarsh), all of whom remained in situ until their deaths. Only 9 changed more than once, but of these 3 saw 3 appointments. There was greater stability in Malling, which is not surprising. It is not simply that the parishes themselves were pleasanter. Although it is not possible to give a realistic indication of their value at this stage, being richly agricultural, the income from them would follow the war-time boom. Moreover a large majority of livings in Malling were in private patronage; among them family livings. However, let us see if it is possible to give any indication as to how the patronage was exercised by those concerned. 104 vacancies occurred. 104 opportunities to do what?

Three Bishops had the responsibility of appointing 14 incumbents to their 8 livings in the Rochester Deanery between 1770 and 1800. (Pearce 2, Thomas 8 and Horsley 4). Both the Pearce appointees were well connected. Charles Moore, of whom we have heard, was the son of the Minister of Aldersgate and Thomas Heathcote of Stone was the second son of Sir Thomas Heathcote of Hursley Lodge, Southampton. As far as can be gathered this was the Honourable Thomas' only living. He was 24 when he was collated and died at the Parsonage House thirty-nine years later. In death he may have been resident, but his registers were invariably signed by a curate. Charles Moore was a scholar of Trinity Cambridge, having been educated at Tonbridge and St. Paul's. In 1766 he received the member's prize and was a fellow of Trinity, Cambridge. Non-resident he may have been for much of the time, but his Canterbury livings enabled him to share with the Rochester Diocesan Synod expertise he had gained in Sunday Schools (see below p. 31).

In the light of Thomas' Visitation hopes, his appointments are of particular interest. The best one can say about them is that they were well tried and safe! Menzies at Frindsbury, for example, was a chaplain to George III, of aristocratic parentage, already vicar of Orlestone and a minor canon of Rochester. (The previous change of incumbency was effected without Thomas' help in that the vicars of

Frindsbury and West Farleigh exchanged livings in 1778.) Derby of Longfield was appointed at the age of 50 and also retained Southfleet. He had been a Six preacher at Canterbury, having been responsible for publishing Bishop Pearce's sermons in the year of that scholar's death. (This living a "thank you" from his admiring successor?) Currey, who followed Derby at Longfield, continued to remain as vicar of Dartford. It looks as if Bagshaw was appointed to Southfleet at the age of 67 and remained as curate at Bromley as well. Rashleigh was but 38 when he was appointed to Wouldham and continued to hold New Romney and Barking, (he did resign Wouldham on receiving Southfleet); he appears in Foster's Baronetage.

For the 4 Horsley appointments nothing can be found.

The one Malling parish in the Bishop's gift (Trotterscliffe) was given by Thomas to Francis Tanyton ("gent"), who also continued as Vicar of West Farleigh - very much in line with Thomas' preferment policy. The 1794 vacancy there was filled by Horsley. He presented his former colleague when Bishop of St. David's, the Archdeacon of Carmarthen (who three years later was also to add the crown living of Milton within the Deanery to his portfolio).

The Dean and Chapter happily looked after their own in the 25 vacancies it fell to their lot to fill. 20 went to canons or minor canons of Rochester and one was headmaster of the Kings School. They also possessed many a plum between them, with some notable pluralists (eg. Charles Tarrant 1776 at Lamberhurst who was already Dean of Peterborough, a prebendary of Salisbury, a prebendary of Bristol and Chaplain to George III; a year later Pinnell of Shorne kept Eltham as well as his Rochester prebendary and at the close of the century we have Willis who added Wateringbury to his other Dean and Chapter living of Kingsdown whilst continuing as a prebend of Lincoln and of St. Paul's as well as retaining the rectory of St. George, Bloomsbury - but then he was the son of a Physician to the King).

Of the crown appointments little can be discovered.

In each case the Colleges, as would be expected, appointed an alumnus - two headmasters (both of them had been wranglers and one a writer of blank verse) and a D.D., who published an analysis of Locke's work. This leaves us with those livings under private patronage.

Three factors are immediately apparent - the first how similar, as far as one can tell, are those who are appointed, whoever is the patron, for many of them continue to hold livings elsewhere or soon acquire them: the second is the number of long-serving incumbents: and the third the founding of several dynasties, where members of the same family were to be appointed well into the next century and indeed beyond, the result in some instances (as we have seen) of clerics purchasing the advowson and appointing themselves. (There were, for example, Monypennys at Hadlow from the Napoleonic Wars until after the Second World War.)

In Rochester Deanery 10 of the 18 appointments were certainly pluralists (and of the remainder nothing is known in 6 cases). In Malling half of the 32 likewise held livings elsewhere, of 6 nothing is known, and in the others there is not sufficient information available to enable us to evaluate the appointment process. It is in Malling with its high proportion of private patronage that we notice the large number of long-serving incumbents, who were instituted during these last three decades of the eighteenth century. 14 of those appointed (2 to Crown and 1 to Dean and Chapter livings) were to serve longer than 40 years and another 14, more than 20 (1 Dean and Chapter); that is, 28 out of 47 were to continue in their livings for over twenty years - 59%. In Rochester Deanery there were a goodly number serving over 20 years (28 in all out of 57 appointments - 49%), but of these only 4 reached their 40th anniversary, compared with Malling's 14.

It is not possible to say on what criteria private patrons appointed, although it would be a good guess that family and family connections took priority. The length of incumbencies does not suggest a frequent use of resignation bonds or like arrangements. There would seem to be little doubt however that incumbencies went principally to those already in livings, which were retained; and to those who were well-connected.

Many a pluralist was appointed, yet the policy, the very strongly expressed policy, of the episcopate was that the good of church and people could only be served by a resident priest. At the end of the century it is a requirement which underpins the parochial policy of Horsley and was stated in forceful terms to a startled Diocese (which had been accustomed for 19 years to the more gentle ministrations of the semi-invalid Thomas). His two Charges left his hearers in no doubt as to what was expected of them.

Bishop Horsley and Residence

The Charge after his 1796 Visitation,⁽⁹⁾ which ran to 48 pages, began by emphasizing the importance of learning and study and included some acid remarks directed at the younger clergy, who shut up their books when they quit university. They proceed to read nothing beyond a review or magazine, but are to be found in every season of the year at every hour of the day in "circles of dissipation" on the excuse that they are studying men. Horsley fears for the future if the number of these "juvenile divines" were to increase. It is not so much that he sees learning as the defence against Jacobinism and irreligion - the sanguinary violence unleashed in France had dampened radical ardour at home in his opinion - but in keeping for the Church the friendship of what he calls a "middle class" in the question of religious allegiance.

There are those (he confidently believes the very great majority), who are Christians not only in name but in practice: there is a very

small class of "Democratists" void of all religion and avowed enemies to its ministers: in between are the Moralists - respectable serious men not much given to theological speculation, but who are friends to religion for its good services to civil life and who would normally support the religion they found established. At present they are friends of the Established Church, because they think that the role the Church plays is essential to the good of the community. But what if looking at the Church they discover negligence? Would they not be likely to side with the Democratists in crying for the confiscation of Church property and the abolition of privileges? Keeping the friendship of this "middle class" is a very important object of policy and the means to achieve it are obvious - to make sure the conduct of the clergy adorns the doctrine they teach and that they are diligent in ministry.

However, for some years past the conduct of the clergy has not in one particular been such as these friends would wish - that is, in the very general practice of non-residence and the resultant insufficient performance of parochial duty. "Nothing has so much lessened the general influence of the clergy; nothing so much threatens the stability of the national church."

The evil fell particularly on the poorer livings, for, of course, the incumbent could provide only the scantiest of allowance to any curate, which meant in turn that the curate took a second parish, and divine service was held but once in each church every Sunday. Moreover, the curate often resided in neither church and could not easily be found in case of emergencies. He concedes that many non-residents were engaged in the general promotion of Christianity and were of better service to the Church so employed than if they confined themselves to a country parish. (But he will in no way connive at non-residence in the younger clergy who are absent for no better purpose than "'to study men' in the manner in which that delightful study is usually pursued by them."!). If not resident, an incumbent is bound in conscience to maintain a resident curate with

adequate income and that curate should both be nominated by the bishop and licensed by him.

Finally he rehearses at length the provisions of "The Curate's Act" and warns that he has heard a whisper (not from his own Diocese) that it would be possible to circumvent the provisions of the act by means of a civil contract between incumbent and prospective curate. He threatens dire consequences to any unlicensed curate or incumbent employing such.

Four years later in a 44 page Charge,⁽¹⁰⁾ (much taken up with the crisis of the times and the danger which threatened all Christendom from the frenzy which had seized the French), he inveighs against the spread of new conventicles throughout the kingdom, where the pastor is seemingly an illiterate peasant, but which are visited by suspect preachers from a distance. Sunday Schools are then set up and financed in Horsley's opinion by Jacobins and subversive associations. The poor are bribed to send their children to these conventicle Sunday Schools rather than to those of the Established Church. He likewise reckons that they are making a tool of Methodism unbeknown to the sincere adherent.

In face of all this, his particular appeal to the clergy is to warn them against becoming too secularised. This will not happen if they give time to serious study, for, as a result their attitude as they participate in the recreation and life of society, will be subtly different.

They must remember to be assiduous in visiting the sick and dying and to prepare them for death. The youth of the parish are to be another important care. There should be public catechising. Sunday Schools should be established and their management be assiduously superintended, with the books used carefully chosen. Such is the best antidote for Jacobinal Schools. They are to perform the public offices with due solemnity and with fervour of devotion. They must be careful not to succumb to the lazy practice which of recent years

had gained ground in country parishes, namely opening the church for divine service for but one part of Sunday, for on the other half of the day the pious will go to the conventicle and the Devil will invite the others to the alehouse. The festivals and fasts were sinking into oblivion. There could be no excuse for the neglect of the Feast of the Nativity, of Ash Wednesday and Good Friday in even the smallest country parish; but in larger villages and towns Passion Week, the Mondays and Tuesdays after Easter and Whitsun and the Epiphany as well as some of the other festivals should be observed.

Celebrations of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper should be increased. Four in the year is the very fewest in the very smallest parishes, but it should be much more frequent and this would increase the number of communicants. If parishioners were instructed in the true nature of a sacrament and that the Body and Blood of Christ were truly taken after a spiritual manner, they would respond. The clergy were to make sure that they preach true doctrine and not new-fangled opinions of their own. (He rehearses the teaching of the church and warns them against engaging in controversial argument in the pulpit, particularly on the Calvinist points of predestination and election.) When, by the assiduity of their ministry, they have gained the good-will and esteem of their parishioners, they are to go on to give teaching on the nature of the church, teaching much needed by the nation at large. They are to emphasise the dangers of schism and instruct their parishioners on how to live within the communion of the church.

Obviously none of this could begin to be fulfilled without residence (or, if really necessary, through an adequate substitute who could provide, without abatement of an iota, the full duty of the resident parochial priest). His listeners and readers must surely realise this, but he concludes "The evil (of non-residence) is grown to that gigantic size, that a remedy in one way or another can be at no great a distance; and if persuasion prove ineffectual, other measures must be taken, and other remedies provided."

Education

The two recurring themes, then, of episcopal exhortation were the need for residence (or adequate alternative arrangements) and the provision of sound education. Advice to clergy about their own studies we have noted. A learned clergy was seen to be a bulwark against fanaticism, be it from the ranting preacher in a way-out conventicle, from Methodist or from the small but growing evangelical party within the Established Church.

If buildings alone are the criteria, the Church would seem to have had little to fear. The 1851 Census records only 11 places of dissenting worship existent before 1800 (4 Baptist, 3 Independent/Congregationalist, 1 Methodist, 1 Countess of Huntingdon Connection, 1 independent and 1 synagogue). However, the return from a Wesleyan Methodist Church in the hamlet of Chiddingstone echoes what was no doubt a common practice at the turn of the century - "the place of worship is a room in a House occupied by labourers 2 miles from a Church". Who knew how many itinerant preachers and cottage conventicles there were? And who knew what dangerous doctrines were purveyed?

The other matter which came to the fore was Sunday School provision. The thirty years under consideration saw the introduction and growth of Sunday Schools nationally. Practical advice to the Diocese came at an Archdeacon's Visitation from Charles Moore, rector of Cuxton and also of Boughton-under-Blean.⁽¹¹⁾ He explained how in Boughton in 1785 he had introduced Sunday Schools (having consulted with Mr Hearne, who in January had at Canterbury introduced the very first such Schools in the County).

The aim was "to furnish opportunities of instruction to the children of the poor without interfering with any weekly industry, to infuse....ideas of decency, sobriety and industry, to inure them to early habits of regularity in their attendance at Church and to teach them how to spend the leisure hours of Sunday to their own

improvement, advantage and happiness, which are now almost universally consumed in idleness, profanity and riot".

The plan of campaign was firstly to get support from gentlemen and other substantial people, obtaining a promise of a liberal annual subscription; then to visit every home in the parish where there were children (he collected about 80 names); and thirdly to procure a man and wife to do the instruction at the cost of a guinea-and a-half per quarter. This was followed up by a leaflet which was affixed to the church door and distributed throughout the parish. This outlined the objects (prudently omitting the comments on how the children of the poor were currently considered to spend Sunday). It explained that the children were to be taught to read and to be instructed in the plain duties of the Christian religion "with a particular view to their good and industrious behaviour to their future character of labourers and servants". All depended on sufficient financial support, and subscriptions, however small, were invited.

Also included was a detailed "Regulation of the Day". Children were to be in the Schoolroom by 8 am and stay until 10 am, when they went with their teacher to church. After worship they return home, meeting at the school again by 2 pm and remaining until 6 in the summer or as long as daylight permits in the winter. (Alternative arrangements were given for those Sundays when service was in the afternoon - Boughton obviously saw but single duty.) An added N.B. declared: "All that is expected of their parents is, that they send their children regularly to school, clean in their persons (which costs nothing) and as decently clothed as their circumstances permit".

In the event 78 children turned up and the vicar visited the School most Sundays. He found that very few could read at all. All the books were provided and tracts for the use of parents and other parishioners were taken by the children to be returned the following Sunday. (Books on hand included Testaments, copies of The Book of

Common Prayer, spelling books and some catechisms). Boughton was considered to be "pretty populous", having 150 houses, and abounded with poor. The normal age range was between seven and twelve. (5 or 6 years of age was quite early enough, but if there were need to limit numbers, then not until they were 7 or 8.) Sadly it was noted that older children were unwilling to attend. Often they were in service by then and in any case their companions laughed at them if they did participate!

The first year's subscriptions amounted to £16 and the costs £20 (which included an initial expenditure on books of £8). Moore considered this satisfactory. He probably found the short-fall himself. Certainly from his Rochester living of Cuxton, which he described as consisting of very small farms and poor people, he declared to the Bishop in 1803: "Ever since I have been Rector (upwards of thirty years) I have endeavoured to promote the instruction of poor children in working, reading and religious principles by setting up a little school in the parish (where there was none before) and paying myself for the constant weekly schooling of eight or more poor children, giving them also shoes and stockings in the winter to encourage them to be good and regular".⁽¹²⁾

How far his clerical brethren in the Archdeaconry were moved by this Visitation exhortation and episcopal encouragement to provide such Sunday instruction is not known.

In addition to Sunday Schools there was, of course, the general round of catechising and confirmation. Fifteen years later, at the time of his 1800 Visitation, Horsley instructed the clergy on how to prepare candidates.⁽¹³⁾ Each had to come with a ticket of recommendation and confirmands were to be at least fourteen years of age save in exceptional circumstances. They were to be taught to say the Lord's Prayer, the Apostle's Creed and the Ten Commandments and further instructed in the Catechism: they were also to be taught from the pulpit and 'in private conferences' the importance and the nature of the 'apostolic rite' for which they were preparing.

Again, as with so much else, clerical response is not known (although one would guess that Horsley did indeed make sure that the confirmation service was more of an occasion than was the norm at the time and that indeed only those duly recommended were presented). When we come to the years up to 1832 more material is available and it becomes possible to compute the numbers resident more accurately and to consider the allied matters of income, tithe, and the provision of parsonage houses. Also we can see how the good name of the clergy and their influence fared. Meanwhile, as a final *jeux d'esprit* to this section (or even "the best wine") we may be permitted to mention three clerics of the period who left something of a mark on history.

Burt, Ramsay and Papillon

Firstly and disreputably, Robert Burt of High Halstow was the "unnamed clergyman" by whom Maria Fitzherbert was married to George, Prince of Wales in the drawing room of a house in Park Street London on 15th December 1785. Was it, it has been wondered, the gratitude of His Royal Highness, which enabled Mr. Burt to purchase the lucrative livings of High Halstow and St. Mary's Hoo in the following year?⁽¹⁴⁾

Secondly, and of much more importance, James Ramsay of Teston and Nettlestead was an early and zealous campaigner for the abolition of the slave trade. A naval surgeon, serving in the East Indies under Sir Charles Middleton, his experience convinced him of the moral evil of slavery. After an accident, which lamed him, he took holy orders (from the Bishop of London without benefit of Oxbridge education) and went back to the East Indies as incumbent of two livings. He also undertook the medical supervision of several plantations using the opportunity to implement a scheme for the religious education of the negroes.

The opposition of the owners became more and more bitter and in 1781 Ramsay accepted the offer of the livings of Teston and Nettlestead from his former Commander. Sir Charles and Lady Middleton were his neighbours in Teston and gave him strong encouragement. They were staunch Evangelicals and Wilberforce and Clarkson took council with the Testonites (Hannah More's designation) in 1786-7. Ramsay's 'An Essay on the Treatment and Conversion of African Slaves in the British Sugar Colonies', which he published in 1784 had been seminal. This he followed up with a second volume in the same year to counter the suggestion that although he was anti-slavery he was not anti-Slave Trade. This second Volume - "An inquiry into the Effects of Putting a Stop to the African Slave Trade, and of Granting Liberty to the Slaves in the British Sugar Colonies." - made a particularly deep impression on Wilberforce and Pitt.

Lady Middleton, a much more committed advocate than her husband, tried to persuade Sir Charles to raise the matter in the House. He wisely demurred and left it to Wilberforce. Ramsay found the calumnious attacks of those with vested interests in the sugar industry hard to bear. After the venomous assault on his integrity by Crisp Molyneaux in the May/June 1789 debates, he was persuaded to leave Teston for recuperative travel. He died one month later on 20th July aged 56, having got as far as the London house of Sir Charles.

In this instance, at least, the relaxed attitude of the episcopate to ordination and the judicious exercise of private patronage made possible an eight year ministry, which was of major importance in the life of the nation and beyond.⁽¹⁵⁾

Thirdly, there is the Jane Austen connection, be it but slight. John Papillon, vicar of Tonbridge, 1791 - 1804, was offered the rectory of Chawton in 1802 by Jane's brother Edward. (There was a very distant family connection.) Jane, her mother and sister often visited their new rector; there are many references to him in her letters. Jane was the daughter of a country parson and her clerical

connections were many; but at the time she was writing her novels, the member of the profession closest to hand was John Papillon, her rector, who was fresh from his life at Tonbridge. His ministry together with many others contributed to the quiet gestation which produced Jane's picture of turn-of-the-century life, where the social round was untroubled by the current war and rumours of war, and clergy were a natural and accepted part of the rural scene and polite society. (16)

1800 - 1835

Chapter 4

SUNDAY SCHOOLS - THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A DIOCESAN POLICY

"The care of forming the docile minds of the Rising Generation is not among the last (sic) of those, which call for the execution of the Parish Priest." So Bishop Thomas Dampier in that part of his 1807 Primary Visitation Charge, which included those matters within the diocese on which he expected his "advice to be attended to". It was, in his consideration, the peculiar business of the clergy to see that the catechism was learnt, for it was important that children should know as soon as they were capable of understanding, the one thing necessary that they may be saved, and be provided with some security against being carried away by infidel or fanatical delusion. The catechism expounded what was really meant by the Articles of the Church (particularly in the matter of Election which many (falsely) held to be the exclusive tenet of the Gospel) and guarded the humble minds of the common people from the enticing insinuations of enthusiasm. For Bishop Dampier, catechising was at the heart of the parish priest's work. He saw it "to be a kind of test of the zeal and diligence with which parochial superintendence is conducted." It was the only matter of parochial concern to which he drew attention, except for the necessity of making careful returns of registers, of keeping them safely and, for the prevention of clandestine marriages, making sure that banns were called correctly. The instruction of the young was to be considered a matter of high priority - as it had been for his immediate predecessors.⁽¹⁾

In 1788 Bishop Thomas, preaching at Bromley,⁽²⁾ had declared: "Had it not been for those numerous parochial seminaries that owe their rise and establishment to the benevolent policy of the present age, God alone knows to what a dangerous height impiety and profligacy

might have risen amongst us". Sitting before him in the church were those helped by several opulent and beneficent inhabitants of Bromley, who through voluntary subscriptions were making it possible "to clothe and get instructed in reading, writing and a little knowledge in accounts thirty children of both sexes selected from the most indigent families, and after being so taught, to place them in service." In a 1797 sermon, Archdeacon Law delighted in the establishment of Sunday Schools, as well as other charitable schools, although he wondered why their pupils did not subsequently live up to what they had been taught and blamed society at large.⁽³⁾ Perhaps Charles Moore's advice, given at an Archdeaconry Visitation, on the establishing of Sunday Schools had had some effect.⁽⁴⁾ Horsley had also commended catechising and Sunday Schools, although he feared that the conventicles were poaching church children and preaching subversion.⁽⁵⁾

In 1802, at his thirtieth Visitation, Archdeacon Law welcomed Bishop Dampier (with whose strictures this chapter commenced): "I do not use the style of flattery, when I assure your Lordship, that you will meet in this Diocese with such a body of Clergy as will be deserving of your protection." The Articles of Enquiry⁽⁶⁾ that have survived for the period from Bishop Thomas' arrival up to 1830 all contained questions on current parochial educational practice. Horsley's Primary Visitation in 1796 had simply mentioned catechising: by 1819 there is a query about schools in the parish and whether the pupils were duly brought on Sunday for catechism and preparation for Confirmation. In 1822 the clergy were asked how many attend catechising and what exposition of the catechism they used. They were also asked about Sunday Schools, how they were supported and overseen, whether the children were brought to church every Lord's Day and whether the Master or Mistress was a Protestant of the Church of England. More generally, in a short one page Presentment of 1829, the churchwardens were asked whether there were a Parochial Library "clean and dry, and a correct Catalogue of Books". How far the clergy responded to all this pressure is not known until we come to the detailed 1819 Parliamentary Returns to

the Committee on the Education of the Poor. (7) Answers from all but three of our parishes are available and on the whole they would appear to be accurate and detailed, with the occasional barbed comment from one or two who obviously resented the effort required to reply.

Sunday Schools in Rochester Deanery

First of all, the matter of Sunday Schools in Rochester Deanery, for which the returns are complete. They could be tabulated thus (where OP means that there was also other provision in the parish, be it endowed or, in most cases unendowed, schools):

Table showing number of parishes with Sunday Schools (SS) and number of parishes with other school provision (OP) classified in bands according to the 1811 population.

Class		SS	OP	NO	
				SS	OP
1.	Population of 250 or less: (1811 figures throughout)	2	0	12	2
2.	Population of 251 to 499:	4	3	3	2
3.	Population of 500 to 750:	1	1	3	1
4.	Population of 751 to 999:	1	1	1	1
5.	Population over 1000:	3	3	4	9
	Totals	11		23	
	Total Parishes:			34	

In class 1 the incumbents in each of the two parishes sign the return themselves (as opposed to a curate) and the Schools are supported by subscriptions, including in the case of St. Mary Hoo a donation from the rector (Burt). It is interesting to note that

whereas he reports that, the poor are without means of education, although desirous of receiving the same, in the more populous neighbouring parish (710 inhabitants) the rector reports that such children of the poor as are unable to educate them receive assistance from the more wealthy parishioners; no provision is made for Sunday School or Day School. The other clergy on the Peninsular disagree with this assessment as far as their own parishes are concerned.

The other Sunday School on the Peninsular at High Halstow is one of the four in Class 2. The curate signs (High Halstow does not have a history of residence), but the rector helps support the school with other landowners. Also in the 251 - 499 population bracket are Kingsdown (where the School is under the superintendence of the curate); Stone, where it would seem the curate resided (although the rector financed the week-day schooling of ten children) and Cobham.

The return for Ash, the parish in Class 3, vindicates the rector's opinion that there was abundant opportunity for education for the poor, and the Sunday School also mustered 70 pupils. The return for Swanscombe in the next bracket was unsigned.

The Parishes of high population were the growing town areas. Chatham with a figure of 12,682, Strood with 3,878 and St. Margaret, Rochester 3,296. Chatham boasted three Sunday Schools, voluntarily supported, catering for 400 children (the number of poor given in the abstract was 471). Archdeacon Law was the perpetual curate; the work was done by his assistant, George Harker. In neighbouring Rochester St. Margaret the Sunday School membership was 150, yet at Rochester St. Nicholas, where the population was much the same, there was no Sunday School, although it was admitted that the poor were generally speaking destitute of means of providing education. The Strood Sunday School across the River, where the lower classes were described as very poor, also opened its doors to the parishioners of Frindsbury. Of course, many of these parishes had other schools, as did some of those who do not seem to have been

affected by the Sunday School movement. But these figures show that only a third of parishes had over the thirty-three years since that Archdiaconal Visitation Address made any sustained response; among the two-thirds where there was no Sunday School was Cuxton, which was the parish of the giver of the paper, although another incumbent had been there since 1811. What were the reasons for this?

Is there any correlation between the provision of a Sunday School with the population (the above table would seem to indicate a negative answer), or with the residence of the incumbent or of a curate, or with other provision - a new national school, endowed schools, day schools? Is it a question of finance?

Sunday Schools in Malling Deanery

But first a look at the Malling Deanery to see how the figures compare, using the same categories as the Rochester table (p.39).

Class	SS	OP	No SS	OP
1. Population of 250 or less	2	1	6	4
2. Population of 251 and 499	6	3	3	2
3. Population of 500 and 750	0	0	3	2
4. Population of 751 and 999	0	0	2	2
5. Population over 1000	5	4	6	5
Totals	13		20	
No return to hand	3			
Total Parishes	36			

13 parishes possessed Sunday Schools and 20 did not. A better percentage than Rochester, but still leaving 60% unprovided.

The Bidborough School in Class 1 had been "opened by the rector in late years for 10 boys and 10 girls" and although the other at Trotterscliffe contained 25 children and was supported by voluntary contributions the curate doubted whether the poor were really desirous of possessing means of education.

In Class 2 the Barming Sunday School catered for between 60 and 70 boys and girls and also partly clothed them. The vicar considered that "nothing has tended to improve the morals of the people as the Sunday School". At Capel and at Birling provision was considered to be adequate and certainly appreciated until the children were of an age to go to work. At West Farleigh, Lamberhurst and Shipbourne, Sunday School provision was considered to be vital if the poor were to receive any instruction. Shipbourne, with its population of 377, taught 70 or 80 children, financed by annual voluntary subscriptions of 17 or 18 pounds.

The most populous of the Class 5 parishes was Yalding, which had a Sunday School where 60 children were clothed and taught. As in other cases there were other unendowed weekday schools in the parish, but it was at the Sunday School where help with clothing was given. Brenchley, (population 1924), had a "considerable" Sunday School but like Speldhurst (population 1,901) gave no actual membership figures. Westerham (population 1,473) supported two Sunday Schools in which 200 received instruction, whilst West Malling (population 1,154) made use during the week of an extensive National School containing 210 pupils, of whom all except 5 also attended the Sunday School, according to the vicar.

The task

That careful explanation in 1785 by Charles Moore ⁽⁸⁾ had outlined the steps necessary to establish a Sunday School. Practically, it meant knowing who the poor were and visiting them, and it meant knowing which of the parishioners could profitably be approached to give a subscription. It required careful oversight week by week to see that all was in order and nothing unsuitable was being taught. The finances needed managing and appropriate tracts and books provided. In other words it needed a resident clergyman who knew his parish and who was enthusiastic enough to provide teaching material.

By 1819 other schools were beginning to flourish. So there could be the excuse that these provided all that was required, and it could be argued that some parishes were too small (so, for instance, in Rochester Deanery there were 12 parishes in the under 250 bracket, but if Luddesdown (population 176 and number of poor given as 19) provided places for 35 where there was also other provision, what about the 8 parishes in this class with near enough the same (or larger) population and numbers of poor, and where there was no other schooling? (Indeed only two had other schools; a Dame School at Cuxton and a National School at Leybourne, which opened its doors to neighbouring parishes). A perusal of the returns would seem to suggest that neither of these factors made much difference.

Returning to Malling, in 8 of the parishes with Sunday Schools there was no other provision for education, but in exactly twice that number there was. Moreover Sundays Schools are found in parishes of varying sizes as can be seen in the above tables.

There seems little to differentiate the parishes which had responded and those which were without Sunday School and as suggested the most important factor was probably the incumbent or curate. This is worth pursuing, because here is a definite matter of diocesan, even nation-wide, policy. The factors, which governed the response to this diocesan initiative, would presumably operate in other matters

into which Bishop and Archdeacon enquired and on which they pronounced in Visitation Charges.

We need, therefore, to see in which instances we can say that the incumbent was resident. If not, whether there was a curate who served the parish for a long enough period to set up and maintain a Sunday School and provide continuity where the incumbent was absent.

Residence

With regard to incumbents it is impossible to be sure. We can see in some instances who signed the return, but that is not, of course, proof positive. Licences for non-residence began to be recorded in 1818/19, so for certain years we have some information; but by no means all who were non-resident obtained permission and those who had permission give the impression in the return to the Ecclesiastical Commission in 1832 that they were resident. However the 1832 protestations need to be regarded with some caution, for a return made by churchwardens in 1837 gives reliable information and the picture, which emerges then, is somewhat different.

The returns for Rochester Deanery are complete (a few are missing for Malling in 1832 and 1837). So for the period 1st January - 31st December 1818/19 (licences were normally granted for two years) the Diocesan Registry Book of Licences for non-residence includes 12 in Rochester Deanery.⁽⁹⁾ In 1832 this has dropped to 9 and in 1837 the number is 8. The 1832 Enquiry from the Commissioners⁽¹⁰⁾ sent in August 1832 was primarily concerned with revenues. However, the Articles also contained questions on patronage, the number and stipend of curates, the capacity of the churches, the duty performed, the state of the glebe house and other preferment or benefices held. Question 14 read "Whether the incumbent or his curate usually resides in the glebe house or, if not to whom it is let or by whom occupied and if there be no glebe house or none fit for residence what rent is paid by the incumbent for house of

lodging?" Only 6 cases of non-residence are actually admitted in the replies. More often a direct answer is avoided. So, for instance, the vicar of Allhallows, where non-residence was habitual, and who certainly had a licence for non-residence for that year, simply leaves the question blank, having reported in the previous article that there was no glebe house at all. Other answers from incumbents who had a licence for non-residence include "lives with father in the parish", "in another house in the parish", or "in a rented house".

In 1837,⁽¹¹⁾ however, the churchwardens reported of the incumbent of Burham (the first of these cases) that he was not resident and lived in his other benefice of Ryarsh (and that the curate, not yet licensed, lived four miles distant from the parish); in the second (Cooling) that the incumbent did not reside, but a curate did; and in the third instance (Halling) that the incumbent did not reside and the curate lived 2 miles away. Higham also gave cause for complaint. The incumbent reported to the Commission that he hired a house at the cost of £52.10s (the vicarage house, he grumbled, was on the borders of the marsh, where the inhabitants were subject to ague and intermittent fever especially in the spring and the autumn. It was let to a cottager.) The churchwardens were not appreciative. In 1837 they stated: "The incumbent resides 5 miles from the Church (with a licence so we understand) no curate - the want of a resident clergyman a subject of complaint with many Parishioners." It is still the same in 1843. In fact, according to the 1837 Visitation return, 17 of the 34 incumbents were then non-resident (50%) and the likelihood would be that the figure was much the same in 1832. We do have a return for a Visitation in 1843 with nearly all the returns extant and in the six years since 1837 one incumbent had become non-resident and two were by then duly resident in the glebe house: this would indicate a solid core of non-residence with little variation over the years and by extrapolation it is more likely that the 1837 figures mirror the 1819 situation in general and even in the particular than those of 1832.

A comparable investigation in Malling suggests a healthier situation. The Licences for non-residence waver (1818/9 - 6; 1832 - 7; 1837 - 3): the 1832 returns admit 8 cases of non-residence and 1837 returns show that 11 were probably non-resident. However 23 were, and to them can be added the ministers of Tunbridge Wells District Chapel and of the new chapel at Southborough, making 25. By 1843 2 more were reported as resident. The percentage of non-residence was 30% in contrast to Rochester's 50%. Circumlocutions to the Commissioners were at a minimum with plain answers like "the incumbent resides", or "resides in the parish and is in process of building a new glebe house", or "the curate resides". However the claim of the vicar of Hadlow "The glebe House occupied, the incumbent is resident in his own private house in the parish" was perhaps less than the full truth, since in 1837 his presence is described as "not constant", although the curate resided within a quarter of a mile. At Kemsing the incumbent protested that he paid a rent of £50 p.a. for a house since there was only a small cottage in each parish in which it was possible for incumbents to reside. "They are divided into three buildings, let to poor families at very low rents, viz two of them at 2s per week each and the other 1s amounting to 131 a year, which is very irregularly paid". However in 1837 a Kemsing churchwarden caustically remarks "The incumbent is not resident. I have no knowledge of his having a Licence (he in fact did have, but communication had obviously broken down - in itself significant), he has a curate who does not reside here, where I do not know, I have heard in the parish of Seale." Seale was next door and had been under the cure of the vicar of Kemsing since well before 1770. But the Hadlow and Kemsing answers were the only two in Malling Deanery which were not direct and unequivocal, in contrast to some of the ambiguous replies from their brethren in Rochester Deanery.

The 1835 figures returned for Rochester Diocese as a whole revealed that 50 out of 98 parishes had a resident clergyman. In 1810 it had been 52 out of 107 parishes, but the numbers of residents declined to a low 35 in 1814 and 1827, before returning to 1835's 50. After

1835 the upward trend continued to 77 out of 105⁶ parishes in 1844, after which boundary changes meant that the Diocese contained 562 parishes and comparisons become meaningless.⁽¹²⁾

Curates

What is significant is the almost universal claim that a curate is resident if the incumbent is not. As we have seen, incumbents were required to report to the Commission how many curates they employed and the amount of their stipends and other allowance. A zealous and resident curate could be as effective as an incumbent, provided there were sufficient continuity. 1832 gives the situation for that year. The 1830 and 1834 processes provide names and the series of processes enable an indication as to length of service. (Processes⁽¹³⁾ are available for the years 1776, 1780, 1796, 1803, 1807, 1810, 1813, 1816, 1819, 1822, 1825, 1830, 1834, 1837, 1840, 1843 and onwards). We can make a judgement as to how settled was a line of curates within four years and within that limit how long a particular curate served a particular parish. We can, therefore, tentatively identify those parishes where the incumbent himself was resident or where a settled curate operated - and parishes where neither was the case.

In each of the 11 parishes in the Rochester Deanery where there were Sunday Schools in 1819 there was either a resident incumbent from such indications as we have - whether he held other livings, whether he signed the return, whether there was a history of residence and whether there was a licence for non-residence - or an established curate: and in the cases where it was likely that the curates would have borne the responsibility, we have considered whether there was normally a settled curate there and/or whether a particular curate had held the office for a considerable number of years. (It must also be admitted that of those 23 parishes without Sunday Schools, using the same criteria, 6 had either incumbents who were likely residents or enjoyed well established curates.)

The zeal of the curates could well be affected by the amount of their stipend. Did they receive a sufficient salary to allow them to give their full attention to the parish, or did they need to seek supplementary employment? No figures for the 1819 period are available, but it is interesting to note that in so far as those of 1832 are at all relevant, the curates' stipends of those parishes with Sunday Schools averaged £130 p.a., but the mean figure for those without was £70.

In Malling Deanery we know that there were 13 Sunday Schools, and in so far as we can tell there would seem to be a similar correlation. Curates were likely to have been responsible in six parishes and in the others it looks as though the incumbent was frequently resident. The Malling situation is not so easy to assess because there is not a complete set of returns and because the residence situation in 1819 is more difficult to ascertain. Nor is the stipend situation clear because by 1832 there are several parishes which had curates in 1819 but no longer do so, and then, of course, no salary figure is available. However the stipends of two curates, for there is information, in Sunday School parishes were in 1832 £100 and £150 respectively, whilst the average Malling stipend was £94.

It must also be admitted that all did not depend upon the clergy. John Cuthbert, parish clerk of Speldhurst, recorded:⁽¹⁴⁾

"In 1808 I commenced a school at Rusthall, and, beyond the habit of attending Divine service at Speldhurst Church I was much struck with the misconduct of persons who were constantly waiting about the churchyard for the arrival of the clergyman, who at that time lived at Tunbridge Wells. The boys made it their playground and the young men indulged in improper language and behaviour. At Christmas, 1809, after consulting the Rector, I undertook to commence a Sunday School at Speldhurst, and hired a house for the purpose. At first the attendance was small; as it began to increase, it was thought more good might be done if a Day School were opened in addition, so I removed my Rusthall school to Speldhurst in January 1810...In 1813,

my schools having greatly increased, to obtain larger premises I hired the Parsonage House, which was then unoccupied, and remained there with my family. In 1817 the Rector required his house to live in and I hired another...In 1837 we removed to a new house and school room...When I began, the number were Sunday School 12, Day School 17. Now in 1838, there are more than 100 in the former and 120 in the latter." Here is a tale of patient persistence over thirty years bringing commendable growth, and all with the agreement of the rector.

Nevertheless, it was almost certainly the case that a clergyman living in the parish, who was well known and who was minded to make the effort, was of overriding importance if anything was to be done about Sunday School provision. For this reason and for others the Bishops were right to value residence, or the provision of a resident and assiduous curate, as vital to parish life, but this did not mean that episcopal admonitions would necessarily be put into practice.

In judging the Church's Sunday School commitment to education in the two Deaneries we can say that the total number of poor given in the Parliamentary return was 6182. The number in Sunday Schools was 1811, but 4 parishes gave no numbers. (2599 were accommodated in unendowed day schools with 10 parishes giving no numbers). The number of the poor in Sunday School parishes was 2715, so where there were Sunday Schools a substantial proportion of the children of the poor would have been reached.

It can also be noted that it was to the parish clergy that the return was sent and they were able to give detailed answers. They knew about the endowed schools, from whence their money came, their trustees and who was eligible for admission. Equally they knew of the 76 unendowed schools, including among them 8 under the "New Plan" (National or British and Foreign) and the 13 Dames Schools. They were able to supply pupil numbers, whether the funds were adequate for the purpose and how they were staffed. There was

sufficient residence by incumbent or curate and sufficient involvement in local affairs to enable them to give a knowledgeable response and to be an agent of government in the collection of local information.

1830 - 1835

Chapter 5

CURATES

The brunt of the Sunday School work in more than half the parishes was in the hands of the curates. Just how highly regarded these clerics were cannot be said. Horsley rated them worthy of considerable esteem if his words to his new diocese of St. Asaph in 1806 are to be taken at face value. He warned that an incumbent should not dismiss a curate with as little ceremony as he might a menial servant with a month's notice or wages, for not only would this lower the order of priesthood in the eyes of the laity, but it was not consistent with the relationship between incumbent and curate, which was of fellow-labourers and not of master and servant. The incumbent was to set the curate before parishioners as his equal, "as, indeed, in clerical rank he is; for in the church, one priest is upon an even footing with another, whatever may be the disparity of worldly circumstances".⁽¹⁾

In 1803, as we have seen, there were 36 curates in all (18 in each deanery). By 1835 there is more definite information as regard to names and, in particular, stipend.

Firstly, a consideration of numbers according to the processes from 1807 until 1834. In later years they become a little difficult to decipher, since there is much crossing out and emendation in pencil. Diocesan records did not always accord with what was discovered on the ground. Processes are available normally every third year. The following table gives the number of new names to appear since the previous process, together with an indication as to how long they remained in post - i.e. the numbers who appear three years later in the next process, those who are still in position at the time of the visitation process after that (normally six years later) and those

who remain longer than that. It needs also to be remembered that some are never mentioned. They had been employed for a period less than that between processes - there are three of these we know of definitely because they are included in the process only to be deleted as no longer there. There is a picture of considerable mobility, but also a growing number of instances where curacies were of greater length. Also included in this table is a column indicating the number of those who are possible entrants in the Oxford and Cambridge alumni lists. The numbers are given for each Deanery, followed by a combined total.

ROCHESTER

1 Year	2 No. of new curates	3 No. still there at next process	4 at the process after that	5 beyond	6 alumni
1807	6*	2	2	2	2
1810	5	2	1	2	3
1813	3	2	0	1	0
1816	14	9	1	4	6
1819	12	1	4	7	5
1822	4	2	0	2	2
1825	3	2	0	1	1
1830	9	7	0	2	7
1834	9	2	4	3	8

Total 65 curates were appointed during 31 years

To clarify:-

Column 1 gives the date of the process.

Column 2 gives the number of curates whose names appear for the first time in that year.

Column 3 indicates how many of these were still in the same parish at the next process three years later.

Column 4 indicates how many appear in the following process and so were in their parishes for for at least 6 years.

Column 5 shows how many appeared in the next process and beyond and thus were in the same parish for 9 years or beyond.

Column 6 gives the number of new curates (column 1) found in the Oxford and Cambridge alumni lists for later consideration (p.57).

*The previous process was that of 1803, so these 6 were appointed during the preceding 4 years.

MALLING

1 Year	2 No. of new curates	3 No. still there at next process	4 at the process after that	5 beyond	6 alumni
1807	6*	5	1	0	0
1810	7	3	1	3	4
1813	6	1	2	3	4
1816	6	3	0	3	6
1819	9	1	2	6	9
1822	1	1	0	0	1
1825	2	1	1	0	2
1830	17	13	0	4	12
1834	12	6	1	5	9

Total 66 curates were appointed during 31 years.

Grand

Total 131 curates were appointed in the two deaneries
during 31 years.

* The previous process was that of 1803, so these 6 were
appointed during the preceding 4 years.

Also to be noted are the number of parishes with curates in the same years. (Perpetual curacies are not included, but their assistants are.)

Year	Rochester Deanery	Malling Deanery	Total
1803	17	18	35
1807	16	15	31
1810	18	14	32
1813	17	19	36
1816	24	19	43
1819	22	21	43
1822	22	19	41
1825	19	11	30
1830	19	27	46
1834	17	20	37

This last table indicates a remarkable consistency in the number of parishes with curates and could well be an indication in the matter of residence - or the conscientiousness of a non-resident incumbent in supplying clerical care. The peaks in curacy numbers are in the immediate postwar years and then particularly in 1830 at the height of anti-clericalism. Perhaps incumbents were trying to show that their parishes were receiving due care and this they could report to the enquiring commission. In Malling in particular, as can be seen, there was an influx of freshly appointed curates in 1830 (a high of 27). By 1834 the figure had dropped nearer to the norm.

So in the 28 years between 1807 and 1835 some 48% of curates could expect to move on within three years, 15% to remain for six years at least and 36% for a longer period.

Curates' Prospects

Of most of these we know nothing. A consideration of the Rochester Deanery shows that some were well placed and some were also incumbents - so Henry Dampier Phelps, a nephew of Bishop Dampier of Rochester was curate at Cuxton for ten years (1810 onwards) whilst he was rector of neighbouring Snodland. The convenient combination of incumbent with the curacy of a nearby parish occurred frequently: George Davies, vicar of St. James Grayne (1813 - 1860) appears as curate of Frindsbury (also on the Hoo peninsular). Dr. Joynes seemed to manage to be curate of Chalk and Cooling from 1819, whilst being vicar of an Essex Church and becoming rector of Gravesend in 1837. James Pearson, curate of Allhallows from 1822, progressed to become Vicar of Stoke in 1839 and continued as curate at Allhallows for another five or six years as well. George Nash sub-curate of Chatham from 1834 became vicar of Allhallows in 1836 - he remained curate until 1843 and at Allhallows until 1874. Robert Shaw of Cuxton (1831 - 73) acted as curate of Halling for the first ten years of his ministry there. The Headmaster of King's School acted as curate to St. Margaret's Rochester from 1834 to 1840 - a reasonable arrangement had he not been incumbent of Kingsdown (and subsequently of Hoo St Werburgh) at the same time.

The subsequent career of some we know. John Stokes, curate of Cobham became its rector after a four year curacy in 1814, to which he added Milton in 1827 until his death. George Harker was an outstanding sub-curate of Chatham, labouring particularly in establishing the new district of St. John's from 1816 until 1853, but was rewarded with the living of St. Nicholas Rochester from 1826. Glover Mungeam would seem to have remained a curate all his life. We find him at Fawkham and Longfield in 1816, then at Luddesdown and Trotterscliffe until 1825. He was curate at Stansted in Essex 1841-46 and then returned to reside in Meopham until his death in 1853. Frederick Winstanley acted as curate to a Thomas Winstanley at Frindsbury (his father?) and then followed Frederick as vicar of St. Nicholas Rochester in 1820. Thomas Deacon, curate of

Stone, became perpetual curate of Strood. Drage remained sub-curate of Chatham, when appointed to Halling in 1824. (In 1831 he was appointed a minor canon and subsequently became vicar of Wilmington and St Margaret's Rochester.) Ottey spent the major part of his career as curate at Southfleet (from 1825 until 1851 - he died in 1861 at the age of 68).

In Malling, likewise, there were a number of incumbents who were also curates.

Edward Mott Allfree was a noted pluralist, appearing in The Extraordinary Black Book. As well as his livings, he was curate at Ditton and West Farleigh for about six years from 1810 (at the same time he was Head Master of Maidstone Grammar School).

While he was rector of Burham, James Hawley (the second son of a baronet) was also curate of Ryarsh.

There is a mystery about John Bousenquet Polhill. He was curate successively of West Malling, Mereworth, and Kingsdown between 1803 and 1822. One of the same name, the son of a rector of Goudhurst, became a curate there in 1794, was a Whitehall preacher, the rector of Hadleigh in Essex (1802-52), Chaplain to the Duke of York and married the daughter of Walter Barton May of Hadlow Castle. Given the Kent connection and the unusual name it could be that this well-connected gentleman did indeed combine a succession of curacies with his other lucrative positions.

William Gordon became rector of Speldhurst in 1816, having been curate there since 1796, but it looks as though he was also perpetual curate of Darlington (Durham) for the same period.

A similar pattern is found in the case of Peter Elers, who was a former Chaplain of the Duke of Clarence (later William IV), rector and patron of Risborough, becoming rector of Addington as well in

1805 and exercising curacies in Birling, Addington and Trotterscliffe until his death in 1820.

Among clerical dynasties were the Wardes, who were part-patrons of Yalding. Richard was curate to his father (and also at West Farleigh) before taking on the living in 1840 and George Ambrose, his brother served as curate at Offham and Ditton and took over the living in 1858. Likewise James Isaac Monypenny was curate to his father for about twelve years before succeeding him at Hadlow in 1841. Richard Cobb was curate of Nettlestead for 34 years, before becoming its rector in 1854, dying in 1862 at the age of 66. During that time he was rector of Mereworth for 2 years; a good guess would be that he was only there to await the arrival of the Honourable Sir Francis Jervis Stapleton into the family living.

Among those who progressed we could also note the sixteen-year curacy of Frederick Gildart in the Chapter living of Lamberhurst, which led to a rectory in Gloucestershire in 1822; and Henry Winchworth Simpson who was curate for Wateringbury for five years (1817 - 22). He was a noted preacher and became an incumbent at Horsham and later Bexhill.

By 1830 many curates could expect preferment. Of the 17 new curates in that year at least 10 can be found to have subsequently progressed up the clerical ladder and the same is true for nine of the batch of 12 in 1834, although, as in every year, some cannot be identified. But the increasing number of curates mentioned in the alumni lists means that many more emerge from complete obscurity and it is possible to give an outline of their careers.

The Rochester picture is much as one would expect. 54% of the curates employed between 1810 and 1822 can possibly be identified in the alumni list and for the following period to 1834 76%. In Malling, however, the comparative percentages are a high 82 followed by 74. This could reflect the more affluent situation in Malling and the ability of incumbents to obtain men of higher calibre. However,

some identifications are tentative and too much cannot be read into this statistic.

Curates' Emoluments

The 1832⁽²⁾ return provides details of curates' emoluments. In Rochester 17 parishes had curates in that year, their stipends ranging from £50 to £150 and averaging £90. Chatham had two curates, who shared £225. Halling has been discounted, since no salary was paid, the curate being employed intermittently when the incumbent was not doing his own duty. Fees were added in five cases, one also had the use of the glebe house, another was given a further £15 in lieu of accommodation. The average net declared income of their incumbents' benefices was £353, ranging from £142 to £530 (Average gross income - £383). Of course, both curates and incumbents could have income from other preferments. So the £50 stipend to the curate of Chalk could be added to the £80 he received from nearby Cooling and the incumbent of St. Nicholas Rochester, whose declared income was only £142, also received £215 as minister of Chatham's St. John's Chapelry.

The curates of Malling Deanery received an average stipend of £98, which ranged from £50 to £200. In 12 of the 16 parishes where they were employed fees were also received and 5 included the use of the glebe house (or other accommodation). The average net value of the livings was £414 (£515 gross), but they ranged from £167 to £1153. Again there could be other emoluments. The recipient of the £200 stipend was the son of the incumbent of Yalding with his £1153 p.a. living. The said son also received £100 as curate of Ditton (6 miles distant) held in plurality by his father (who was also a prebend of Canterbury and rector and Archdeacon of Saltwood in that diocese).

It would be surprising if the average £94 p.a. curate, who presumably did most of the work in the parish where he served, did not look

with some envy at the average employing incumbent, who declared his net income to be £384 (gross £449). He would most certainly envy him his security; particularly so if he and his family inhabited the glebe house.

At the end of October 1831 the Dean and Chapter living of Lamberhurst fell vacant and was offered to the Provost of Oriel, Dr Hawkins. ⁽³⁾ A month later, whilst he was still considering the matter, he received the following from one of the churchwardens:

"Reverend Sir,

I am ashamed to send you so dirty a Petition, you no doubt aware that a Village Congregation are but bad writers, but felt it my duty to send the Original in preference to a Clean Copy, they were signed in our Vestry to Day had I time could have had more signatures as the Church is allways very full; if you should not got the Living please to forward this to the Reverend gentleman whas got it & you will much obliged." (sic throughout.)

This was written at the bottom of the petition, which had 119 signatures and read:

"We the undersigned Parishioners of Lamberhurst humbly beg leave to solicit you to continue our present Curate (the Rev'd Samuel Beckwith) in his situation, as he gives the highest satisfaction to his Congregation, being a Shepherd who has the future welfare of his flock at heart, kind and attentive to the sick and Poor, capable and willing to instruct them."

Dr. Hawkin's response was kind and tactful, congratulating them on having such a faithful curate as Beckwith, but intimating that if he did become their vicar he had a brother of his own, whom he would wish to reside among them as his curate. Dr. Hawkins did accept the living.

In March Beckwith is writing to say that his application for a curacy in Leicestershire was his third unsuccessful attempt since seeing Dr. Hawkins and asking for a short extension of the "liberty you have, hitherto, so liberally afforded me". He is grateful that Dr. Hawkins' brother is purchasing the carpets and curtains of the house. A covering letter from one of Hawkins relatives at Lamberhurst (mother or sister-in-law) comments that Beckwith's prospects of obtaining another curacy with a house "are not very flattering", but that Beckwith understands perfectly his remaining at Lamberhurst is only temporary. In April the luckless curate is reassuring Hawkins that he is urging his absent friends to renew their endeavours on his behalf and he is sanguine enough to expect that he will be established in another cure by the time agreed; but in July the churchwarden writes: "Mr Beckwith has not been able to get another Curacy tho' he has tried for several, he has a very ill state of health & I am fearful will not require One long."

That is the last we hear of Beckwith.

1800 - 1835

Chapter 6

AGRARIAN UNREST AND TITHE

The Lamberhurst correspondence of 1830/31 provides a fascinating vignette of contemporary clerical concerns and practice.⁽¹⁾ Extant are a series of letters to Dr. Hawkins, which are replies to enquiries by him (with one draft reply from him). They reveal how the living came to be offered by the Dean and Chapter, the matters into which Hawkins enquired before accepting, in particular its value and tithe composition; how he fared in his negotiations with the farmers in that year of agrarian unrest; the appointment of a new churchwarden; relief to the poor; the duty performed by the curate, his salary and, as we have seen, his dismissal to make place for Hawkin's brother; also there is the picture of the parish given by the curate with an estimate of attendance at the church, the population, the schools and the strength of dissent; and the matter of dilapidations. Thus the bones of any statistical overview are fleshed-out in one particular parish.

On October 30th 1830 Dean Stevens wrote to Hawkins following the death of Eversleigh, who was incumbent of both Aylesford and Lamberhurst. He assumed that Griffiths (a member of the Rochester Chapter) would take Aylesford, "it being the better and more eligible living of the two", and that Lamberhurst would fall to Hawkins. (Hawkins was likewise a member of the Chapter with a year's less seniority than Griffiths, and presumably second in the pecking order.) Dr. Stevens thought the living's worth to be about £300, (on November 12th amended to £450 clear after enquiry to Mrs Eversleigh - this was the sum her husband had compounded for) and requested a decision by 25th November. Edward Mott Alfree, a noted pluralist, wrote a confidential note on November 16th, having heard that Hawkins had a brother to whom he wished to give an acceptable curacy

in the Rochester neighbourhood and gave detailed information about the composition, which he had received from a reliable "friend on the spot", who did not wish to be named. Presumably Hawkins accepted by the due date and in January Mrs. Eversleigh confirms the tithe composition drawn up by a Goudhurst attorney, signed by the local farmers and the agreement placed in the Parish Chest in the church. Its great attraction was that the farmers agreed to pay the parochial assessments and the Dean considered that Hawkins would do very well if he could similarly compound "especially in these times, when any increased demand would excite hostile feelings". He strongly recommended one Mr. Lake, an agent who was "a fair man known in the County and his character and his opinions stand high among the farmers".

On request Beckwith (the curate) ascertained that the composition was made in 1827, but became void on the decease of the incumbent and, having talked with Mr. Goldstone (one of the wardens), he doubted whether the parishioners would settle upon similar terms. The churchwarden himself wrote twelve days later (on February 1st) feeling that the composition of £450 would be reasonable, although some were looking forward to large reductions, but "the bone of contention was them paying the Poor Rate", which in the current year had amounted to more than £220. The matter rumbled on through the annual vestry meeting - Hawkins was not helped when a Dissenter "who seldom visits the Church & cant bear Tithes" was elected as one of the churchwardens - and on to the end of May when Goldstone reported that he had secured the agreement of all principal tithe payers to contribute the same as the previous year (though a few on the outskirts would not pay without trouble) and into July and August when a meeting of principal payers was proposed to put matters on a longer term basis. Mr. Lake, on what he had seen of the papers, thought it best to settle for another year, which was no more than £45 less than Eversleigh's agreement and this "on account of that part of the County being very much overplanted with hops....a trifling rise might incline the farmers to displant and thus injure the Vicarage". He hoped (vainly as it turned out) that

the Composition Bill would be passed within twelve months (i.e. by August '32) and Hawkins could avail himself of it. According to his 1832 return Hawkins received £401.0.8½ from tithe net (£258.8.5½ being deducted for the poor rate, highways rate, tenths, cost of collecting tithe and average land tax.), which would seem to confirm that he settled for something like £45 less than Eversleigh's £450 composition. (Eversleigh himself, for instance, had given an annual tithe dinner, which constituted part of the expense of collection.)

The autumn, in which Dr. Hawkins received his offer, saw the outbreak of concentrated agrarian unrest in the area, so he did well to settle as he did. Clergy throughout the district had been agreeing for about the same. Examples in November/December 1830 include an 8% reduction at Shorne; 10% at Snodland, Hartley and Birling; and a considerable 25% at Brenchley according to the Maidstone Journal & Kentish Advertiser.⁽²⁾ Although Hawkins also saw a 10% reduction, the parish continued to pay the rates.

Agrarian Unrest

It was in the April that the first signs of agrarian unrest manifested themselves in Kent, near Orpington (in the Shoreham Peculiar). 43 disturbances during 1830 have been listed in West Kent in and around the two deaneries under consideration, the majority (35) being in the months of September, October and November.⁽³⁾ There were only 16 outbreaks strictly within the boundaries of Malling and Rochester Deaneries, but the surrounding unrest and the general alarm reported in the press left its mark in every Rochester and Malling parish. The declared targets of the labourers were various. Of the 30 cases where it is known, the farmers were, as would be expected, the numerically largest group (17). Other sections of the community were severally mentioned but only once or twice. Overseers once (although they were also included five times in the outbreaks against farmers), the government once (after a visit from Cobbett), gentry and landowners

four times, tradesmen three times, widows twice and parsons likewise twice (at Wrotham in the Shoreham Deanery and Cowden in Malling, though it could well be that the act of incendiarism at Cowden was against Rev. Thomas Harvey as a farmer, rather than as a parson - he had, after all, reduced his tithe computation by 20% because of bad harvests.)⁽⁴⁾

On these figures, widows could be counted worthy of as much opprobrium as parsons, but this is not usually considered to be the case! It is suspected that in many an instance the farmer colluded with the agitators against the parson and the landowner. A petition to parliament in December from occupiers of land in the parish of Wrotham (Shoreham Peculiar) complained of the disappearing income from land and the alarming growth of pauperism, because the farmers could not find the money to employ labourers. They begged for a diminution in the burden of taxation, particularly the malt tax, but above all they asked the House to consider seriously "the present odious and oppressive Tythe system, that cruel scourge which compels one man to toil his improvements, and thereby deprives him of the little surplus which would be spent in the employment of the poor" and they entreated the Commons "to devise some fair and equitable means of getting rid altogether of this bane of religion this enemy of all agricultural improvements, and consequently one of the principal causes of pauperism."⁽⁵⁾ It was also reported of Wrotham that the labourers mobbed the rector to compel him to reduce his tithe and that the farmers were not unconnected with the assembly.⁽⁶⁾

At Rochester on 9th November Lord Clifton (son of the Earl of Darnley of Cobham Hall) invited the farmers to enrol in the yeomanry. The appeal was ignored by the assemblage. (They had been inveigled to meet at the The Bull Inn by an anonymous advertisement to all "Owners and Occupiers of Land" and were surprised to discover its genesis was the Earl. He had suffered an arson attack at Cobham Hall two weeks earlier and received a threatening Swing letter three weeks after the meeting!) The resolution, which they actually

passed, read: "That, at the present alarming crisis, it is the duty of the landowners and clergy, by a liberal abatement of rent and tithes, to assist the farmers in bearing those additional burdens which the peculiar circumstances of the times necessarily impose upon them.".(7)

In the disturbances in the area under consideration, there were 22 arson attacks, 5 threatening "Swing" letters, 13 wages meetings often accompanied by rioting (in two instances tithe was a specific grievance), and there was one destruction of a threshing machine and one political demonstration at Maidstone. By the end of November The Maidstone Journal was happy to report that the western part of Kent had become more quiet and settled.(8) The worst was over, but there were two more burnings before the end of the year and finally in February 1831 the overseer at Hadlow received a threatening letter as did the parson the following day.

It is perhaps worth noting that if 16 parishes in the Deaneries were directly involved, the other 57 were not. Of those that were, the greater number (12) were in Tonbridge Deanery, where there were 5 arson attacks and 7 wages meetings. In Rochester there were only 4 incidents - 2 against the Earl of Darnley at Cobham Hall as noted, and acts of arson at Chatham and Aylesford. The attack at Aylesford in December was against a large farmer and inflicted some £700 worth of damage, but Aylesford was very much a Malling type parish on the boundary of the Rochester Deanery: it was in the outwardly more lush Malling countryside that the anguished poverty of the poor erupted.

Naturally, tithes were unpopular. A tax on all agricultural produce to the clergyman pleased neither farmer nor labourer. It was seen as a particular burden in times of agricultural depression. It was alleged to be a disincentive to increase production and consequently a disincentive to employ more labourers. More could be given the dignity of wage earners, rather than being pauperised by the current system of parish relief. Threshing machines, which could give employment, especially in the winter months, were blamed and there

was talk of foreign labour. However there was only one instance of agricultural Luddism; the overt threat was certainly to the farmers and it was they who bore the cost in damage to crops and threatening letters. After the initial spate of incendiarism there was a series of wage meetings with near riotous assemblies in the Weald area (following the example of Sussex) and areas near Maidstone, where Cobbett had been speaking and was suspected of having incited his audience to arson and riot and had "much excited the feeling of the paupers".⁽⁹⁾ In the Malling Deanery, Yalding, West Peckham, Nettlestead and Lamberhurst were affected in this wave of protest.

Tithes

Tithes had existed, on Biblical principles, from time immemorial. Where the tithes had been impropriated there could scarcely be scriptural justification. Where the parson did receive them, how could they be warranted if he were non-resident? Yet, however much railed against, the parson was part of the fabric of society and, because of the tithe system, his livelihood was inexorably linked to that of the farmer.

In Rochester Deanery an average figure for the years 1829, 1830 & 1831⁽¹⁰⁾ shows that 86.08% of the incumbent's gross benefice income was accounted for by tithe and in Malling Deanery that figure was 83.78% (the aggregate 84.87%). The parson would be poor indeed if he were to depend upon other sources. These were various - the occasional dividend or pension, Easter offerings and Surplice fees and they differed between town and country. Many a rural incumbent either did not collect surplice fees or gave them to the poor - in any case they amounted to only one or two pounds; also in rural areas Easter Offerings had been all but discontinued. The town incumbent could receive a considerable sum in surplice fees (£244 at Chatham, £107 at St. Margaret Rochester, £58 at Milton, £20 at Gravesend and at Strood). Easter Offerings were also collected (£32 at St. Margaret Rochester, £20 at Milton, £12 at Strood): also £15

Pew Rents at St. Nicholas Rochester. (There were also pew rents at the new chapel of St. John Chatham, but that is a tale still to be told). Three livings had been augmented from Queen Anne's Bounty (Chalk, Cobham, and Strood) and some Dean and Chapter livings had small pensions from the Dean and Chapter originating from rectorial tithes. More lucrative than these was the income from glebe land. A few incumbents farmed their glebe, or a portion of it, but usually it was rented out. The average receipts to those who did rent out land belonging to the living was £43.49 in Rochester and £51.47 in Malling (an aggregate of £47.48).

That tithe was unpopular, and more than unpopular, is not in doubt. However, incumbents did come to an agreement; and the 1832 return shows that the majority expected, as the result of settlements, that their income would remain much the same. So some 37 felt unable to offer an opinion about future income prospects from tithe or judged that that income would remain the same or were unconcerned enough not to comment. The general tenor was as at Burham: "It has been for five years within a few pounds amounted to the above mentioned and it can reasonably expected to continue so with little variation." There was confidence among seven or eight (mostly in hop-growing areas) that more could be expected and three or four expected less. Chatham had decreased by £100 p.a. in the last few years and could not see how matters were likely to go.

What becomes apparent is the sense of grievance among the clergy. There were many complaints about the ever escalating Poor Rate; and a feeling that even where the tithes had been underlet any adjustment would only be swallowed up therein (Wouldham). Frequently incumbents professed that they had commuted very moderately. "The rector's composition with his parishioners is moderate. Whether capable at any future time of improvement must depend upon circumstances (Cuxton)." "The present charges on the occupiers are very moderate and ought to be more but it is impossible for me to say whether the incumbent will realise more" (Shorne). At Leigh the sums paid in lieu were considered to be unequally apportioned and

not in favour of the incumbent. The incumbent of Cowden "was perfectly aware that the value of the composition was not the actual value of the tithes and if strictly tied to agricultural produce would have amounted to a considerably larger sum. Moreover it had been his habit to adjust them in seasons of distress". The rector of Kemsing gave back 10% of tithes due to the "pressure of the times". Composition was considered to be low at Horsmonden and he expected that the "actual sum to be put into the incumbent's pocket" would be increased by "an improvement in the administration of the Poor Laws which at present press peculiarly hard upon the parochial clergy."; a hope also expressed by Dr. Hawkins because the Poor Law was "greatly mismanaged".

The rector of Nettlestead complained of a low composition, but in particular that he had received nothing from West Barming which he had been informed should pay tithes to the rector of Nettlestead to a considerable amount (£200 or £300). The previous two incumbents had been deterred from examining the subject "from delicacy and a wish to avoid disputation". The incumbent of Ryarsh also inherited a situation where a very aged incumbent had shown "extreme indifference" in collecting his dues.

How far did the situation at Tonbridge reflect the norm, where the vicar stated: "It is generally considered by the farmers that they do not pay much more than half the value of the Tithe in kind; in consequence of my moderation I have lived on the most friendly terms with my parishioners."? He had done this at some expense: there had been an agreement in 1809 for £1050, with the parish paying the rates, but this part of the agreement had never been honoured. However, the net income was £577.11.0 after deducting rates and the curate's stipend. The curate paid for an assistant, so it was presumably these gentlemen who did the work, whilst the vicar, Sir Charles Hardinge (Bart.), who was licensed for non-residence, lived elsewhere (maybe in his other living of Crowhurst). He no doubt had the means to be generous.

R. H. Jago, a land surveyor and auctioneer, who valued tithe around London including Kent gave it as his opinion to the 1833 Parliamentary Select Committee on Agriculture that lay impropiators struck a much harder bargain, because often they were unknown to the tithe payers, knew their legal rights and were not prepared to concede to clamour and intimidation. The clergyman, on the other hand, had to value the tithes, lay such valuation before the parishioners and bargain with them ("I leave the Committee to judge who is likely to have the best of it"). "The clergyman resides (or ought to reside) amongst them, and although he rarely claims more than two thirds of his legal entitlement, he is often obliged to be contented with less than half." John Neve, a land agent at Tenterden, also considered that a better bargain could be struck with a clergyman than with a layman. A Gillingham farmer (William Taylor), however, whose land bordered Chatham Dockyard, thought that the clergyman did just as well, and had heard tell that in hop districts there was much more difficulty with the clergyman.⁽¹¹⁾

Crop values had changed, but tithe compositions could be based on valuations twenty or thirty years out of date. For the sake of maintaining good relations, clergy incomes were in some instances diminishing, yet the commissioners were perhaps expecting them to do their best to improve benefice income. Was that not why they were enquiring about future prospects?

In a few parishes there was outright intransigence from the tithe payers. Although there was no reason to expect any increase in the amount of income in the opinion of the incumbent of Frindsbury, yet "from the difficulty that now exists in collecting the composition fears may reasonably entertained of the future." and at Gravesend, "The holders of two-thirds or more of the land in this parish have already given notice to set out their tithes at Michaelmas unless the composition is considerably reduced and this spirit has more particularly manifest itself in the country since the present enquiries by the Ecclesiastical Revenues Commission have been set on foot". At Higham the complaint was against increasing Poor Rate

and "the systematic combination of the tithe payers of this particular parish against the vicarial tithes". At Kingsdown compositions were tending to decrease and part had been lost by the bankruptcy of a farmer and would never be recovered, and at Strood income is likely to be less "from the disinclination in the parish to pay the assessment of tithes." Allington was losing out for a different reason; the value of the living had so increased as to make it no longer eligible for £13 p. a. from Queen Anne's Bounty. New compositions and the Poor Rate led the vicar of Hadlow to expect a considerable diminution of the net yearly produce of the living.

There was some justification for complaining about the burden of the Poor Rate. From the returns where its amount is declared, the average sum per living is £94.07 (Rochester £56.16 and the richer Malling £131.52), which also includes the highway rate, since these two figures are usually lumped together. This works out at an average 19.05% of gross benefice income.

Dislike of the Poor Rate was not the same thing as being unwilling to give help to the poor. In the Hawkins correspondence⁽¹²⁾ Beckwith reports to the new incumbent: "I have been engaged this morning in distributing some of the fruits of your liberality to about 50 of the most necessitous and meritorious poor of Lamberhurst, for wh (sic) very reasonable relief they beg me to return to you their most grateful thanks". Eversleigh before him, according to his son, paid annual subscriptions for the support of the Sunday School and for placing children at other schools during the week. The clergy recognised a duty to the impoverished (see below p. 70), but at least one considered the increase in Poor Rate to be the result of "that most mischievous and guilty provision of the law which permits a fixed weekly sum to be paid out of the rate to every labourer according to the number of his family whether he be in work or out of work." (Barming). The fruits of the "Speenhamland System" were manifest to all and reform of the poor law was as urgently demanded as that of the tithe system. One cost the payer 20% of his income

and the other, in theory, but rarely in practice, 10%. Did either represent value for money?

Other outgoings included land tax, highways tax, the cost of collecting tithes, tenths, mortgage repayments on the cost of building or repair of the glebe house, or of renting a more suitable dwelling, procuration fees and visitation costs, subscriptions to clerical and other charities, and various local costs such as schools, the repair of the chancel, the local lunatic asylum, for singers in church "two guineas have been paid to induce some singers to attend church" (Longfield) and even the church rate, not forgetting the curate's salary.

It is evident that sometimes such matters were mentioned and reported as outgoings to their income; often not. To quote the vicar of Bidborough: "Perhaps it might be mentioned that from there being no resident gentry in the parish, the superintendence and care of the poor throw a heavy expense on the funds of the clergyman supposing that he wishes to do his duty. For instance the present incumbent can but obtain a subscription of £4 towards the education of the children of the poor, accordingly the school depends altogether upon him and, at the least, the cost is £30 per annum" and there are "many other wants to which the poor are liable". Or at Cowden, in addition to the school "assistance to the labourers in necessary cases, and especially in distributing medicine, having no medical man within some miles, and assistance to the sick persons have much more considerable expense in a country situation than may be supposed by those unused to such things". Having complained about how highly the clergyman was assessed for the poor, the rector of Horsmonden added "he is expected, and from moral considerations is inclined, when...many labourers are out of work, to employ them when he in no way requires their labour" or "There are annual expenses such as private charities and support of day and Sunday School but which an incumbent, with kindly feeling, would not publish" (Nettlestead).⁽¹³⁾

Obviously, too, as several commented, projected emoluments depended upon the future use of land; in the Hoo penisular, whether "by breaking up or laying grassland", in the Weald and surrounding area on the acreage increasingly being given to the cultivation of hops (although increased profit from hops was not properly reflected in tithe payment - eg. Ditton and Yalding where it was considered to be greatly under-computed, whereas Lake, as we have seen, thought there was a danger of over-production of hops) and on the unknown prospects for agriculture, which had seen a period of sustained depression; compositions were tied into the value of the produce of the land (cf. Luddesdown, and Stone where the composition was tied to the price of wheat). Sometimes tithe valuations were twenty or thirty years out of date.

The feelings of Henry Dampier Phelps (rector of Snodland and nephew of Bishop Dampier, formerly of Rochester and subsequently translated to Ely) got too much for him: "The future value of this and of every other kind of property must it seems depend upon the will and pleasure of our Sovereign Master's the mob to whom the present Ministers by connivance, at least, if not by actual encouragement to agitate, have surrendered the government of the country and with fear and trembling obey their behest; but should order be restored and the power again placed in proper hands, agriculture may once again flourish and then this Living could be greatly increased in value and the system of cultivating the land...much improved."⁽¹⁴⁾

It was rare for the tithe to be collected in kind in the years 1829-31 and where it was, it constituted but a small portion of the whole and as often as not it was attempted for just one single year. (Ashurst alone appears to have collected the greater part in kind in each of the three years.) At Higham the rector complained that he was forced one year to collect £17.4.4-worth of tithe (to add to the £473.16. commutation agreement). Farmers used the option of collecting in kind as a threat, for obviously it could be an acrimonious and laborious business (cf. R.H. Jago's evidence, above p. 68). At Southfleet the produce of four acres and a garden were

collected in kind, at Horsmonden in one instance only, as also at Leigh, where the receipt did not cover the cost of collection, a small portion at Addington and likewise at Swanscombe (where the incumbent was convinced that the income could be more if completely collected in kind). The vicar of Trotterscliffe experimented. He likewise was convinced that the tithe income was much too low and in 1832 collected in kind. When he reported to the Commission in November of that year the sale of the produce was not complete, but it was already evident that he would make more than £100 over and above the former computation agreement of £275.8.0..

That the clergyman received in tithe nowhere near the amount to which he was legally entitled cannot be gainsaid. But the parishes lay in a wealthy area. In 1812 the total monetary value of tithe in Kent was second only to that in Essex according to a table which included 40 English counties.⁽¹⁵⁾ Moreover it is likely that the clergyman's income had steadily increased over the years. In 1817⁽¹⁶⁾ 7 livings in the two deaneries were reported as being below £150 per annum. In 1832 only 1 had remained so - Nurstead at £140, which was a special case, being almost a sinecure. The other 6 were returning incomes of £180 to £305. (Rochester Diocese as a whole had the lowest number of poor livings among the English dioceses in 1830 - just 1 under £80, which was in the £60-£70 bracket).⁽¹⁷⁾ In these 6 poor livings there was an average increase in income over the 15 years of 70%; this in years of agricultural distress and income allied to the land through tithe and glebe. The whole of the parsons' 10% was not collected, but sufficient was gathered (frequently through the good offices of canny and efficient tithe agents) to ensure that the incumbents' standard of living in fact improved.

1830 - 1835

Chapter 7

PATRONAGE, RESIDENCE AND DUTY

The years 1800 - 1835 saw little change in the owners of patronage⁽¹⁾ or the manner in which it was exercised. There were 62 opportunities to appoint in Rochester Deanery and 55 in Malling. (There were 5 parishes in Malling where there was no change of incumbent in the 35 years although at Tudely- cum-Capel there were 7.); overall much the same rate as 1770 - 1800.

The only changes in patronage in the Rochester Deanery were in two (or may be only one) of the eleven livings in private hands (the other nine remained in the gift of the same families as in 1800). It is not clear whether there was in fact any change at Fawkham. It was an appendage to the manor with the owners of Old Fawkham and New Fawkham appointing alternately; from the names of the patrons it is impossible to say if there were any change. The advowson of Luddesdown was in process of being sold.

As would be expected in Malling, where 26 of the livings were in private hands, there were more changes in the ownership of patronage. 16 certainly stayed in the same family; 10 had possibly changed (4 of them to be family livings with the incumbent owning the advowson).

In both Deaneries, other patronage (Episcopal, Dean and Chapter, College and Crown) continued as before.

The Bishop was patron of 13% of the livings, the Dean and Chapter of 18.6%, the Crown 7.2%, Cambridge Colleges 2.9%; well over half, 58.1%, were in private hands (including private clerical hands). Peter Virgin has calculated similar percentages for a sample of five

counties (Cumberland, Westmorland, Kent, Norfolk, Suffolk) in 1833. They are: Bishops 17.4%, Dean and Chapters 9.5%, Crown 6.3%, Colleges 5.8% and Private 56.3%.⁽²⁾ In Rochester and Malling Deaneries the Chapter had the right to present in twice the average number of livings; the Bishop in half the average. It was members of the Cathedral Chapter and the various private patrons whom those in search of a living needed to cultivate, although not with much hope if they were unknown and had no family ties or other connections.

It is natural to expect lay patrons to appoint family first and, as we have seen, four did this in the Malling Deanery by the simple expedient of purchasing the advowson (following a trend already noted - p. 23).

Likewise, one would expect colleges to appoint from their midst. St John's Cambridge appointed a fellow, Joseph Hindle, to Higham in 1829. He was to remain there forty-five years; restored the church and built a chapel-at-ease and National Schools, largely at his own cost. Sidney Sussex College Cambridge also appointed a fellow, George Cecil Renouard, to Swanscombe in 1819. His incumbency lasted forty-nine years; he resided in the glebe house - when at home. He was fluent in Arabic, Turkish, Hebrew as well as in French, German and Italian and was a noted classical scholar. He travelled much in the east and had a reputation as a botanist and geographer.

Chalk, Gravesend, Milton in Rochester and Barming and Offham in Malling continued to be crown livings. The three Rochester Deanery livings fell vacant only once each, two of those appointed had livings elsewhere, which they retained. In Malling, Offham went first to a son of the Dean of Christ Church Cambridge, then to the son of a general. Barming was given to a prebendary of Winchester, who also held Boxley, and he was followed by the son of the Governor of Madras.

The Dean and Chapter during the first 35 years of the century had 21 opportunities to appoint to their 10 livings in contrast to the 30

years prior to 1800 when they had 25. How they set about the task we have seen in the Lamberhurst appointment, and prebendaries of Rochester were similarly appointed in 3 other instances. The other livings (except two) went to minor canons: the exceptions were the headmaster of the Kings School and the brother of Dr. Hawkins. It was a matter of policy to appoint minor canons. In 1804 the Chapter faced a situation where minor canons, once appointed to a benefice, continued therein, but withdrew from the minor canonry. Clergy offered themselves for the duties of a minor canon in the expectancy of a benefice, so it was resolved to make it clear to all minor canons when they were offered livings that they were expected also to continue as canons as long as they retained their benefices. Only so could the hopes of minor canons be realised.⁽³⁾ (There would, presumably, be too many vacancies for minor canons and not enough available livings when in due course the time came to satisfy their aspirations).

There might be a hope that the Bishops would do better. Altogether they had 14 opportunities. Dampier, as we have seen, appointed his nephew to Snodland and he also was responsible for the appointment of Charles Moore (of Sunday School fame) to St. Nicholas Rochester, which he held with Cuxton.

Walker King came to the Diocese with definite ideas. He mentioned in a letter to Earl Fitzwilliam, five clergymen whom he considered had a claim on his generosity. The list consisted of a nephew, his curate, his chaplain (of whom he writes "The Chancellor has just given him a good Living in my neighbourhood. They are worth together 12 or 1300 a year. I am therefore no longer anxious about him, but he may hold another Living, & he has nephews in orders, and he will expect to have the disposal of something as opportunities may offer"), a protégé of Burke (whose works King had edited) and an unsuccessful applicant for a fellowship who had been in competition with him.⁽⁴⁾ King was responsible for the appointment of 8 incumbents in the Rochester and Malling Deaneries. His eldest son received Frindsbury in 1822 and Stone in the same year. He was to

hold Bromley and Dartford in the same diocese for short periods, before being appointed archdeacon in 1827 together with the cathedral prebendary that went with it. His second son went to Longfield in 1825, which gave him a £200 p.a. additional source of income to that from Henley-upon-Thames. He did employ a curate, but at a low stipend of £60 p.a.

During his six-month episcopacy in 1827 Percy appointed one Edward John Shepherd to Trotterscliffe. He had been admitted to Gray's Inn after Cambridge and appears to have been ordained deacon and priest in the same year that he became rector of Trotterscliffe. The aristocratic Murray began his 33-year episcopate after Percy's translation. He gave Cuxton to the fourth son of a baronet in 1831, Frindsbury to a nephew of the Dean⁽⁵⁾ and 2 of his sons were to receive livings later in his Rochester years.

As we have seen, in 1837, 50% of Rochester Deanery clergy and 30% of Malling were non-resident according to their churchwardens. There was also 50% pluralism. According to the 1832 return, 19 of the 35 Rochester and 15 of the 29 Malling incumbents for which we have a return held other livings or prebends. In mitigation it could be said that seven held two parishes, which were close enough to allow them to be served by one priest.

In the 1832 return, 9 of the Rochester clergy complained of their glebe house, 9 say there is none, 13 consider they have a house fit for residence and 1 is in the process of building. In Malling things were different. There, only 4 complain, 1 says there is none, 23 have a house fit for residence, and 1 is in process of building. The only frustrated reply comes from Offham: "The incumbent being desirous of residing upon the benefice has hired a mere Cottage pro tempore though being unfit for Rectorial residence; and he has not been able to find a suitable house within a convenient distance."

The want of a house was, of course, a classic excuse for non-residence and had led to a Parliamentary Enquiry in 1818. ⁽⁶⁾

Then, 11 of the Rochester Clergy had complained of unfitness, 8 said there was no glebe house, 17 had a house fit; in Malling 6 complained of unfitness, 1 that there was none and 20 that the house was fit, with 1 in the midst of repairs. In the 14 years intervening 6 were considered to be no longer fit by 1832 ("not fit for an incumbent with a family", "no, never one fit for residence on the Hundred" (of Hoo), "unfit because of dilapidated state and inconvenience")⁽⁷⁾. On the other hand, 2 houses were currently in the building to replace those considered unsuitable and 4 had been provided with an adequate residence. The 9 parishes which had no glebe house in 1818 still had no glebe house in 1832. The situation had evened out and the percentage of parishes with no glebe house or one that the clergy considered uninhabitable remained about 40%. It would seem that where suitable dwellings were built it was at a particular incumbent's initiative and at his (and his successors') expense, sometimes leaving a mortgage charge on the living to Queen Ann's Bounty under the Gilbert Acts. 7 such are recorded. Ryash was repaying a charge of interest to Queen Anne's Bounty on £600 borrowed for building and Barming was about to build, borrowing £1,100, with repayments over twenty years.

Clerical Duty

What was expected of the clergy by their clerical superiors?. We have noted Horsley's requirements in 1800 (above p. 28). The prerequisite was residence. Archdeacon Law was optimistic enough two years later to comment: "Looking to the Diocese, I am justified in denying anything like a general failure in residence".⁽⁸⁾ He also commented that the public debate on the matter of residence showed the high value that was put on the pastoral office of the clergy. By 1822 Bishop Walker King was more sanguine. To the Churchwardens he asked the usual question concerning residence; but to the clergy Article 1 of his Enquiry read: "If you are not resident in the Parish where do you usually reside, and how often between the 1st of April 1821, and the 1st of April 1822 have you

visited your Parish, and what stay have you made there each time?".⁽⁹⁾ But proper ministerial care by a curate was expected, backed up by regular visits from the incumbent himself. If the incumbent resided, but had a curate, he was expected to officiate at least once a month.⁽¹⁰⁾

A perusal of the 1822 Articles of Enquiry to clergy and to the churchwardens shows that the current expectancy was for Divine Service to be performed twice on Sundays (as well as on public Fasts and Festivals of the Church), at least one sermon every Lord's Day, the sacrament administered at least three times annually, (but the Act of Parliament against profane cursing and swearing was to be read four times every year), infant baptism and marriages (with careful records kept), catechising of the youth publicly, the provision and direction of Sunday Schools and a knowledge of other schools, almshouses and charitable endowments (ensuring that they were duly managed according to the direction of the founder), the provision of Books of Common Prayer, Bibles and tracts to the poor, the keeping of the church and chancel in good repair. He was also to confer with popish recusants and other sectaries, endeavouring to bring them to the true religion professed by the established church and encourage loyalty to the King and his government, he was to visit the sick and he was to be a man of sober life and conversation, his dress and apparel decent and "his carriage" in no way disorderly, scandalous or unbecoming a minister.

The first replies to returns which have survived giving details of Sunday and other services are those to the Commission of 1832. Questions about preaching were not asked, but in 1837⁽¹¹⁾ George Murray did enquire whether at least one sermon were preached every Sunday. In the replies to the Commission 16 Rochester and 22 Malling clergy declared that they performed duty twice on Sunday, 18 Rochester and 7 Malling that they did duty once (although in this Malling number is included 2 cases where there were joint livings and the clergy served one church in the morning and the other in the afternoon). Where there was only one service on the Sunday, it was

frequently added that the time alternated between morning and afternoon or that there was single duty in winter and double in summer. Many made a point of adding "with sermon". Other fasts and festivals were declared in various combinations. (The question simply read "What duty is performed in each church and chapel?") Over the archdeaconry as a whole, therefore, there were 38 parishes where double duty was performed and 23 instances of single duty, with, again, a marked difference between the two deaneries.

From the 1837 return of churchwardens it would appear that in Rochester all parishes had at least one sermon each Sunday and all read the service devoutly and clearly. It is a matter of conjecture how far a simple "yes" to the question is indicative of satisfaction, although 10 replies added the gratuitous information that there were two sermons every Sunday. Moreover the answer to other articles was not invariably the expected "yes". One question asked whether the children were catechised after the afternoon service in accordance with 59th Canon and 14 replied "no", but usually added that they were catechised during Lent, or in the Sunday School or National School although there was one "not to our knowledge" and an equivocal "he is willing to do so". The Malling pattern is much the same. All seemed satisfied with the conduct of divine worship and the sermons (17 averring that there were two sermons every Sunday) and there was the same response to the question about catechising, explaining that they were examined in the Sunday School or in one instance "on account of heavy Sunday Duty the Sunday School Master does it".

In 1820⁽¹²⁾ the aged Law warned against emulating the dissenters in preaching: "we are carefully to avoid that declamation, and those vehement gestures, which however admired by the multitude, savour not of Evangelical simplicity and purity. This mode of preaching has been chiefly introduced by those who are denominated Methodists.". The preaching of his clerical brethren should not be cold, but "Pulpit oratory ought to be chaste, correct, and, at the same time, energetic, very different from that which is now in use". He felt

that much sectarian preaching was intended to popularise the preacher rather than instil duty. Indeed in the "present day too many make the chief part of their Duty to consist in listening to instruction, rather than in obeying the Word of God". How far in fact ministers of the established church preached, rather than resorting, say, to the homilies, as the Articles of 1822 permitted if he were not licensed to preach, is not known; but the implication of Law's remarks would seem to have been that clergy were expected to compose their own sermons.

The churchwardens of every parish also agreed that the clergyman was "ready and diligent" in visiting the sick. There were two compliments "praiseworthy" and "humane, diligent and charitable" - even a grudging "he does considering the distance from his parishioners".

The clergy were seen as agents in upholding law and order, in guarding the morals of the people, in encouraging social stability. So Law, after the war in the year that Habeas Corpus was suspended (1817), felt that the country's evils were magnified and declared "Actuated by the desire of maintaining such a temper, and of preserving that due order of subordination, which are necessary to be upholden in all well-regulated governments, We, the Clergy of the Diocese, have recently felt ourselves called upon to avow our principles of attachment to our excellent constitution; and our abhorrence of that contempt of legal authority, which has been reproachfully exhibited by a misguided populace. If we are accused of unduly interfering in civil concerns, we refer to the Apostolic command of enjoining 'submission to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake (1 Peter ii 13)'"⁽¹³⁾. It was that spirit which twelve years later was to bring such obloquy during the passage of the Reform Bill. Visitation Articles to Wardens and clergy continued to ask "Are there any offenders notoriously and habitually committed, to the subversion of religion and morality, and to the scandal of well-doers ?" (1830).

Meanwhile, anti-clericalism was fuelled by publications like Cobbett's "Rural Rides" (he skirted the two deaneries) and "The Extraordinary Black Book".⁽¹⁴⁾ From the Rochester Diocesan hierarchy this latter publication included Bishop Murray and Dean Stevens. Among the parish clergy Allfree of Strood, Marsham of Allington and Neville of Birling were considered to be appropriate candidates for its scandalous list of some 440 flagrant pluralists.

What is extraordinary is that the 1837 churchwardens' returns show very little hostility or bitterness; indeed they appear generally to be satisfied with clerical ministrations. This in spite of the fact that 40% were non-resident and 50% were pluralists. Could it be, that, as in Lamberhurst, it was the curate who saved the day? There, Samuel Beckwith preached twice each Sunday.⁽¹⁵⁾ He reckoned that church attendances varied from 400 to 700 (generally the latter) in the summer and from 300 to 600 in the winter. This was from a population of about 1,600. Communicants numbered about 110. 43 children were instructed at the Poor House. There was also a Sunday School. He was sure that more than half the population were steadily attached to the principles of the Establishment; the residue consisted of dissenters of different denominations and of persons professing no sentiments of religion whatever. How highly he was regarded was evidenced by the petition sent to Hawkins, yet, given the number of dissenters, he obviously did not have an easy time and as has been seen the annual vestry of 1831 appointed a dissenter as churchwarden. But, if this correspondence had not survived, even his name would not have been known, for he was not at Lamberhurst long enough to appear in a process. It was the man in the parish to whom the local populace related. The absent incumbent might provide largesse and occasional oversight: it was the curate they saw visiting the sick and conducting worship.

In about the year 1814 George Harker became sub-curate of Chatham. (Chatham, a perpetual curacy, was in the hands of Archdeacon Law). Chatham was the most populous and rapidly expanding town in these deaneries and saw the prompt building of St. John's under the

provisions of the 1818 Act. (In 1830 a district chapel of Tonbridge was also built at Southborough.⁽¹⁶⁾) In the December of 1818 a Building Committee was appointed, some local funds were raised and by July 1819 plans were well under way. There was then a difficulty about the orientation of the building, but this was accommodated and the building, to house nearly 2,000 (1,200 seats free), was duly completed in 1821 at comparatively little expense to the parish and none from the church rates, as had been promised.⁽¹⁷⁾ "The finishing of the Church, and even its Books, Furniture, Vestments, and Communion Plate, were provided by the Committee, without any charge to the Parish." George Harker was appointed minister of the new chapel and the residue of the pew rents (after a £15 payment to the clerk), went to Harker as stipend.

By 1825 an acrimonious dispute had broken out. A meeting of the Building Committee (January 1819), which Harker had been unable to attend due to illness, had declared that it was their wish and intention to appropriate a part of the money from the letting of seats and of pews, to constitute a fund for the purpose of contingent expenses and repairs. To this Harker made immediate objection and claimed the committee was acting completely beyond their powers under the 1818 Act. The immediate cause of the dispute in 1825 would seem to have been the changing of worship time to the evening, rather than the afternoon, which meant additional expenses in lighting. Initially expenses were defrayed by a quarterly collection at the doors, but this the Bishop did not favour. Legal opinion was taken by both sides. Harker was supported and the Vestry had to accept that by law the parish was liable to the repairs and contingent expenses and consequently these were to be defrayed through Church Rates. According to Harker the trouble was a very strong party of dissenters and "there were too many of the establishment who acted with them". Harker felt that his income was at the mercy of the churchwardens of the mother church, who could decide how much was required to defray expenses, had the responsibility of letting the pews and seeing to the collection of their rents and whom (it would seem to be hinted) sided with the

dissenters in the matter of church rate. Moreover, Harker protested that his good name was being defamed and vigorously defended himself against the charge that the new Church had been built for his own private emolument.

From the correspondence it becomes clear that the pews of the parish church were fully rented and nearly all those of the new church. It was in the evening that the poorer inhabitants filled the free seats. The change in time to evening had made it more possible for them to attend and that change could well have been made in conscious competition to dissent. The Congregationalists had built a church in 1818, the Wesleyans a chapel in 1820 and another in 1822, the Particular Baptists in 1821.

Questions about Church Rates were beginning to appear in Visitation Enquiries and in Chatham by 1818 were a very sensitive matter. Archdeacon Law (also perpetual Curate of Chatham) was unusually tolerant towards dissenters in his Charges desiring his hearers to avoid acrimony in controversy; but acrimony between the established Church and Dissent - and especially the question of Church Rates - came to dominate the ecclesiastical scene during the first decades of Victoria's reign and it is to the period 1835 -1870 that we now turn.

1835 - 1870

Chapter 8

CHURCH RATE, WORSHIP AND VISITATION

"My client was induced to purchase in the first instance to prevent it falling into bad hands". John Franklin was writing to the Commissioners in 1840 about a recently built Tunbridge Wells church (1835) - there were legal difficulties concerning its consecration. The "bad hands" were Romanists or leading London Dissenters. The vicar of Tonbridge also wrote expressing alarm "lest Dissenters should become ultimately the purchasers".⁽¹⁾ Dissenters were viewed with as much alarm in the watering Spa of Tunbridge Wells as they had been at the other end of the Diocese in less salubrious Chatham. At Capel a few miles distant from the Wells the churchwardens in their 1837 presentment reported "We have some notorious drunkards, chiefly Dissenters".⁽²⁾ Clergy outside the Diocese were refusing Christian burial to those baptised by Dissenting Ministers and Bishop Murray sympathised: "It is a conscientious scruple deserving of every respect". However he had to point out that baptism was valid whoever performed it, even a layman.⁽³⁾

Both Tunbridge Wells and Chatham were rapidly expanding and, in both, dissenters had stolen the established church's thunder. In Tunbridge Wells a Chapel of Ease had been built by public subscription (donors included Pepys and Evelyn as well as the R. C. Duke of Norfolk) and was opened for worship in 1678, but it was to remain the only establishment presence in the Spa town (which was in the parish of Tonbridge) until Holy Trinity was built in 1829. Meanwhile the Countess of Huntingdon's Connection had had a chapel since 1769 (opened by George Whitfield), the Baptists since 1800 and the Wesleyan Methodists from 1812. The Particular Baptists opened their doors in 1834 seven years before Christ Church - as the above mentioned church, which had legal difficulties with its consecration, was eventually known - was licensed for worship.

At Chatham, Archdeacon Law as perpetual curate of the parish was quick off the mark in building a District Church as soon as was possible under the 1818 Act. The estimated population of the garrison and dockyard town was 15,200 in 1820 and the parish church seated about 1,600. By that year, however, Zion Baptist Chapel, Ebenezer Independent Chapel (both a few streets away from the new District Chapel), Bethel Methodist Chapel, an Old (Unitarian) General Baptist Church and Chatham Hill Independent (Congregationalist) were well established and in 1821 a Particular Baptist Church was built nearby in the High Street with two Wesleyan Methodist Chapels being added to Chatham's places of worship in 1822.⁽⁴⁾ (It was enough to try the patience of an eighty-year-old Archdeacon. Perhaps that is why his former tolerant attitude to dissenters lapsed a little in his 1820 Charge, when he deplored the frenzied preaching "introduced by those who are denominated Methodists".)⁽⁵⁾ Certainly, underlying the difficulties, which George Harker experienced, was the dissenter presence. The parishioners had obviously been led to believe that the proposed established Church Chapel would not become a charge on the Church Rate.⁽⁶⁾ It was in Chatham that opposition to Church Rate was at its most ferocious. It was one thing to pay Church Rate for the upkeep of the ancient parish church, which in any case they had extended in 1788 (see above p. 6); another maybe to face an escalation in rates for the maintenance of a new district church (and how many more would there be in populous Chatham?). But the legal ruling was that St. John's contingent expenses and repair costs were chargeable to Church Rate. Harker had complained that many members of the established church had supported, or refrained from opposing, the dissenters' stand. In fact, as we shall see, hostility to church rate from the time of the opening of St. John's meant that no rate could be agreed and rate payers did not contribute towards the upkeep of St. John's - or St. Paul's and Christ Church Luton, which were to follow.

Church Rates

The 1830 Articles to Churchwardens had no question concerning rates, but in 1837 Murray included three queries.⁽⁷⁾ The first two ("Do you, as often as the state of your Church, Churchyard, Church Goods etc. require it, apply to the Parishioners legally assembled, for the necessary Rates, in order to sustaining or restoring (sic), as the case may be?" and "When a Rate is granted, do you, without delay, proceed to collect the same?") were to remain unchanged throughout his episcopate (1827-60). In addition in 1837 and 1840 he was rash enough to ask: "Do you immediately report to The Archdeacon, the Christian and Surnames of those, who, being a majority, have refused you the rate?" This latter produced a heavily underlined "No" from Chatham, but more generally replies stated: "This necessity never occurs", "No rate refused", "Rates made without opposition hitherto" and "We have none that say that they will not pay although the rates are very hard to collect". It was one thing to grant a Rate at the Annual Vestry; it was another thing to collect them. The trouble spots were the towns. A rate had been refused in Gravesend in 1837 by a majority of 14 and to this question there was also Chatham's blunt "No". (There was also, a "no" at High Halstow on the Isle of Grain.)

In the Malling Deanery there is no hint of a rate refusal, the usual reply being something like Capel's "No rate has ever been refused" or "rates have always been granted unanimously when required". However, the wardens of Westerham replied "No" to the question. (Returns for 1840 have survived only in Malling Deanery: answers were to the same effect, including Westerham's "No".) Otherwise every parish in Malling averred that they asked for and were granted rates, and that they were collected as required. An 1856 Parliamentary Return asked for details of refusals during the previous fifteen years and again there was no demur in Malling;⁽⁸⁾ (except for Paddlesworth: an appendage of the manor and considered to be a sinecure: it had a population of 52, no visitation articles were returned and its church according to Fielding was used as a

barn, having been deserted since 1660. The 1856 reply was "Have not been refused, but would be were it not for the law".)

This was equally the case for by far the greater number of parishes in the Rochester Deanery. Chatham and Gravesend were the only overt trouble spots.

In Chatham there would seem to have been agitation from the early twenties. In 1843 open antagonism between the churchwardens was manifest. Asked about the setting of a rate one warden replied "Yes without effect - The malignant feeling of the Dissenters, and the apathy and indifference of the professing churchmen toward the church, has prevented a rate for the last four years." His fellow scribbled by the side: "I protest against Geo. Wood's answer to this question." Later in the return Mr. Wood complained that his fellow warden was non-resident - there was another protest from the said co-warden. Protests were also lodged when he reported that the lack of a rate meant that the church was not kept as clean as it should be. "What little can be done is done at the personal expense of the Sexton, there being no rate or funds from which to pay the pew openers....The church is in a dirty state throughout and sadly dilapidated." He also reported that the altar books were no longer fit for use and that the churchyard was shamefully abused by improper characters at night (another protest from his colleague) and, asked whether the wardens took proper measures to prevent tippling in public houses on the Lord's Day, he replied: "Yes. In the public houses in Chatham and its vicinity little difference is observed between the Sabbath and other days. The Houses, in general, are open during divine service & it is useless to apply to the magistrate without naming a particular case and this, if done by the only resident warden, would subject him to the indignation of the party accused and his life would be in danger. The desecration of the Lord's Day and its vicinity is much to be lamented and requires the most vigorous measures to be adopted to check the same." This answer also received a protest from his colleague and was crossed through - but remains easily readable.

Matters were no better in 1851. "All applications for Rates have been refused by the vestry since 1840. At a vestry held on 25th October only six persons in a full vestry voted for a twopenny Rate." By 1859 it was admitted "Church Rates are practically abolished" and there was an addendum "The Churchwardens, knowing it would be useless, have not applied to the Parishioners for a Rate for many years. The necessary funds are provided by a collection once in the year from house to house, and quarterly collections at Church. The Churchwardens are assisted by a Committee consisting of the Incumbent, Churchwardens and several of the Parishioners".

In 1859 St. Nicholas Rochester reported that the majority of parishioners had refused to grant a rate and Frindsbury on the Isle of Grain was reporting opposition from Dissenters and delay in collection. (Higham also hinted at difficulties in collection.)

Over the bridge, across the River Medway from Rochester, lay impoverished Strood. These matters had been resolved by a local Act of Parliament (52 Geo 3. c37). Affairs were managed by trustees and an authorised agent appointed, who collected annually for three years. Then, when an error was found in the legislation, 3 & 4 Vic c 91 remedied it.⁽⁹⁾ In 1853-4 this system brought them £330 (the highest receipt in the two Deaneries, where mostly income was in two figures; the nearest were Tonbridge with £287, Gravesend at £276 and Hadlow at £198; but the norm was nearer £50).⁽¹⁰⁾

Moving Londonwards, the next large conurbation was Gravesend. The Visitation Returns lack the colour of Chatham, but, as noted, a rate was refused in 1837 - in contrast to Chatham the Parish was declared to be extremely orderly on the Sabbath and in 1851 rates were again being collected. By 1859 there was "no Church Rate", it having been refused by a show of hands at a Vestry in August 1855.⁽¹¹⁾

Church Rate was a running sore and understandably viewed as a great injustice by many dissenters; certainly by the agitators. In the Rochester Deanery, according to the 1851 census,⁽¹²⁾ the Established

Church claimed 13,235 adult attendances (plus 3,528 Sunday Scholars) at worship during the day. Returns are unavailable from two parishes. In addition the vicar of Stoke refused to give the required statistic. His response is indicative of the widespread Establishment fear and distrust of Dissent. "Under a persuasion that the questions will not and in numerous instances cannot, be fairly assessed & that in many instances also they will invite an exaggerated statement by Sects inimical to the Church, I decline these, merely stating the average attendance is respectable." (Military and hospital chapel figures are also excluded in the calculations, since their congregations obviously fluctuated and formed no part of the norm.) The dissenting places of worship within those parishes reckoned 9,195 (Sunday Scholars 3,632). In Malling the figures are 15,341 (S.S. 4,857) for the Church of England (returns not available from four parishes) and for Dissenters 6,828 (S.S. 1,750). Roman Catholics claimed 140 (S.S. 30) at Gravesend (Rochester Deanery) and 170 adults at Tunbridge Wells. The Chatham Jewish Synagogue duly declared its Sabbath and Eve of Sabbath figures to be 54.

In the combined Deaneries the adult figures suggest there were 27,666 attenders at the established Church and 16,389 elsewhere - some 37%, therefore, worshipped elsewhere than the parish church (not to mention those whose Sunday devotions did not include attendance at public worship). Of course, many of these objected to paying for the parish church rate - even if they were forced to use it - and perhaps valued using it - for weddings and funerals. In the Census there are returns from 81 Parish or District Churches, but 87 from dissenting places of worship (12 from Chatham) and these also required continual maintenance. Yet it must be emphasised that there are very few places indeed that there is any evidence of refusal - indeed the Returns of the churchwardens are to the contrary and a modified system continued beyond its legal abolition in 1868.

After the abolition of Church Rate, the churchwardens were asked how the expenses of the church were being defrayed. Returns for

Rochester Deanery are available. In the country parishes the norm was "Same as before", "by voluntary rate", "The ordinary rate has been levied and collected", but the true situation was probably more accurately expressed by Hoo St. Werburgh: "By voluntary subscription levied after the manner of rate on those who may be willing to pay." (13) Altogether 19 parishes in Rochester Deanery continued to use the rate system. In the towns it was different. There parishes, including those newly established, depended upon voluntary contributions, subscriptions, pew rents and an emerging custom of an offertory on Sunday - at Milton, for instance, "after divine service". The 16 parishes not using some form of the old Church Rate system were all town parishes save one and that was a cement manufacturing area. So in the country parishes of Rochester Deanery, hatred of Church Rate was in no way such that it prevented its continuance almost as matter of course.

Unfortunately the 1851 census return is not available for Lamberhurst, where, it will be remembered, the curate reported to Eversleigh in 1831 that although at least half the population of Lamberhurst were firm for the Establishment, the remainder, were either dissenters of different denominations or persons professing no sentiments of religion whatever. Possibly a proportion of dissenters above the average? Lamberhurst would appear to have possessed two dissenting places of worship, (14) Strict Baptist and Wesleyan, but they have not been found in the census returns either. Visitation and Parliamentary returns give no indication that there was any difficulty in collecting Church Rate. It was duly gathered and the sums expended on church repairs and renovation, not withstanding the large proportion of dissenters; and thus reflected the Deanery norm.

Many complained of bad weather on census day, and of sickness, when sending their return; but they failed to mention that some would be double attenders, and that amongst those who worshipped twice on a Sunday there would be those who attended divine service both at Church and at dissenting Chapel. The closest admission to this

possibility is the remark of the Vicar of St. Margaret's Rochester: "Many families who attend this church in the morning go to the Cathedral in the afternoon or to Evensong services in other churches. The afternoon congregation therefore being chiefly composed of Servants and working people, is of a different class from that of the morning. (The vicar counted 734 adult attenders in the morning and 426 in the afternoon. However an additional note provides a reminder of the need for caution in evaluating the returns - "This total sum includes about 50 persons who were not in attendance, but kept away for sickness and other causes and would normally attend.".)

Worship

The 1851 Census asked about morning, afternoon and evening worship on Census Sunday (as well as requiring an average figure over the preceding three months). These replies, taken with Visitation/1832 returns and an 1869 Visitation Return (for Rochester only), make it possible to see how the pattern in church worship evolved in Rochester Deanery between 1830 and 1870.⁽¹⁵⁾ The following table gives the numbers in the Rochester Deanery Parishes and only the statistics from the original 34 parishes are included, so that there can be a truer comparison. It also seemed convenient to add the figures for non-residence from the respective returns *for comment on p. 93.*

Column Date.	Column No. of Sunday Services.			Column No of times Holy Communion p. a.				Column Sermons			Column Non Res	Column No Answer or No Return	
	1.	2.	3.	3	4	12	More	1	2	3			
1832	18	16	-										
1837				27	4	1	-	24	9	-	17	2 (ans)	
1851	7	21	3	-	27	7	2				12	3	
1859				-	15	10	3				12	6	
1869		19	7	-	3	15	7	2	13	7	2	8. missing returns 1. "no answer" to Col. 3 12 "no answers" to Col. 4	

Firstly, therefore, the number of Sunday Services: the 1832 return is that to the Commissioners. The relevant enquiry simply asked "What duty is performed in each church and chapel?". Sometimes the sacrament of the Lord's Supper featured in the answer, but not consistently enough to use as a statistic; likewise the number of sermons each Sunday, and weekday worship were added in some answers. There is no indication that anywhere was there more than two services. Nineteen years later single duty was no longer the norm and in Chatham, Gravesend and Higham there were three services every Sunday according to the Census form. Eighteen years further on there were no instances of single duty (if that term is not an anachronism by then) and seven parishes were reporting three services each Sunday, mostly in the towns, but Southfleet, Snodland and Higham could be classed as rural.

The first indication of the frequency of Holy Communion is in 1837 and this figure of 27 for 3 times per year is the best we can supply in response to the query: "Is the Holy Communion ministered so often, and at such stated seasons, as that every Parishioner may communicate at the least thrice in every year?" Higher figures were sometimes added to the answer, and where the actuality was significantly higher than thrice, it is likely that they would be given. The more precise 1851 figures, when the question was a straight "How often is the Holy Communion ministered?", indicate that then quarterly was in fact the norm; by the end of the decade nearly half offered Holy Communion monthly. It was in the '60s that there was the greatest increase, for by 1869 only 3 were still quarterly and 22 monthly or more frequently. (It is to be noted that 8 returns are missing for 1869, and one failed to answer this question.) The churchwardens of St. Margaret's Rochester observed "Until late once in the month, but now more frequently." The new factor had been mentioned earlier in the return: "Our present vicar has been appointed only within the last 5 months."

In 1837 one sermon on a Sunday was normally considered adequate. 32 years later, when the matter was next raised, only 2 admitted to

anything less than twice each Sunday: (20 reported 2 or more sermons each Sunday - 4 avoided answering the question).

It was the '60s which saw the decisive upturn in worship provision and in clerical care in general. Certainly, as the above table indicates, it was in the '60s that the residence numbers took a turn for the better. In 1837 half the incumbents were non-resident; by 1851 it was just over 35%, but by 1869, from the returns available, only 2 or 3 were habitually non-resident (about 3% - if a % figure means anything when reckoning in ones and twos). One, of course, was Allhallows where in 1873 the churchwardens were still bemoaning "The Necessity of a Resident Clergyman". "Not Lately", reported the churchwardens at Hartley; and at Wouldham, where the rector having been resident eight years earlier had since absented himself, the Wardens declared ominously that they had "written to the Bishop".

Under the 1846 reorganisation of dioceses the Malling Deanery departed to Canterbury.⁽¹⁶⁾ What we can say, prior to that date, is that out of the total of 35 core Malling parishes, in 1832 9 incumbents performed single duty and 22 double (with 4 non-returns) and in 1851 5 offered single duty, 24 double and in two parishes there were 3 services per Sunday with again 4 non-returns. Compared with Rochester, there is the usual better performance - half the number of single duty, for instance, in 1832; by 1851 the margins have narrowed. In 1837 18 preached once and 15 offered 2 sermons on a Sunday: that is, 45% preached twice, compared with Rochester's 29%. (There were 2 no replies). All replied that Holy Communion was celebrated three times in the year, but 10 were at least quarterly and three monthly; again a better response than that of Rochester Deanery (but note the above caveat (p. 92) in using these replies for definite information). In 1837 15 were non-resident. This compared with Rochester's 17.

During the period 1820 - 1870, 28 new churches were built in the two deaneries: in Rochester Deanery - 11 (12 if New Brompton in neighbouring Gillingham is counted, since it was carved out in part

from Chatham) and 17 in Malling. The pattern of services in the Rochester parishes in particular needs to be considered to complement the above comparative table. Before 1851, Census year, only four were functioning - 1821 St. John Chatham, 1834 St. John Milton-next-Gravesend, 1843 Christ Church Luton (Chatham) and 1845 Holy Trinity Milton. St. John's Milton had a brief career - it was opened in 1834 and belonged to a number of shareholders; it became the property of its third vicar (William Blew) and he "shamelessly sold it to Cardinal Wiseman, who converted it into Papistical Church in 1850" according to Fielding. (At the time of the Census it was still in fact within the establishment.) That did not do much to stem protest against papal aggression. In 1832 St. John's Chatham had two full services with sermon as well as monthly communion. On Census Sunday there were three services, but the minister complained that "the church was built to accommodate 2000 and there was much waste room" (the largest congregation was in the morning and totalled 550, which he also gave as the average). By 1869 there was Holy Communion every Sunday at 8 and 3 other Services with sermon on Sundays. At Christ Church Luton Holy Communion was monthly in 1851 and there were two services, which by 1869 had become three, all with sermons. At Holy Trinity Milton Holy Communion was monthly in 1851 and Census Return shows that there were two services. They reported the largest Sunday attendance of any of the Gravesend and Milton Churches; in '59 Holy Communion was still monthly, but by '69 it was weekly as well as three other services with sermons.

1852 St. James Gravesend, 1854 St. Paul's Chatham, 1855 St. Mary Greenhithe, 1858 Christ Church Milton, 1859 St. Peter's Rochester, 1862 St. John's Higham, and 1869 St. Mary's Strood complete the list. In 1859 monthly was the norm for Holy Communion. By '69 this had become weekly in one parish and fortnightly in three others. All had two other services (one 3) with sermons (but from 3 parishes no information is available).

The pattern in the new churches is much the same as that of their more established neighbours. Naturally enough they are all in urban areas and the forward surge is in the 'sixties, with a growing emphasis on the frequency of Holy Communion and a trend also to provide morning, afternoon and evening worship.

There was also a revival in week-day worship, again especially in the towns and particularly in the newly built churches. So in 1832 St. John's Chatham had a sermon of preparation on the Friday before the monthly sacrament Sunday. In 1869 all the recently built churches, for which there are returns, had some level of week-day worship ranging from the mere observance of the greater festivals at St. Paul's Chatham through one weekday service per week (Greenhithe) to Wednesdays, Fridays and Saints' Days. By then St. John's Chatham was offering Wednesday and Friday mornings, a sermon every Thursday evening and daily services in Advent and Lent.

Of the 34 ancient parishes, on which the above table (p. 91) was compiled, 7 had weekday services over and above the keeping of the greater festivals, such as Christmas, Good Friday and Ascension Day - mostly once or twice in the week, but at Milton daily service at 11 in the winter, and at 11 and 6 in summer. This George Herbert spirit had not spread further in the Deanery. 11 parishes had weekday services on the greater festivals only and 4 had none. (In 1869 there were no returns from 8 parishes and 4 left the article blank.)

In the 1832 return some had included weekday worship in answer to the question about frequency of duty. 5 had regular services in addition to Sundays, 4 kept the special Holy Days and 25 mentioned nothing over and above Sundays (remembering, of course, that no direct query about weekday duty was included - although human nature being what it is the likely response would be to include it in the answer to a question "What duty is performed?" if it were being performed).

Thus the greater festivals and fasts were being kept in country as well as town by 1869, but only the populous areas went beyond Christmas and the greater festivals in weekday worship. It was, of course, very much up to the parson and, as has been noted at St. Margaret's Rochester, it was the arrival of a new incumbent five months previously which had led to an increase in the number of communion services.

Visitation

In the Visitation process the Bishop (and Archdeacon) had to hand a regular means of communication with the parishes. The questions asked presumably indicated what was considered by Authority to be of importance. Clergy and churchwardens might (or might not) respond. The Charge was delivered after the Replies to the Articles of Enquiry had been digested. Often the Charge received a wider circulation, because the hearers normally made the courteous request that the Speaker's wise words be published to allow more careful perusal. In theory, therefore, the questions he actually asked reveal what the Bishop required and what were his evolving priorities.

After 1832, surviving are the Articles of Enquiry to Churchwardens for the years 1837, 1840, 1843, 1851 and 1859 (Murray) 1860 and 1864 (Wigram), 1869 and 1873 (Claughton). We have Murray's two-page Primary Visitation of 1830. This he had expanded considerably by the time of his Fourth Triennial Visitation in 1837 (extant). Thereafter his quite extensive matters of enquiry remained much the same, although there were some subtle and conservative changes. By the time he reached his Tenth Visitation (1859) - he died in 1860 aged 76 - he was using the same Articles, the "Ninth" on the form being deleted and "Tenth" added in pen.

The Articles are from the Bishop himself. He expected the clergy to be present at the Visitation, even if non-resident, together with

their Letters of Orders and "He has no doubt of their seeing the propriety of attending his Visitation in their Gowns". Murray was an aristocrat, a descendant of a long line of aristocrats, who wished England to be a land fit for aristocrats and was the last Bishop to wear an episcopal wig outside church.⁽¹⁷⁾ He was not prepared to accept graduates of the new Durham University for ordination, since he disapproved of encouraging the lower classes from aspiring to stations for which there were already too many candidates from the classes immediately above them.⁽¹⁸⁾ He was a believer in masterly inactivity. He deplored the efforts of Parliament to redistribute church property (e.g. cathedral wealth to fund poor livings and new parishes.) The same matter had been raised in Horsley's time and got short shrift from him. It all came from a "momentary and passing outcry against the Clergy". English people generally formed a right opinion in the end and so in 1840 Murray urged "that we had only to procrastinate and to give them time for consideration" and the outcry would pass. Moreover if the established church were "shorn of its honours and deprived of the dignified position it has hitherto held, it will soon sink into the state of many of the foreign Protestant Churches, where the Clergy are but one degree removed from the labourer and mechanic."⁽¹⁹⁾ (Surely a xenophobic remark unrelated to fact.)

Response to "Tracts for the Times" was Murray's overriding concern in his 1843 Charge.⁽²⁰⁾ He took a moderate line, though he feared the growing Romewards direction of the Tracts. However, "The low notions which have been entertained by some of the Clergy with respect to our sacramental ordinances and the services of the Church have, I fear, in a great degree, led to the adoption of extreme views in an opposite direction." "There is a middle course, equally removed from puritanism and the errors of popery, which we may safely follow." He approved the Tractarians' recovery of discipline and veneration for the church's Liturgy and sacraments, their restoration of sacred edifices, the sanctity of their lives, their earnest discharge of their duties and their spirit of greater holiness. He engaged in detailed discussion on such matters as the

invocation of saints, the eucharistic sacrifice, the use of the term "altar", the real presence, turning to the east, the wearing of the surplice. He commented that it was outward change that excited alarm and recommended that clergy "depart as little as possible from the usage of the church for which they have been accustomed" and was wary of the use of unauthorised versions of the psalms because the congregation could not join in if they did not possess a copy. He was equally unhappy with many hymns which were "often of an objectionable nature". His attitude to bowing typifies his approach: "In some places offence has been taken at the bowing of the head on approaching the communion-table, or on leaving the church. This is an observance which I can not say that I am in the habit of practising myself, but of which no one has any right to complain, or to find fault with his brother for adopting" and he quotes St. Paul on meat offered to idols.⁽²¹⁾

All this he addressed to the clergy.

The Articles of Enquiry to churchwardens likewise came from the Bishop and equally reflect his concerns, but they concentrate on matters which are particularly within the province of those gentlemen.

Featuring in all are indeed questions about the clergy - the residence of incumbents and their provision of curates, whether they are of sober life and conversation, as well as the frequency of the administration of Holy Communion, the instruction of the young in the catechism, confirmation, and visiting the sick: also the state of the glebe house and the glebe lands. Naturally the state of the church and its ornaments, the preservation of registers and the condition of the churchyard are included.

It is interesting that in 1843 the 1837 questions regarding the dress, the audible and canonical use of the Book of Common Prayer, the number of sermons, the administration of baptism, the Thanksgiving of Women after Child-birth have all been omitted with

the result that the careful and probing questions about the conduct of vestry meetings included in '37 - whether the Minister takes the chair and if he is absent, whether there is a proper election for chairman, where the meeting is held and whether due notice is given - receive heightened prominence in the later year. (Included was a reminder of the qualifications for voting: "A person who is assessed to the Poor Rates at less than £50 has one Vote; at £50 has two; above £50, has one for every £25, if he has paid the said rate, But no one has more than six votes.")

The contentious spirit of some Vestries, the disputes over the appointment of churchwardens and the voting of the Church Rate are thereby obliquely acknowledged. Whatever the acrimony, however, the meetings took place in church or attached vestries and were expected to be presided over by the incumbent. In 1837 all but four Malling parishes said that the minister took the chair when present and in Rochester all but seven. In their absence it was rare for an election to take place - the churchwarden usually presided or as at Halling "We seldom met more than four or five (sic) and do not go into the formality of choosing a chairman". At Wouldham the minister would have presided, "but the parish being small we seldom require a vestry meeting". At Higham "he never attends", at Chalk it is always the Churchwarden and at Hoo "it has not been usual for the minister to take the chair". In contrast at Teston the vestry was held only when the minister was able to be present.

All this illustrates the intertwining of church and neighbourhood. In Rochester Deanery in 1843 14 meetings appear to have taken place in church, and 13 in vestries (usually within or attached to the church). At Milton-next-Gravesend the vestry was too small for the general meeting, which took place in the Town Hall and at Swanscombe the 1837 meeting had taken place in a vestry, but in '43 was in church (need for larger accommodation in contentious times?); for 7 parishes there is no information. The Malling pattern is different. 20 parishes had vestry rooms and held their annual meeting in them. Tunbridge Wells District Chapel had a vestry room, but it was too

small for the annual meeting, so they repaired to the church, 11 had no vestry and held the meeting in the church and for 3 there is no information. More Malling parishes could afford to make special vestry provision, but it is unlikely that rooms so provided would be large enough for a sizeable Annual Meeting: at Ditton, for instance, the vestry room had been made out of the church porch. Greater affluence, but smaller and less contentious vestries would seem to be implied. At Horsmonden the Vestry was convened in the church, but Smith-Marriott (see below p. 121) did not feel it to be a suitable place for the inevitable wrangling and adjourned the meeting to a local inn, (or in later years to the school). From his diary: "March 26th: I presided at a JAW meeting for choosing parish officers. Very disagreeable as usual."⁽²²⁾

By 1851 concern over the vestry meetings has been dropped (although there remains a query about the collection of Church Rate). Also omitted are articles with a "social" context, however minor, over and above the immediate concern of the parish church. Are there any funds left for charities (although funds left for church repairs remain), any wills not proved, measures taken to prevent tipping in public houses on the Lord's Day ('37), any persons of scandalous life that is capable of proof by law? - all these disappear. Instead the fabric of the church gets greater attention - repair of church, tower and chancel; whether organ or gallery, monuments or vaults have been erected without faculty. The 1859 Articles are an exact repeat of those for 1851, save an addition to a question on the font (Is it set in the ancient and usual place?, which could well worry traditionalist Murray) and in the following year they are repeated verbatim by the newly appointed Wigram.

Apart from a section on the ministers and services of the church, the new bishop's 1863 Visitation reads like a detailed questionnaire from a surveyor and runs to forty questions (from "Do the windows open?" to whether all is properly insured and the existence of tithe maps). However Bishop Wigram was an energetic evangelical (see below p. 136) and employed other methods to make his wishes known.

Claughton in 1869 reduced all to 16 questions, but did ask how church expenses were being met since the abolition of church rates.

Was there a gradual withdrawal from involvement with social concerns? From 1851 the Articles are all church orientated: a far cry from those despised days of 1819, when churchwardens were expected to know about common drunkards, swearers and blasphemers, filthy talkers and sowers of sedition - not to mention those who worked on Sundays, which shops were open on the Lord's Day (especially alcohol purveyors), those denounced or pronounced excommunicate for any crime, those who set up school in the parish, and any who practised 'physic or surgery' or midwifery.⁽²³⁾



1835 - 1870

Chapter 9

TOWN MINISTRY AND PATRONS

Rural clergy and churchwardens would know full well the details of parishioners' lives. For their brethren in Chatham such knowledge was an impossibility. There, as in Milton, Gravesend, Tonbridge and Tonbridge Wells, it would be natural to concentrate on spiritual provision through proliferation of services and education. Simply to do this could fully occupy the day: in some areas it could be dispiriting and unrewarding work, as the minister of St. Paul's Chatham, George Venables, was to discover. In contrast, at Tunbridge Wells, Edward Hoare's evangelical ministry bore great and satisfying fruit.

A Chatham Ministry

Whilst curate of Broadwater in Sussex, the thirty-four-year old Venables wrote "I am hoping in a few days to be located at Chatham, having been presented to a church in a very important locality". How far had he investigated the situation? The district assigned to St. Paul's when it was consecrated in January 1855 had a population of over 5,200 and already by April 1855 George Venables was finding that his promised income was in doubt - another problem with pew rents and change in tithe rents; the gross £450 he was expecting turned out to be £250 - and there was no parsonage house. Moreover he had plans to provide two schools at the cost of £2000 and £3000 or more. The parish had a large proportion of poor: "I doubt if there be a householder within the parish who spends £250 per annum and not more than three or four who ought to do so while the remainder are working people and many hundred extremely poor". Only some six or eight families, none of whom were at all rich, kept a servant. He

wrote often and with increasing desperation to the Governors of Queen Anne's Bounty and to the Commissioners seeking assistance.⁽¹⁾

In 1858 he returned New Year greetings and added that the erection of a parsonage house would be the best earthly thing which could make a happy New Year a reality.

"We exist in a low, miserable, filthy street full of nuisances and abject poverty. My neighbours within twice the length of your room of me are starving and this too well describes the condition of very many more." and the year before: "Some are paupers of the poorest and worst kind. In the midst of these people I with my family have resided during three years nearly, submitting to many inconveniences of disturbance to and to positive nuisance from the most noxious smells which one can conceive of, but which I cannot describe, arising from causes which in most towns would not be permitted to exist for one day, but which are increasing here every year. A very physician, not of this neighbourhood, has warned me that I am greatly infirming my constitution and that of my family by residing here and pointed to the abject condition of even the natives as a proof of a state of the place. Most of whom are driven to gin drinking by the depressing effects of the polluted atmosphere, and however sad it is for any person to dwell in such a locality, perhaps none suffer so much as the clergyman who after visiting among scenes of wretchedness and sin which often almost break his spirit, he is expected to be ready with comfort and consolation" and to prepare "sermons which nothing but calmness and study can enable him to produce. The effects upon the mind and the body of a constant residence amongst actual scenes of depravity and vice are such as can be appreciated only by those who endure them."

In further correspondence he reminded the Commissioners: "I am living in a street full of nuisances of the grossest description and to which all the refuse of the houses is cast. Some of the houses are of ill-fame, I suspect that one immediately opposite my own door is just now of that description". He described the parish as by far

the poorest in Chatham and among the poorest in England. "Clergymen, inspectors of schools, inspectors of police, military gentlemen and even railway contractors agree in pronouncing this place as being lower sunk in sin than any town they know and probably the non-residence of any clergyman here for more than a century may account for a little of this degradation" - also for the Dissent and infidelity which were paramount in the area! He was not looking forward to the heat of another summer. The population consisted "of some few shopkeepers, a larger number of dockyardsmen and their families who earn from 30s. weekly; of the wives and children of marines, seamen and soldiers who subsist on a monthly half pay remittance of 15s to 20s per month and make up the rest as they can, some of them in a most shocking manner, and of a large number of extremely poor persons many of whom are in the most abject state of distress."

George Venables described his duty - "I have performed alone three full services every Sunday, one service with sermon on every holy day besides many occasional lectures, services etc in cottages", also performing all the offices of the church, except burials. "The practice of frequently gathering the poor together into different cottages and addressing them there has had the effect of bringing a larger number of them to church, many of them in their working clothes, the only dresses they possess." He had had the heavy correspondence which building schools for over 200 children generated, and had also been responsible for raising the money. Philip Wickham Martin wrote from the House of Commons supporting Venables' application for help towards providing a house: "With the aid of a curate, he performs three and sometimes four services every Sunday and on all the Holy Days besides three and sometimes four on a weekday. Nearly every house in the district is visited besides occasional visits to the sick. Schools have been opened and built between 1855-57 at a cost of £1500." He added that the health of Venables' family had been so affected by living in such a poor street that he would feel compelled to resign the benefice, unless a better dwelling could be built.

The parish had been offered gratis a plot of land by the War Office for a parsonage (although a request to buy land for a school had been refused - a testimony, Venables pointed out, to the value put on the presence of a resident clergyman), but no help from the Commissioners was forthcoming and no parsonage house emerged. Venables continued to have plans for the parish. He considered that the number of worshippers warranted an extension to the church to accommodate free sittings (some places in the church had become appropriated to certain parishioners by custom or permission of the churchwardens). He also had a scheme for erecting "in the most benighted part of the parish", a building which could be used as a school in the weekdays, excepting the chancel, which could be shut off and contain a pulpit, lectern etc., and as a church on Sunday. This could be accomplished, he estimated, for £700 and accommodate 400.

But four years was enough. Although he was given an honorary canonry, he moved to a parish in York later in 1858, where he was to stay for eleven years before going on to Leicester and then Great Yarmouth.⁽²⁾ He was obviously a man of considerable ability and wrote prolifically on such matters as extending churches, the catechism, what is a churchman?, the marriage service, patronage and preferment, and the provision of new parishes.

A Tunbridge Wells Ministry

In 1853 Edward Hoare became vicar of Holy Trinity, Tunbridge Wells, which dated from 1829 and counted as the Town Church.⁽³⁾ He exercised a remarkable ministry of forty years. The son of a banker and his mother the sister of Elizabeth Fry, the forty-one-year old vicar was tall, handsome and athletic. He filled the church to overflowing and his sermons were reported at great length in the local press. The Church Times was to call him "The Protestant Pontiff of Tunbridge Wells". He was prominent in the evangelical world and the list of his writings takes 4½ columns in the British

Library Catalogue. He was involved in the building of St. John's (1858), St. James' (1862) and St. Peter's (1874). While the first of these was being mooted Hoare had written "At present the parish is placed by God's providence under my cure, and I can never voluntarily surrender any portion of it unless I am thoroughly satisfied as to the hand into which I resign it.": this to scuttle the Archbishop's proposal that the patronage be decided by the subscribers.⁽⁴⁾ The patronage was given to a band of evangelical trustees.

He with his staff of curates and lay helpers ran five Sunday Schools, Bible classes, and night schools for working men. They organised and ran sewing evenings, temperance lectures, a clothing club, a coal club, a savings bank and a free registry for servants.⁽⁵⁾ Many wealthy families moved to the town to sit at his feet and his word was greatly revered in town affairs, although he himself took no seat on the local Board. His teaching, preaching and forthright comment was the source of his enormous influence and three years after his death a memorial cross was unveiled at the entrance of a newly built park. All in all, a considerable contrast to the fortunes of George Venables - but how would Edward Hoare have fared in the stench of back-street Chatham?

Hoare made a determined effort to see that the patronage of the Tunbridge Wells area was in acceptable (that is "evangelical") hands in collaboration with Sir Charles Hardinge, the vicar of Tonbridge. Evangelical laymen built and endowed the churches. Prominent was the Deacon family of Mabledon, listed among the trustees of a number of livings, who initiated the whole enterprise.

The story appears to have gone something like this. Sometime before 1832 William Deacon (the city banker) of Mabledon had acquired the patronage of Tonbridge, probably from the Papillons, who feature as incumbents from 1791 to 1812, and Sir Charles Hardinge was appointed. Tunbridge Wells was part of the parish of Tonbridge, although it had been served by the District Chapel in the Spa area

of the town. As the town expanded up the hill, the centre of population changed and Holy Trinity was built in 1829 by private subscription, but with considerable help from the Church Building Commissioners.⁽⁶⁾ If not from the beginning, the patronage soon came into the hands of the Deacon family.

St Peter's Southborough was opened a year later (between Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge). Active in negotiations with the Commissioners was J. Deacon. Five trustees, of which he was one, were proposed - there was a hitch because the legislation determining more clearly the duties and powers of the Commissioners was limiting trustees to three and Deacon pointed out that all five had borne a heavy responsibility in building and endowing the church.⁽⁷⁾ The five duly became trustees. They asked Decimus Burton to change his plans so that the pulpit and reading desk could be placed in a line in the middle aisle, instead of being on opposite sides of the aisle. The Word was to be central.

To the west, on the Sevenoaks side of Tonbridge, lay Hildenborough. This was carved out of the parish of Tonbridge in 1844 and remained under the patronage of Hardinge and his successors. Meanwhile, in Tonbridge itself, the railway had brought a large influx of population around the station, and the Building Committee made an urgent appeal to the Christian public to "assist them in their holy work, that a house of prayer may be speedily reared to the Glory of God and the spiritual welfare of the poor and increasing population". The trustees for the new St. Stephen's were to be the same as for Southborough! Mr. Deacon, a member of the respected and renowned banking family, offered a benefaction of £1,000. He seems in fact to have remained sole patron until all debts were cleared, but in 1865 it was handed over to trustees, including a Deacon, when Mrs Sophia Deacon of Mabledon contributed a further £1,000 to the endowment of the living.⁽⁸⁾

In Tunbridge Wells the trouble over the consecration of Christ Church was resolved. Hardinge had written in alarm at the thought

of the building finding its way into the hands of London Dissenters, who were only too eager to purchase (see above p. 84). It was eventually consecrated in 1855, but remained in the patronage of the perpetual curate, Franklyn. He had the full approval of Hoare. Two further churches were built before 1870. St. John's was built by voluntary contributions and put under the patronage of Hardinge for his incumbency, to be succeeded by Mrs Deacon; St James (where trouble lurked) remained in the hands of the current incumbent of Holy Trinity (Hoare) and thereafter to trustees, one of whom was John Deacon.⁽⁹⁾

Just off the road between Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells is the village of Bidborough. By 1869 its patronage had been acquired by John Deacon.

To this day (1995), a century and a quarter later, the patronage of all these parishes is in evangelical hands and colours the church life of a considerable wedge of the deanery. Of the sixteen churches built in the Malling deanery between 1829 and 1870 seven were built through the exertions of the Deacon/ Hardinge/ Hoare phalanx; the product of protestant zeal and generosity.

There were signs of resistance. The original District Church of Tunbridge Wells (King Charles the Martyr) had the distinction, according to Hasted when chronicling the history of Speldhurst, of standing in three parishes - the pulpit in Speldhurst, the altar in Tonbridge, and the font in Frant, whilst the stream which marked the county boundary ran under it. The vicar of Speldhurst tried unsuccessfully to be involved in the appointment of the ministers.⁽¹⁰⁾ Hardinge was very wary of offending him and explained to the Commissioners in 1826 that the proposed district boundaries of Southborough had been so drawn as to avoid the difficulty of gaining the assent of the patrons and incumbents of Speldhurst and Frant, by excluding any territory therein. He was expecting Speldhurst to build.⁽¹¹⁾ Speldhurst parish did cover an extensive area and within it two new districts were formed, but not

until 1850 (St. Paul's Rustall) and eighteen years later All Saints Langton Green (1868). The rector of Speldhurst became patron of both.⁽¹²⁾ (He still is.)

A further church was also built at Southborough as the parish expanded, but this time by Mrs. Pugh who endowed it and continued as patron. It was to develop in Tractarian ways; something which could not have happened under the aegis of Deacon. Moreover all did not go well at St. James. Its first vicar, Pearson, was the son of Hoare's predecessor at Holy Trinity and fully approved. He began to develop ritualist tendencies and was soon in dispute with one of his churchwardens. In 1870 H. W. Hitchcock, a former curate of Mayfield, who had dreams of being a "slum priest", built a mission church in the parish at his own expense. He was much more of a ritualist and he filled the church. It was too much for the vicar, who was a gentle soul, and for the Archbishop, who revoked Hitchcock's licence. The church was enlarged, but still proved too small and St. Barnabas (1888) was built on its site to flourish and become a centre of advanced Tractarianism. When Pearson left St. James (1881) the patrons saw that it returned fully to the evangelical fold; but St. Barnabas became a separate parish and a permanent dent had been made in the Hoare empire.⁽¹³⁾

The other new churches in Malling Deanery were all built by private benefaction and endeavour, whether clerical or lay. So Holy Trinity at Crockenhill was built at the sole expense of Charles Warde of Squerries (1841); Pembury New Church was provided by the Marquess of Camden (1847); St. Margaret Collier Street through the efforts of the incumbent (of Yalding - a family living) Richard Ramsey Warde (1848), Holy Trinity Cowden by the Honourable John Chetwynd Talbot (1852), St Andrews Paddock Wood by the Courthopes. In each case the benefactors retained the patronage, when, in course of time, the districts became separated and parishes in their own right. In the late sixties, St. Margaret Underriver and St. Laurence Seale complete the tally of seventeen.⁽¹⁴⁾

The Rochester parishes are listed above (p. 94) and usually continued under the same patronage as that of the mother church: St. John's Chatham to the perpetual curate of Chatham and likewise Christ Church Luton; Holy Trinity Milton to the Crown & the Bishop; St. Mary Greenhithe to Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge; St Peter's Rochester to the Dean and Chapter, although St. Paul's Chatham went to the Bishop who was responsible for appointing the misled Venables (see above p. 102). St John's Higham was not yet separated and St. Mary Strood was built by and partly endowed by Canon Griffiths, one of the residentiary canons, and his wife. The advowson was given to the Bishop, after the first turn, which was in the hands of the Griffiths.⁽¹⁵⁾

The maverick was St. John's Milton, whose patron and vicar sold it to the papists (see above p. 94). The whole exercise was very much a matter of private enterprise, as this untoward case, not to mention the Tonbridge/Tunbridge Wells history, amply shows.

However, before a district could be properly assigned and become separated, delicate negotiations had to be pursued with the incumbent of the mother church, with patrons and ecclesiastical commissioners to determine the source of income for the new clergy - primarily matters of endowment, of assignment of fees and of pew rents. There is in the Commissioners' files correspondence relating to this matter in 13 of these parishes. 6 of the ministers depended on pew rents for by far the greater part of their income. These could fluctuate. In the planning stage it was calculated that pew rents would provide £300 for the minister of Holy Trinity, Tunbridge Wells; in 1871 at the height of Hoare's incumbency, they were netting between £600 and £700. When in 1865 the minister of Christ Church Milton declared £232 as benefice income in an application to the Commissioners, the Bishop crossed the figure out, explaining that only 2/3rds of any pew rents could be considered permanent income. However, the popular Tunbridge Wells churches did well out of them.

Others depended on annuities or the like. The trustees of St. Peter's Southborough were prepared to invest a sufficient sum to produce £150 p.a. and Mrs. Pugh at the other Southborough Church made an endowment which realized £178 p.a.. St. Peter's Rochester had an endowment from the Dean and Chapter (1859). The donor of Seale St. Lawrence made arrangements with the Commissioners to invest a sum capable of giving £100 p.a. (1867) and Griffiths was making similar arrangements for St. Mary's Strood. At Collier Street the vicar of Yalding gave £95 p.a in lieu of tithe. Venables at St. Paul's Chatham had been promised pew rents, but in fact received income only from a tithe rent charge. In some instances fees were also assigned. These were not normally a significant percentage, although at Rusthall they amounted to more than £180 in 1874.

Church Maintenance

The problem of church repairs and expenses began to arise in the new churches and it was not always certain where responsibility lay. The vicar of St. Stephen's Tonbridge felt that his parishioners were so poor that the church expenses and maintenance were likely to fall on him; and even at the more affluent Holy Trinity Tunbridge Wells a similar fear was expressed. The poor needed the church, if they were not to be spiritually deprived and fall into moral degradation, it was agreed, and there was a deliberate attempt to serve the poorer parts of Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells, Milton, Gravesend and Chatham. The poor were not always so ready or indeed capable of maintaining their spiritual home. In the poorer parishes (and many of the rural parishes) incumbents could well need a large purse. The vicar of St. Stephen's Tonbridge complained in 1864: "During 1863 the sacramental alms amounted only to £23.17s and this was the total amount entrusted to the incumbent for distribution among the poor during the year." As well as caring for the poor he paid towards schools and a curate's fund; his district had the largest proportion of poor in the parish, many were extremely indigent and a

considerable portion were in need of assistance during some part of the year. So "the difficulty in raising the fund for church expenses is considerable and it is possible that the burden will fall on the incumbent." (He detailed the expenses for a year: Clerk's Salary £12. Sexton's Salary £12, organist's Salary £20, Organ blower £1.10, tuning organ £6, cleaning church £3.10s, insurance £2.10s, washing surplices £1.1s, fuel £3.10s.6d, gas £6.6s, repairs in church £20.11.9d, in churchyard £1.10.10d, wine £1.0.6d, and various sundries which gave a grand total of £92. 16s. 1d.). His own emoluments appear to have fluctuated around £297.⁽¹⁶⁾

Patronage

In the established parishes patronage rights remained the same, although it is not always possible to trace changes in private ownership. (The Bishop appointed to Trotterscliffe as Lord of the Manor: the advowson was obtained by the sitting incumbent during this period, which meant that there was no parish in the gift of the Bishop (or after 1846 the Archbishop) in the Malling Deanery). However, there would not appear to have been a great deal of change in ownership. The patronage certainly remained in the same family in 7 out of the 11 Rochester Deanery cases and 17 out of 26 in Malling. Of the others it is not always possible to be sure. There were 51 opportunities to appoint to parishes in the Rochester Deanery between 1836 and 1870 and in Malling 38 (total 89); a contrast with 62 and 55 (total 117) in the previous 35-year period - an almost 24% drop. There was a similar contrast in the number of livings where there was no change of incumbent during the 35-year period: 15 compared with 5 (8 of them in Rochester, where there had been none such in 1800-35).

Of Murray's seven appointments, 2 went to his sons; 1 to a nephew; 1 to the son of an Archdeacon of Lewisham; and another to a scholar, former Chaplain to Archbishop Manners-Sutton and prebendary of St. Paul's and principal of King's College London, (he became

Archdeacon of Middlesex, whilst still rector of Southfleet and was then appointed Bishop of Lichfield in 1843, where he founded the theological college). It was by far the most lucrative of the bunch which went to his offspring (Stone at £800 gross and Southfleet at £735 gross according to the 1832 return). The remainder were under £200. Although Wouldham was returned as £198, it was considered to be worthy of his nephew, Frederick Boyd. He was fortunate to have been offered this, for gossiped Murray: "I have appointed Mr.-- to Wouldham. "But oh! if I had only known - what do you think? - why that when he came here the other day to be instituted he actually smoked in his bedroom! - he would never have had that Living!"⁽¹⁷⁾ It was the embryonic Bishop of Lichfield who had enjoyed Southfleet's income before Murray's eldest son, George. George died after eleven years and the living then went to the above-mentioned Archdeacon's son. His brother's predecessor at wealthy Stone had been Walker King, son of the Bishop and currently Archdeacon and holder of a Rochester prebend.

Murray's successor in 1860 was a Palmerston Bishop, Joseph Cotton Wigram⁽¹⁸⁾ (see below p. 136). Of his 5 appointments, Carey received Snodland after two curacies in Essex and was to go on to be Archdeacon of Colchester, another at St. Nicholas Rochester (1864) specialised in sermons for the young - "'How shall I Pray?' a sermon to children on the Lord's prayer.", also "Blossoms from the King's Garden" and "Tender Grass for Lambs"; yet another had been principal of the Jewish Converts Institution in Bethnal Green. Neither Stone nor Southfleet became vacant, and nor did they for the rest of the decade. Thomas Legh Claughton succeeded Wigram in 1867, but before 1870 had no opportunity to exercise his patronage in the deanery.

The Dean and Chapter had its wealthy livings. There was Chatham at £868⁽¹⁹⁾, for example, which had stayed in the hands of Archdeacon Law for 43 years until his death in 1827 and would explain why he held on to such an unsalubrious and contentious place. His successor in 1827 had been Dr Irving, likewise a prebend of the cathedral. Altogether the Dean and Chapter appointed 19 times.

The Dean had held West Farleigh since 1820, and continued to do so until his death in 1870, when its value seems to have been something like £500 net according to his successor. He was writing to the Commissioners looking for help with the parsonage house. He complained that the Dean had lived in it only for a few months in the summer season and that it was so dilapidated that he had had to build a new parsonage house. He pointed out that he had been a minor canon of the Cathedral for over 30 years and had been rewarded with West Farleigh because of his long service and discharge of the offices of sacristan and librarian. The living was reputed to be valuable, but because of the need to rebuild was heavily mortgaged. (20)

Wateringbury at £727 was next highest in value of the Dean and Chapter livings. The Dean's eldest son, Henry, became rector in 1840 and enjoyed its fruits for 37 years (and Henry's son was to become rector of Chatham in 1868!). However, there seems to have been no question of plurality.

Dewe, a minor canon, possessed Allhallows for six months, but was then given the wealthier Kingsdown. Aylesford went to a fellow and tutor of Oriel. (Queen Anne had annexed a Rochester Prebendary Stall to Oriel; as noted, Dr. Edward Hawkins held this from 1828 and was to continue to do so until 1882). Another prebend was the Honourable Jacob Marsham who as well as being a canon of Windsor and vicar of Wateringbury, was a canon of Rochester from 1797-1840. (He died just in time for his stall to be suppressed.) One of his sons received Shorne in 1837 and remained there for 52 years; a second son (after his father's death) was to be given Halling (in addition to Allington, which he already held).

In 1848 Cathedral and Town became embroiled in the Whiston Matter. (21) Whiston was a prickly cleric and champion of Rochester's Kings School of which he was head. With the initial enthusiastic support of the Chapter, he had reinvigorated the School. It all began in 1848 with Whiston's contention that the

Dean and Chapter were failing their exhibitioners at Oxford and Cambridge and should also, according to Whiston's interpretation of the Cathedral Statutes, be completely maintaining the Kings School twenty "poor" scholars. After trying to appeal to Murray as Visitor - the Bishop prevaricated - Whiston published "Cathedral Trusts and Their Fulfilment" and in the course of a lengthy argument into the foundation documents and history of Cathedral Chapters produced what the Dean and Chapter considered to be libellous statements. Memories of the agitation against cathedrals, parliamentary debates and the Cathedral Act were still vivid. The Dean and Chapter summarily dismissed the headmaster. The matter enlivened the pages of the local and wider press. Public meetings were held in Rochester, there was wide sympathy for Whiston, a fund was established to pay his heavy legal expenses, and for a while there were two rival schools. Throughout, Whiston appeared in the Cathedral and took his part as headmaster in the procession at services. He continued to teach in the cathedral school buildings. (It was the Chapter who had to find alternative accommodation for the official school, whose pupils dwindled to one.)

The appeal against dismissal went to the Court of Chancery, who ruled that the matter did not come under their jurisdiction, and then to the Court of Queen's Bench, who ruled in favour of the Dean and Chapter. The Matter came full circle when Whiston again appealed to the Visitor, the Bishop. Murray had been condemned in Whiston's Book for his conduct as Dean of Worcester. The hearing was held in 1852, Murray having two independent assessors with him. There was a compromise judgement, which pleased no one. Whiston was to be reinstated on January 1st 1853, but had no right to the emoluments since his dismissal. It was judged that his book was libellous, but in mitigation, it was allowed that he had been misled by erroneous advice from the Archbishop on one matter, and that in fact the strict letter of the Statutes had not been kept (and probably never had been.) Whiston continued as an excellent headmaster but as a constant thorn in the side of the Chapter;

always writing and complaining, and ever jealous for the academic success of the school.

The Matter opened a window into the secretive conduct of Chapter affairs, although the Chapter steadfastly refused to bring its Account Books into court. One of Whiston's accusations was that the emoluments from suppressed posts, such as the appointment of poor bedesmen, some minor canonries, other capitular officials and to scholars and exhibitioners, went into the pockets of members of the Chapter. This was not in fact so. All, the Chapter claimed, was held in a "domus" for cathedral maintenance and there had indeed been considerable work on the fabric. What the members did share amongst themselves by custom were the "fines", that is the sum exacted on the renewal of leases. (The Dean received a double portion.) This was, of course, a highly variable source of income. An 1852 Return from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners showed that the income from the suppressed stall in their hands did indeed fluctuate (£37.15.4 in 1849, but £2,053,2,2d in 1846, but over seven years the suppressed stall's income had been £924 after tax.⁽²²⁾ This presumably was what each canon would have received, with a double portion for the Dean.

It also became widely known that each member of the Chapter resided and took part in services for only two months of the year and that the number of times they preached was very low. Moreover, Hotham resided permanently in Bath because of ill health and from 1847 to 1854 was not seen in Rochester. His two months' Residence was covered by Matthew Irving (also perpetual curate of Chatham) who received in recognition an extra £100 from the fruits of the suppressed canons stall from the Commissioners.⁽²³⁾ (Rochester was to be reduced from six to four.) In any case the minor canons did the greater part of the duty. The Maidstone Gazette's correspondent (possibly Whiston himself) had written that he had recently attended a service, at which the Canon-in-Residence had read a portion of the service in a very audible and clear voice. He had then returned to his stall and an elderly minor canon had preached with a voice "so

feeble that he could scarcely articulate some of his words". The same minor canon gave a sermon in the afternoon "that was as good in matter as it was poor in delivery", whilst the Canon-in-Residence had sat in his stall. Surely, the correspondent commented, he could have spared the older man his painful ordeal.⁽²⁴⁾

The Crown livings were Chalk, Gravesend, Milton-next-Gravesend (shared with the Bishop) and Barming. Amongst the 10 appointments in these years the name Joynes dominates. At Gravesend father (Richard Symonds) was followed by son Robert; another son (William) received Chalk (as well as being sinecure rector of Merston) and John went to St. James Gravesend, of which his brother was patron by virtue of being vicar of Gravesend. At Milton a Joynes was first vicar of Holy Trinity from 1845, where the patron was the Crown and Bishop alternately - this Joynes may or may not have been of the same family. The first Joynes, Richard, was of Gravesend stock (the second son of James Leigh of Mount Pleasant). He was a Cambridge D.D., and was presented to another Crown living (Chalk in 1837), which he held with Gravesend.

Hindle remained vicar of Higham throughout. The other college advowson, the valuable living of Swanscombe (£612 p.a.), fell vacant in 1867 and again in 1868. Both appointees were fellows of Sidney Sussex College. James Yates died at the age of 46 and was at Higham just one year. Thomas Henry Candy, who followed him was a New Testament scholar and wrote a critical revision of the Greek Testament.

It was an age of wealthy parsons, who, in the country areas certainly, increasingly expected to be resident, and settled happily into a life of gentle care for their flock, whilst pursuing private interests. They built extensions to their churches, they provided schools, often out of their own pockets; over-adequate parsonage houses were built to accommodate gracious living, and curates were employed. Such flourished particularly in the 35 parishes under private patronage and especially those 26, which appear to have been

owned by the incumbent or the close family (5 in Rochester and 11 in
Malling). A closer look at three such follows.

1835 - 1870

Chapter 10

RURAL MINISTRY AND CURATES

Something of the flavour of life in more rural areas, (in contrast to the affairs of Chatham and Tonbridge), where patronage was in the hands of a clerical dynasty, can be savoured in the ministries at Horsmonden (Malling Deanery) and Ridley in Rochester Deanery (with a glance at a unique personality in The Hundred of Hoo).

Horsmonden

William Marriott Smith-Marriott, the younger son of a baronet, came down from Cambridge in 1825 to take up the family living of Horsmonden which had been kept warm for him.⁽¹⁾ There he remained until his death in 1864 (having succeeded to the baronetcy two years earlier). On arrival he immediately set about his parochial duties. His journal includes some notes: "called on poor Lampkin who is ill", "called to enquire of the Whibleys' daughter and glad to find her better", "heard of the dangerous and sudden illness of poor Neal the shoemaker. Found him very ill and his wife in very great distress. Administered the Lord's supper to him".⁽²⁾ He did his parochial visiting by foot (he loved walking) or horseback, but the social gap was immense. His estate comprised some 2,000 acres and his household included nearly a score of servants, liveried and living in.

The rectory was the centre of Yuletide festivities. There were 98 poor school-children to dinner in the servants' hall and laundry on 21st December; the village band played at the rectory on Christmas Eve and a few evenings later the hand-bell ringers; jollity filled

the servants' hall on New Year's Eve. "Very Cheerful. We all went down and had a dance with them.", noted the rector in his journal. The tenants, their wives and children, numbering about seventy, were invited to a concert in the rectory drawing room, followed by supper, early in January.⁽³⁾

Much charity came from the Smith-Marriotts. He was a kindly man. Every Saturday for many years soup was prepared in the rectory kitchen and taken to the village and distributed under the rector's personal supervision.⁽⁴⁾ He was appalled by the practical results of the Poor Law legislation and wrote a lengthy letter in 1838 to the Commissioners at Somerset House. He called the consequences of the law disastrous and suggested as an emergency measure that discretionary power be granted to the Guardians or Overseers to provide outdoor relief to the able-bodied with large families, because the high price of flour was swallowing up what he considered in normal times would be an adequate wage of 12s. per week. "I will only add that the poor people in this neighbourhood have borne their privations in a way most creditable to them, and presenting a praiseworthy contrast to the violence of the manufacturing districts under circumstances much less trying." - a parson's indignant care for his own flock; a countryman unable to resist a jibe at the town dweller. Smith-Marriott was a countryman through and through - he loved shooting and made sure that the game was well preserved. This view-point he would take to the bench, on becoming a J.P. in 1836 at the age of 34, but he continued to be appalled at the misery he found, when he visited Tunbridge Union as a member of its Board of Guardians.⁽⁵⁾

He founded the Horsmonden Benefit Society (a form of Provident Association). He also made sure that the church building was well insured!

In the early years he did the parochial work himself, not employing a curate until 1848 at a salary of £100 p.a. after his own financial position had strengthened, following the death of his

mother and two aunts. He could also afford to spend more on the fabric of the church.

In 1853 the North Aisle was rebuilt at his own cost, except for a contribution of £40 from the parish; and in 1855 a new pulpit and reading desk were added.

He solicited financial help from his wealthier brother (Sir John Smith) and together they built a school in memory of their aunt (a former rector's wife). It was all completed in six months and dedication festivities in 1853 included, according to his journal, "games for the children, running races, running in sacks, scrambling for gingerbread and halfpence. The workmen dined at The Gun at our expense". There was dinner in the rectory for about forty, complete with entertainment from a company of local glee singers.⁽⁶⁾

He did not like vestry meetings with their "JAW!". However in the years 1821 - 23 there had been much haggling over tithe. John Jenkins, the then incumbent, did not attend the vestry meetings, which meant that there was lengthy and difficult correspondence with the vestry clerk. Smith-Marriott probably felt it better to be there and deal personally with any unpleasantness. This did not prevent a dissenter being appointed churchwarden in 1837.⁽⁷⁾

(In the Deaneries at large, to the Article enquiring about the church attendance of churchwardens and their keeping of order - a question, which appeared in all the Articles of Enquiry from 1837-1870 - there was usually a "yes", with occasional prevarication when the word "generally" was favourite: a rare fit of honesty occasioned: "Not so frequently as I ought to do" from Leybourne. Chatham and Lamberhurst also elected a dissenter as churchwarden.)

It is in accord with establishment myopia that nowhere was the existence of the Calvinist Baptist Chapel in Horsmonden mentioned. It was opened in the year of the census, and claimed 90 adult

worshippers in the morning and the same number in the afternoon. The parish church was outside the village. Its comparative figures are not known, since Smith-Marriott could not be persuaded to reply.

Smith-Marriott enjoyed expressing himself in verse and published "Stray Thoughts on the Olden and Modern Times" in 1852. Through this medium he found it easier to share his feelings on matters which meant much to him: these included churchmanship differences and the wonder of Holy Communion.

What difference ought the Church to know
Amongst her sons 'twixt high and low?
Too high, you soar on clouds of doubt,
'Midst vapours darkly wave about,
And find not footing, till you toss
Yourself upon St. Peter's Cross!
Too low, you quit the shelt'ring ark
Which safely rides o'er billows dark;
Into Geneva's lake you roll,
Whose waters deep congeal the soul;
Grim Calvin's spirit hovers o'er,
Forbidding rescue from the shore.
Had Faith and Works their union kept
The wounded church we had not wept!

All very Anglican; but he was a convinced sacramentalist and could not understand why his parishioners came so unwillingly to the Lord's Supper. Hence his hymn:

'They all with one consent began
To make excuse', and ev'ry man
Resolv'd to keep away;
And now when on the sacred board
Is spread the supper of the Lord,
How few there are that stay.

'Come unto me' Christ kindly said
'And I will give you of the bread
Which does true health afford;
And ye shall drink the living wine.'
Then why - oh why should men decline
Communion with their Lord?

And

Eat of the bread which makes us one
With Christ - a union here begun
And made complete in Heav'n.

Sir William Marriott Smith-Marriott was an archetypal "Squarson"; all his ministerial life was spent exercising a paternal care over his wealden village of some 1,200 souls.

St. Mary's Hoo and High Halstow

Northwards, on The Hundred of Hoo, lived Robert Gasgoyne Burt, who also spent the whole of his ministry in a family living, or to be precise two livings. St. Mary's Hoo and High Halstow had been purchased by his father, probably with funds accrued through services to royalty (see above p. 34). Robert took possession of St. Mary Hoo in 1816 at the age of 26 and High Halstow seven years later. He spent three months of every year in his Twickenham house. Of him, Ralph Arnold⁽⁸⁾ reports a tradition that he never composed a sermon in his life and very seldom delivered one. Services were kept to a minimum. (The churchwardens made a note for the Bishop's attention in their 1859 visitation presentment : "We think it necessary to have a resident Curate to do the duties of the Rector in his absence, and that a service be done twice a day.")

Arnold remarks:⁽⁹⁾

"The services at St. Mary's must have been extremely odd."

"The men sat on one side of the church and women on the other. The school children were herded into a pew in the chancel and were watched over by one Collins, who was armed with a stout stick with which he maintained order, the clerk, Justice, by name, frequently dropped off to sleep, waking up to intone "Amen" at inappropriate moments. Music was supplied at first by a band which, turn and turn about on Sundays, attended the churches of Stoke, Allhallows, High Halstow and St. Mary's, and later by a barrel organ, purchased at second-hand from Cliffe Church, which played six hymn tunes. This restricted musical fare was subsequently supplemented by one of the parishioners who played the concertina. He was famous for his solo rendering of 'I will arise', but in due course uprooted himself in no small way and emigrated to the United States of America.

"Church collections were spasmodic. When Mr. Burt decided that it was time to have one he stationed himself at the church door with a dinner plate which he had most tactfully primed in advance with a sovereign and a penny."

He remained unmoved by Evangelical or Tractarian. He was kind-hearted and subscribed generously to parish funds, leaving each of the villages £500 in his will.

"He did not read very much. He did not shoot or ride or fish or hunt. He did not garden. He did not go for walks. So far as I know he did not even write books. He just existed beautifully from Sunday to Sunday, occasionally marrying, baptising or burying his parishioners and going out in his carriage on fine afternoons." writes Arnold.⁽¹⁰⁾

He died in 1875 aged 83, having been rector of St. Mary's 59 years and High Halstow 51.

It may be added that his replies to enquiries from central authority were kept to the minimum, and that any financial information supplied looks suspiciously like inspired guesswork, being in round numbers (such as £500 for tithe). However, he had a service in each church on census Sunday, 31 & 44 being the respective general congregation numbers.

Ridley

Burt was an eccentric son of an eccentric father: not perhaps a representative example of Rochester Deanery clergy, even of those living in the more remote areas of the countryside. An equally remote ministry was exercised by Thomas Prankerd Phelps in Ridley for 53 years (1840-1893). Educated at Oxford whilst 'Tracts for the Times' were being published, he was presented to the Lambarde family living, because he was already known to them (his uncle was rector of Snodland in the Deanery) and in particular because he was happy to serve that small community of just over ninety, whilst the Lambarde brother-in-law could retain more lucrative Ash and Fawkham in plurality.⁽¹¹⁾

He made a good marriage and lived happily in the vicarage, which he soon extended, with help from relations, to house a growing family and servants.⁽¹²⁾ Gently touched by the Oxford movement, but zealously anti-Rome, he wished to bring more dignity to the services and emphasise the importance of Holy Communion. To this end he extended the chancel in the late '50s to house a heavy oak altar, choir and harmonium (largely at his own expense).⁽¹³⁾ He added a carved reredos of the Lord's supper in 1869. (There were also practical improvements, such as two porches to keep out the wind and an additional heating stove.) He quietly introduced a robed choir.

The parish was small, very small, with a population of just over 90 in 1840. Some of the residents of the hamlet of Hodsoll Street,

technically in Ash parish, but geographically nearer Ridley, worshipped at Ridley and came under Phelp's care. (Hodsoll Street had a population of about 200, double that of Ridley's.)⁽¹⁴⁾ He knew them intimately and through his moral persuasion encouraged young pupils to attend the small school, which he built (again mostly at his own expense) in 1849. It consisted of just one well-lit school room, but with accommodation for a teacher - downstairs a separate teacher's room with a larder, an entrance passage and a scullery: upstairs three rooms. The first teacher to be appointed was recruited from Tonbridge and her two younger sisters accompanied her to work as laundresses in the parsonage. She had to follow closely the syllabus and methods laid down by Phelps. The aim was to teach the children to read, to write a simple letter and to be able to add, subtract and multiply (plus a little needlework for the girls.)⁽¹⁵⁾

In 1861 Phelps was appointed Rural Dean, although there were a number of older and longer serving incumbents in the revived Cobham Deanery, and in 1863 an honorary canon, but it was an isolated patch. The railway only skirted the area. For 53 years an obviously able man was content to direct his energies to the care of his small flock and find himself happily fulfilled, before resigning at the age of 82. His successor lasted only six years. Lancelot Phelps, a son, reported of his parents, retired to Shipbourne, that "frightful accounts about their successors were filtering through": an inevitable legacy of a long incumbency. In the matter of dilapidations, Phelps had been prudent. Not only could he afford to relinquish his living, he put the chancel in order in 1891 and £130 covered the maintenance due on school and parsonage.⁽¹⁶⁾ Others were not necessarily so foreseeing. The lack of adequate financial provision, the cost of dilapidations and the need to find a house all encouraged incumbents to stay where they were.

Of course the Phelps and their like lived in polite society. An adequate parsonage house, with sufficient accommodation for

servants, was considered a necessity and, once attained, provided another inducement for the incumbent and his family to continue in their living. As noted, there was less and less non-residence; it was becoming the norm for the clerical family to reside among the flock. Statistically there was a gradual increase in the number of years an incumbent could expect to stay. In 1830 the average length of time incumbents had been in their parishes was 15 years; it was the same 13 years later. By 1859 the average had risen to 20 years and by 1869 to 22. The decrease in the number of livings which became vacant, which has been noted, tells, of course, the same story.

The files of the Church Commissioners are littered with requests for help in the rebuilding or extension of parsonage houses. There are something like seventeen such from the parishes of Rochester and Malling; but many incumbents simply built or enlarged at their own expense (as did Phelps), which could lead to difficulties later. In 1881 the poor vicar of Birling wrote asking permission to sell the vicarage house and build another because "The present house was very much enlarged by my predecessor, a man of large private means. There are 14 bedrooms besides dressing rooms, 4 sitting rooms, large conservatory, very extensive servants' rooms and offices, stabling for five horses with coachmen's rooms alone besides laundry".⁽¹⁷⁾ (His predecessor had been the Honourable Edward Vesey Bligh, second son of the Earl of Darnley.)

Tithe

It also became altogether a more comfortable prospect to reside and to put down roots in a rural community with the passing of the Tithe Commutation Act. The Tithe Commissioners and their assistants left the local parties to work out their own commutation rent charge and normally accepted what was proposed. At Chatham for instance the assistant commissioner recommended the acceptance of a voluntary agreement to the rector of £808, although a valuation had

suggested the tithes were worth £987 after deducting all collection expenses.⁽¹⁸⁾ With tithe no longer the contentious issue it had been, and incumbents endeavouring to be both a spiritual and material blessing to the community, relationships with the farmers and their other neighbours improved, in the rural areas country at least. Nor it would seem were the parsons any worse off - or not until the last quarter of the century, when depression in agricultural prices meant lower value for the rent charges, which were tied to the price of wheat, barley and oats.⁽¹⁹⁾

A comparison of the declared value of tithe in 1832 and the Rent Charge recorded in the Parliamentary Returns indicates that in 49 parishes the rent charge was in excess of the 1832 amount. Indeed in 21 cases the increase was in excess of £100 p.a., and considerably so in many instances.⁽²⁰⁾ In 13 cases, however, there was a drop. In 1832 incumbents frequently remarked that they knew they settled for much less than was their due. They were vindicated. Among the particular complainants were the incumbents of Wouldham, Cowden, Kemsing-cum-Seale, Horsmonden and Tonbridge. The comparative figures are:

	1832	Rent Charge
Wouldham	£183.3s	£266
Cowden	£351.6s	£583.17s.6d.
Kemsing-cum-Seale	£487	£586
Horsmonden	£720	£988.15s.3d
Tonbridge	£700	£1,077.1s.8d

Moreover, admitting all the anomalies (such as lay and clerical impropriatorship) and the fact that income came from other sources, tithe did mean that there was some, be it rough and ready, correlation between population size and the incumbent's emoluments. A comparison of those parishes in the Deaneries in 1832 with a population of 1000 or less with their average declared tithe tabulated in population bands of 250 reads thus:

Population	Average Tithe p.a.	No. of parishes in the band.
Under 250	£224	13 parishes
150 - 500	£285	14 parishes
500 - 750	£410	9 parishes
750 - 1000	£510	5 parishes

The more people to be cared for, the more tithe-payers; and with tithe payments no longer subject to an annual wrangle and handed over without too much grievance, the tithe-payer could come to the annual dinner, enjoy himself, and set out to eat and drink as much as he could at the parson's expense.

Music

In each of the three sample rural incumbencies, the matter of music arose. Galleried instrumentalists were giving way to organs (even of the barrel variety) and choirs. In 1837 and 1840 Murray asked whether due attention was paid to the encouragement of psalmody, under the direction of the minister. Every parish except 9 in the two deaneries answered in the affirmative. 2 left the question blank and there was a simple "we have no singing" from 3. Others offered a variety of excuses - "The singers have quarrelled" (Wouldham); "No encouragement, three parts of the singing have left off singing in consequence" (Ashurst); "No particular attention paid to it, we are a small parish and want an organ." (Trotterscliffe); "There has been no singing for two years. The inhabitants have recently raised £70 towards purchasing a Barrel Organ which is likely to be erected before Christmas" (Wateringbury).

A few proudly announced that there was "an organ in the chancel" (Milton) or the minister "has paid every attention and has given us an excellent organ" (Snodland). The music movement was gathering pace. In 1829 Harker had solicited help from the Commissioners to

provide an instrument for the new church in Chatham where the want of an organ to lead the psalmody had long been felt.⁽²¹⁾ As has been noted the rector of Longfield was paying two guineas in 1832 to induce some singers to attend church (p. 70). Before that, in 1816, the vestry minutes of St. Margaret Rochester record that the minister had cheerfully complied with a request to select from versions of the psalms some suitable for singing.⁽²²⁾

At the beginning, the move to introduce music had not always been met without opposition. Early in his incumbency at West Malling George Bates (vicar 1814 - 1842) introduced hymns into the service. The parish paid for a post-chaise for a deputation of three to go and ask the Bishop of Rochester to prohibit the practice.⁽²³⁾ By 1840 the parishioners were more than reconciled and the churchwardens were not content simply to enter "Yes" but added "There has been for many years an organ & the organist has been paid from the Church Rate".

(The vicar of West Malling fell into "the much-loved eccentric" class. In 1837 the churchwardens presented thus: "The bells were rung at the close of the Last Election for the County contrary to the express wish of the Vicar. The Bells were rung at the close of the former Election for the County contrary to the wish of the Churchwardens and a great many of the Parishioners by order of the Vicar." In the same year,

"on the day before the Kent V. Sussex cricket match, the vicar Mr Bates preached a rather extraordinary sermon against the game of cricket, describing as sinners all those who attended the match, whether they betted or not. He then prayed for grace to support him under the weight of the reproaches he anticipated would be heaped upon him for performing his sacred duty. It appears, however, that he suffered no diminution of the esteem and affection of his flock, who felt that he had spoken in the sincerity of his conviction, and not from any hypocritical motive. The match was attended on both days by many of the neighbouring clergymen".)⁽²⁴⁾

A specific question with regard to organs (over and above the enquiry concerning the encouragement of psalmody) was not asked until 1851 (and then again in 1859), but it was a negative question asking whether such had been erected without faculty, so the normal answer "no" gives no indication as to whether they were in use. Only Rochester Deanery replies are available (Malling having departed to Canterbury). In them three churchwardens felt compelled to emphasise that they did have an organ and the new churches in Milton (Holy Trinity and Christ Church) had both added organs through public subscription. One had been introduced without a faculty (Frindsbury) and at Higham the wardens, having admitted to not having a faculty in 1851, declared in 1859 that "our organ is not erected but moveable". Southfleet said they had no organ at all.

Schools

Incumbents were also anxious to supply schools of the National variety, doubtless with one eye on their Dissenting competitors. There is no direct question about schools in the Visitation Articles of Enquiry, but often a school is mentioned as the venue for the catechising of the children. In the 1851 return 14 Rochester parishes mention National Schools or Day schools (4 - different parishes - had alluded to them in 1837 and in '59 3 more are mentioned (including Ridley)). The surge, then, was in the late 40's. A total of 31 is a very respectable proportion of the 38 parishes, and a few were too small to warrant a school. Thus at Allington in Malling Deanery there were "no children but the Ministers" according to the 1843 Visitation return. For Malling Deanery there are no returns after 1843. Information from Visitation returns for that Deanery, therefore, is limited to the 1843 report from Brenchley that National Schools were about to be opened there and that six parishes were using Sunday School Rooms for catechising in 1837.

Curates

A survey of the curate position in the two Deaneries must also be incomplete, because of the change in diocesan boundaries. There are no visitation processes for Malling. In Rochester visitation processes also become less frequent, being available for the years 1837, 1840, 1843, 1848, and then not until 1860 followed by 1873. There are, however, clergy lists published for 1859 and 1866, so numbers have been taken from these for the following tables. Using the same categories as previously (see above p. 52) Rochester Deanery continues thus:

1 Year	2 No.of new curates	3 No.still there at next process	4 at the process after that	5 beyond
1837	12*	6	4	3
1840	13	4	2	2
1843	8	2	2	N/A
1848	10	4	N/A	N/A
1851	9			

The 8-year and 7-year gaps make it impossible to give length of stay figures. The only curate still in office in 1859 was George Nash at High Halstow. He was incumbent of Allhallows on the Hoo peninsular, where he resided but intermittently. Presumably he provided services when Burt was away or not of a mind to attend (see above p. 123). There was a complete changeover between 1859 and 1866.

The above table is included for the sake of completeness. As with the curates' tables on pp. 52 & 53 column 1 gives the year of the visitation, column 2 the number of curates appointed since the previous visitation, column 3 the numbers who are still in office at the next date 3 years later, and column 4 the visitation after that i.e. those who have remained in the same parish for 9 years or more. N/A indicates that the gap between visitations has become so wide that no meaningful figure can be given.

*The previous visitation was in 1834 so these 12 have been appointed within a 3 year period.

The total number of curates in each of the years can be given:

Year	Rochester	Malling	Total	In Alumni Lists		
				R	M	Total
1837	23	20	43	23	18	41
1840	23	18	41	22	15	37
1843	19	15	34	13	12	25
1848	21			* 20(inc possibles)		
1851	21			21"....	
1859	15			13"....	
1866	21			11	... "....	

(The 1859 and 1866 figures are from the Oxford and Cambridge Alumni; the particularly low 1866 figure could be because candidates were presented from say Durham or London or from one of the emerging theological colleges. Bishop Wigram was at pains to point out in his Visitation Charge (1864) ⁽²⁵⁾ that the latter must be valued as theologically-literate, even if they were without a university degree. He was presumably more willing than Murray to give titles to deacons who were not graduates of Oxford or Cambridge.)

Of the twelve "new" curates in 1837, which are traceable, one, a rugby blue, died three years later, having been a curate since his ordination in 1831 and six were to become incumbents (or hold perpetual Curacies) - of these one became secretary of the Pastoral Aid Society, returned to Cambridge as a tutor and vicar of Holy Trinity and became recognised as the most prominent evangelical in the University.

The bunch in 1840, of whom 9 are traceable, all went on to livings eventually, except one.

* i.e. giving the benefit of the doubt when positive identification in the alumni lists is not certain.

In 1848 10 came to fresh curacies: of 4 there is no further information, 4 went onto livings and 2 remained curates (one disappearing from Crockford in '73 and the other dying whilst curate at Fawkham). In 1851 there is no further information for 2 of the 9, 6 went on eventually to livings and 1 continued as Head Master of Sir Joseph Williams School in Rochester.

There are still instances of incumbents acting as curates in nearby parishes. Shaw, who was curate of Halling, was also vicar of Cuxton for 42 years. One of the curates of St. Margaret Rochester was rector of Hoo St Werbergh. A curate at Milton was also rector of Ash and curate of Frindsbury and Cobham's curate was the incumbent of neighbouring Ifield. Walker King was curate to his father, the Archdeacon, at Stone for a while, a pattern more frequently found in the clerical dynasties of Malling Deanery.

The nature of curacies gradually changed. In the early part of the century an incumbent normally employed a curate because he was himself non-resident. It became more usual for an incumbent to appoint a curate to assist him in the work of the parish, he himself remaining in the parish. In 1837, of 23 curates 13 looked after parishes while the incumbent was absent. By 1851 eleven of the curates had resident incumbents (St. Nicholas Rochester had employed an additional curate because the incumbent was to be non-resident). The 1860 process gives curates' names, but unfortunately we have no accurate information with regard to residence. According to the Register of Licences⁽²⁶⁾ for non-residence, the incumbents of the following had permission at sometime between 1860 - 65: Allhallows, Aylesford, Cooling, Chalk, Higham, Hoo St Werburgh, St. Nicholas Rochester and Shorne. A comparison indicates that some 17 curates were employed where the incumbent was also resident, whilst 4 parishes were left unattended altogether, with neither curate nor resident incumbent. The 1873 returns suggest that some 20 curates were employed. In 4 parishes there was possible non or intermittent residence. (3 had no curate

either: the other was the parish of the Archdeacon, who provided 2 curates to look after Aylesford when he could not be there).

In his 1864 Visitation Charge Bishop Wigram commented on the increasing mobility of curates.⁽²⁷⁾ "Some young Clergy think it a duty to change their place of serving when their two years title is satisfied, for the sake of experience in varied work." He also commented on the poor remuneration offered to curates. Looking at the diocese he remarked that the average stipend of the curates was just below £100 p.a. and a house was rarely found - this is scarcely any improvement on 1832's average figure of £94 (see above p.57).

The changing pattern becomes apparent in the 1859 Clergy List. The outline career of 10 is available. Of them, 8 served three or even four curacies of two or three years each, maybe in a variety of dioceses, before obtaining a living some fifteen or more years later.

There is definite information concerning the career of only 10 of the curates listed in 1866. There are enough details to know that a similar pattern occurred in six cases. A typical example is Edward Robinson: Aylesford was his title; he was there 3 years followed by a year's curacy at Felsted in Essex, a 7 year curacy at Battle, and a 2 year curacy at Tilmanstone in Kent, before becoming vicar of St. Luke's Caterham Valley in 1876. That was 13 years after his ordination in 1863.

Curates could expect to move around. They could also expect to wait a considerable time before obtaining a living and their remuneration was by no means generous, but they were sons of a new age.

1835 - 1870

Chapter 11

EPILOGUE: A BISHOP'S VISION

This study of Rochester and Malling Clergy began with the hopes of one of the Diocese's country rectors. The visionary expectations of Bishop Wigram shine through his 1864 Charge. It is a long document and full of statistics, which however are of little help for our purpose.⁽¹⁾ In 1846 Rochester Diocese lost the Malling Deanery but gained most of the County of Essex and all of Hertford. Wigram gave population figures for the Diocese: in Essex 333,363, in Hertford 173,280 and in Kent 103,027. Rochester remained the cathedral city, but the Bishop lived at Danbury, near Chelmsford, where Murray had insisted the Commissioners build him a house (at a cost of £30,000) and where he spent much time.⁽²⁾ The centre of gravity had changed, so, for instance, when giving statistics about schools Wigram mentioned only Essex and Hertfordshire.

Wigram was a startling contrast to Murray. He could be thankful that non-residence was almost a thing of the past, (although there were a few parishes, he explained, with long-standing incumbents where legislation could not be enforced until their tenures had ceased). He commended new initiatives in reaching the unchurched: the semi-itinerant work force such as brickworkers, the military, seamen, even remote lighthouse-men. Clergy had visited, set up reading rooms and the like. He enthused about an initiative to reach the hardened hearts of brickfield workers, where after two years' spade work from local clergy, he was able to confirm and preach in a situation where no one would have thought it could be possible. He was well aware of the need for new churches. He knew of 4 Kent localities (and 20 in Hertfordshire as well as 39 in Essex), where parochial clergy would "fain have an enlargement of 29 churches and 38 school-room chapels, for their scattered and

inaccessible flock". He praised the work of chaplains in the Union workhouses, gaols, hospitals and services.

From his far-ranging Charge it is worth mentioning his initiative on family prayers - and its response. On the first Sunday in January 1863 he had requested that a pulpit letter be read on the subject. He had reports back as to how well his suggestions had been received, and of the valuable work of door-to-door Book-Hawkers in providing suitable material. He then sent a circular asking the clergy to follow up all families who had responded. He was surprised at the lack of enthusiasm for this enterprise exhibited by the clergy. Many had been their objections, of which "as requiring an unduly and indelicate questioning of individuals concerning their private and domestic life" was typical. Clergy did not consider the exercise to be a good use of time; a reply the zealous Evangelical Bishop could not understand, for surely an ideal pastoral opening had been provided for fruitful visiting. He himself had rejoiced, when considering the clergyman's status, that "Tuition, agriculture and secular occupations never engaged so little of a minister's sacred hours as now. Field sports and mere worldly pursuits were never so clearly disapproved in the Church."

Hoare in Tunbridge Wells would have thundered approbation from the three-decker pulpit he continued to favour. (He liked it because it brought him up to gallery level and the flat ceiling made a good sounding board.)⁽³⁾ The likes of Horsmonden, Ridley - and Hoo, continued, no doubt, much as before. If anything it was Tractarian solemnity which brought change there.

Murray had not even considered such evangelical activity when he gave advice to the newly ordained at the conclusion of his Charge twenty years earlier. In so far as that advice went, Wigram would have approved. The one matter, over and above preaching and public worship, which Murray brought to the attention of the young men, was their ministry to the sick and dying, when comfort, exhortation and advice were needed. "The house of mourning and the bed of

sickness present opportunities for 'turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just'", but, how to minister the mercy of God without encouraging presumption and the need for true repentance and conversion, for "the language of rapture and confidence.... is now, at the hour of death, too often assumed by the most profligate and abandoned sinner."⁽⁴⁾? (Did he have dissenters in mind?)

This was the one thing that Murray felt it apposite to mention. Wigram would have endorsed enthusiastically the desire to encourage repentance and individual conversion, but he also expected his clergy to provide assiduous teaching, careful monitoring of the spiritual lives of parishioners and outreach to the unchurched. He applauded clergy who had "hearts yearning for souls".

The atmosphere had changed.

NOTES

Preface.

1. M. Ransome, Wiltshire Returns to the Bishop's Visitation Returns, 1783. Wiltshire Record Society, Volume XXVII, Devizes, 1972.

Chapter 1: Prologue: A Rector's Vision.

1. C. Perfect, The Constant Residence of Clergy upon their livings shown to be absolutely necessary for recovering the sinking interests of religion in general and for the Church of England in particular, Caleb Perfect, London, 1760. pp. 17, 77, 85.
2. Details of Perfect's career come from E. Hasted, The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent, 12 Volumes, Canterbury, 1789 - 1801 (under the parish of Cuxton), and from the entry in J.A. Venn, Alumni Cantabrigienses, Part II, 1752 - 1890, 6 Volumes, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1940.
3. D. Church, Cuxton, A Kentish Village, A. J. Cassell, Sheerness, 1976 p. 34.

Chapter 2: Rochester and Malling Deaneries and their Clergy.

1. See Map p. vii. This outline of Deanery boundaries is superimposed, with kind permission, on an amended copy of a map of Kent Parishes, published as a Genealogical Aid, by the Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies, Northgate, Canterbury. There is a list of parishes in the two Deaneries on p. viii., together with a list of the Bishops of Rochester for the period.
2. Details of the topography are taken from E. Hasted, op. cit., under the various parishes, unless otherwise indicated.
3. P. MacDougall, The Story of the Hoo Peninsular, John Hallewell, Chatham, 1980, p. 86, quoting W. H. Ireland, History of Kent, G. Virtue, 1830. MacDougall makes the suggestion about malaria.
4. E. Hasted, op. cit.; C. H. Fielding, The Records of Rochester Diocese, Snowden Press, Dartford, 1910; J. A. Venn, op. cit.; Joseph Foster, op. cit..
5. Details of plurality as recorded in E. Hasted op. cit.; J. A. Venn, op. cit. & Joseph Foster, op. cit..
6. John Thomas, Primary Charge, 1776 in Sermons and Charges to which is prefaced a sketch of the life and character of the Author by the Editor, 2 Volumes, G. A. Thomas, Vol. II, p. 2. and following.
7. Kent County Archives, DRo/Vs. Visitation Processes. Visitation processes are available from 1724 and, as well as incumbents, contain the names of curates and sometimes schoolmasters and parish clerks. They seem to have been prepared by the Diocesan Registrar to list those who could be expected to appear at the Visitation and acted as a sort of attendance register; additions and alterations were made in pencil. In this study the processes have been used principally to ascertain the names of curates, which often are not to be found elsewhere.

Chapter 3: Episcopal Policy and the Exercise of Patronage.

1. John Thomas, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 442.
2. John Thomas, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 430.
3. Anon., A Kentish Curate's Letter to Revd Mr Archdeacon Law, J. Davies, London, 1780.
4. John Law, A Charge delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of Rochester, 1820, Rochester, 1820.
5. John Thomas, op. cit., Charge, 1780, p. 442.
6. John Law, A Sermon preached at the Anniversary Meeting of the Sons of the Clergy. May 11, 1780, London, 1781.
7. John Thomas, op.cit., Charge 1780, p. 440.
8. E. Hasted, op. cit.. Under each parish entry Hasted records the patronage of the living up to the time of writing (c. 1800).
9. S. Horsley, The Charge of Samuel, Lord Bishop of Rochester, to the Clergy of his Diocese in 1796, London, 1796. p. 34 following. He saw learning as the present work of the Holy Ghost; replacing the immediate outpouring of the Spirit on the first Apostles, who had been directly inspired.
10. S. Horsley, The Charge of Samuel, Lord Bishop of Rochester, to the Clergy in his Diocese in his Second General Visitation in 1800, London, 1800.
11. C. Moore, A Sermon on the Introduction of Sunday Schools given at St. Nicholas Rochester at the Visitation of the Archdeacon, to which is added a large appendix, Simmons and Kirkby, Canterbury, 1795.
12. D. Church, op. cit., p. 34.
13. F. C. Mather, High Church Prophet: Bishop Samuel Horsley (1733-1806) and the Caroline Tradition in the Later Georgian Church, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1992, p. 181.
14. J.A. Venn, op. cit. and R. Arnold, The Hundred of Hoo, Constable, London, 1947, p. 116.
15. J. Pollock, Wilberforce, Constable, London, pp. 50, 51, 52, 53, 92. Entry in The Dictionary of National Biography.
16. J.A. Venn, op. cit. and Irene Collins, Jane Austen and the Clergy, The Hambledon Press, 1993, p. 16.

Chapter 4: Sunday Schools - The Implementation of a Diocesan Policy.

1. T. Dampier, A Charge delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of Rochester, at the Ordinary Visitation of Thomas, Lord Bishop of Rochester, 1807, T. Payne, London, 1807.

2. John Thomas, *op. cit.*, Sermon on 28th September 1788, Vol. II p. 15.
3. John Law, A Sermon on Psalm cxix preached at the Yearly Meeting of the Children educated in the Charity Schools in and about London and Westminster, 1797, London, 1797.
4. C. Moore, *op. cit.*.
5. S. Horsley, The Charge of Samuel, Lord Bishop of Rochester to the Clergy in his Diocese in his Second General Visitation in 1800, London, 1800.
6. Articles of Enquiry. Kent County Archives, Maidstone, awaiting cataloguing, as are the Presentments.
7. Parliamentary Paper 1819 IX, Committee on the Education of the Poor.
8. C. Moore, *op. cit.*.
9. Licences for Non-residence. These are recorded in a manuscript volume in Rochester Diocesan Registry.
10. Articles of Enquiry into Ecclesiastical Revenues, 1832, Church Commissioners Archives, London. There are replies from the majority of parishes. They are included in the particular parish file and referred to in this study as 1832 Return.
11. Visitation Presentments, 1837. Visitation Presentments from Churchwardens, uncatalogued and now in Kent County Archives, Maidstone.
12. P. Virgin, The Church in an Age of Negligence: Ecclesiastical Structure and Problems of Reform, 1700-1840, James Clarke, Cambridge, 1989, Table XIX, pp. 291-4.
13. Visitation Processes, Kent County Archives, DRa/Vp. (see Notes: Chapter 2, note 7 above.)
14. D. MacKinnon, History of Speldhurst, H. G. Graves, Speldhurst, 1902, p. 53.

Chapter 5: Curates.

1. S. Horsley, A Charge to the Clergy at the Primary Visitation of Samuel, Lord Bishop of Asaph, 1806, London, 1806.
2. To the Commissioners' Articles of Enquiry into Ecclesiastical Revenues, 1832.
3. Kent County Archives, Lamberhurst Parish, P216/3/2/1-21.

Chapter 6: Agrarian Unrest and Tithe.

1. Kent County Archives, Lamberhurst Parish, P216/3/2/1-21.
2. Maidstone Journal & Kentish Advertiser, 7.xii.30, 14.xii.30, 21.xii.30, 30.xi.30, 16.xi.30, 30.xi.30.

3. E. J. Hobsbawm & G. Rudé, Captain Swing, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1969, Appendix III Table of Incidents, which lists and categorises all known incidents of agricultural disturbance during the period of unrest.
4. Commissioners' Articles of Enquiry into Ecclesiastical Revenues, 1832.
5. Maidstone Journal & Kentish Advertiser, 14.xii.30.
6. Hobsbawm & Rudé, op. cit., p. 233.
7. ibid. p. 109, Appendix III. Maidstone Journal & Kentish Advertiser, 29.xi.30.
8. Maidstone Journal & Kentish Advertiser, 23.xi.30.
9. Hobsbawm & Rudé, op. cit., p. 104.
10. 1832 return.
11. Parliamentary Papers, 1833 V Select Committee on Agriculture; 1836 VIII State of Agriculture and an Enquiry into the Causes and Extent of Distress.
12. Kent County Archives, Parish of Lamberhurst, 216/3/2/1-21.
13. 1832 return.
14. 1832 return.
15. P. Virgin, op. cit., Table I, p. 270.
16. Parliamentary Papers, H.C. 1817 XV, Augmentation of Poor Livings.
17. P. Virgin, op. cit., Table IV, p. 274.

Chapter 7: Patronage, Residence and Duty.

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2. P. Virgin, op. cit., Table XVI, p. 288.
3. Rochester Cathedral Dean and Chapter Minutes, Kent County Archives, Ac/9/34.
4. quoted in A.D. Harvey, Britain in the Early Nineteenth Century, Batsford, London, 1978, p. 66.
5. R. Arnold, The Whiston Matter: The Reverend Robert Whiston versus the Dean and Chapter of Rochester, Rupert Hart-Davis, London, 1961.
6. Parliamentary Papers, 1818, H.L. XCIII.
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8. John Law, A Charge delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of Rochester, 1802, T. Payne, London, 1802.
9. Walker King, Articles of Enquiry, 1822, Rochester Diocesan Registry, and now uncatalogued in Kent County Archives.
10. *ibid.*
11. G. Murray, Articles of Enquiry & Churchwardens Presentments. Rochester Diocesan Registry, and now uncatalogued in Kent County Archives.
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13. John Law, A Charge delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of Rochester, May 1817, Rochester, 1817.
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16. Church Commissioners' Archives, F 18393, which contains correspondence concerning its building. See also Parliamentary Papers, 1830/31, VII, 8th Report of Church Building Commissioners.
17. Church Commissioners' Archives, F 15452.

Chapter 8: Church Rate, Worship and Visitation.

1. Church Commissioners' Archives, F 18384.
2. Visitation Return, 1837, uncatalogued in Kent County Archives.
3. G. Murray, A Charge delivered by the Bishop of Rochester to the Clergy in his Diocese at the Triennial Visitation, July, 1840, London, 1840.
4. R. Homan, The Victorian Churches of Kent: a Gazetteer intended to be comprehensive of all places of worship purpose built between 1818 and 1901, Phillimore, Chichester, 1984, p. 3; Chatham's returns to the Census of Religious Worship in 1851, Public Records Office HO 129 and on microfiche at The Centre for Kentish Studies, Maidstone.
5. John Law, A Charge delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of Rochester, June 1820, Rochester, 1820.
6. Church Commissioners' Archives, F 145452.
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9. *ibid.* (Also Visitation Return, 1843.)
10. *ibid.*
11. *ibid.* (Also Visitation Returns 1837 and 1843.)
12. These figures have been calculated from the returns to the Census of Religious Worship in 1851. Public Records Office H O 129/49-74 and on microfiche at The Centre for Kentish Studies, Maidstone. As noted there were not returns from every place of worship and the care with which the returns were completed obviously varied.
13. Visitation Returns, 1869 and 1873.
14. R. Homan, *op. cit.*
15. Compiled from Visitation Returns, 1851 Census, and 1832 replies to the Commissioners.
16. C. H. Fielding, *op.cit.*, p. 608. He also gives the dates of building and the current (1910) patronage of new churches.
17. O. Chadwick, The Victorian Church, Part I, 1829-1859, 3rd Edition, SCM Press, London, 1987, p. 134 note, p. 29, p. 40.
18. *ibid.* p. 40.
19. G. Murray, A Charge delivered by the Bishop of Rochester to the Clergy of his Diocese at the Triennial Visitation, July 1840, London, 1840.
20. G. Murray, A Charge delivered by the Bishop of Rochester to the Clergy of his Diocese at the Triennial Visitation, October, 1843, London, 1843.
21. New Testament, 1 Corinthians VIII.
22. A. Cronk, A Wealden Rector, Phillimore, Chichester, 1975, p. 45.
23. Articles of Visitation and Enquiry, 1819, uncatalogued in Kent County Archives.

Chapter 9: Town Ministry and Patrons.

1. Church Commissioners' Archives, F 8534, for this lengthy correspondence.
2. Joseph Foster, *op. cit.*; see British Library Catalogue for a list of his published writings.
3. A. Savidge, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Midas Books, Royal Tunbridge Wells, 1975, p. 145.
4. Church Commissioners Archives, F 1384.
5. A. Savidge, *op. cit.*, pp. 145, 149.
6. A. Savidge, *op, cit.*, p. 114.
7. Church Commissioners' Archives, F 18393.
8. *ibid.*, F18393.
9. *ibid.*, F32029.
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12. C. H. Fielding, op. cit..
13. A. Savidge, op. cit., p. 150.
14. Fielding, op. cit..
15. Fielding, op. cit. and Church Commissioners' Archives, F 38222.
16. Church Commissioners' Archives, F 31783 and MB 31/195.
17. R. Arnold, The Whiston Matter: The Reverend Robert Whiston versus the Dean and Chapter of Rochester, Rupert Hart-Davis, London, 1961, p. 33, (quoting Esme Wingfield-Stratford: This Was a Man.).
18. O. Chadwick, op. cit., p. 472.
19. Return to Church Commissioners' Enquiry into Ecclesiastical Revenues, 1832.
20. Church Commissioners' Archives, F 4934.
21. see R. Arnold, op. cit.. Unfortunately Arnold gives no references. His detailed and entertaining work is based on material found in Rochester Chapter House strong room, transcripts of the Court Cases and contemporary newspaper reports. Chadwick refers to it in a note in The Victorian Church, Part I, p. 513. (Arnold does accuse the Dean of giving wealthy Frindsbury to his nephew, when in fact that living was in the hands of the Bishop.)
22. R. Arnold, op. cit., p. 190.
23. *ibid.*, p. 30.
24. *ibid.*, p. 140.

Chapter 10: Rural Ministry and Curates.

1. A. Cronk, A Wealden Rector, Phillimore, Chichester, 1975. The life of William Marriott Smith-Marriott is told in this work. (The "Smith" was added to Marriott when the child was ten, since he was designated heir through his grandfather's married daughter, Lady Smith, and was already destined for the Marriott family living and estates.) The author had access to Smith-Marriott's Journal, writings and other family papers.
2. *ibid.*, p. 41.
3. *ibid.*, p. 71.
4. *ibid.*, p. 84.
5. *ibid.*, p. 83.
6. *ibid.*, p. 110.
7. Return from Horsmonden, Visitation Returns, 1837, uncatalogued in Kent County Archives.
8. R. Arnold, The Hundred of Hoo, Constable, London, 1947. Arnold does not give his sources. The following is taken primarily from this work.

9. *ibid.*, p. 143.
10. *ibid.*, p. 145.
11. G. van Loo, A Victorian Parson: The Life and Times of Thomas Prankerd Phelps, Ridley, Kent. Rector, 1840-1893, Van Loo and The Self Publishing Association, Upton upon Severn, 1987, from which the following is largely gleaned.
12. Church Commissioners' Archives, MB31/156.
13. G. van Loo, *op. cit.*, p. 119.
14. *ibid.*, p. 178.
15. *ibid.*, pp. 104-5.
16. *ibid.*, p. 228.
17. Church Commissioners' Archives, F 52114.
18. E. J. Evans, Tithes and the Tithe Commutation Act, 1836, Standing Conference of Local History, Bedford Square press, London, 1978, p. 20 onwards.
19. W. R. Ward, The Tithe Question in England, Journal of Ecclesiastical History, XVI, 1965, p. 80.
20. Return to Commissioners' Enquiry, 1832: also Parliamentary Papers, HC. LXIV 1887, Tithes Commutation.
21. Church Commissioners' Archives, F 15452.
22. St. Margaret's Rochester Vestry Order Book 1816-1836, Kent County Archives, P/R 305/8/2.
23. A. Cronk, A Short History of West Malling, A. Cronk, West Malling, 1951, p. 34.
24. 1837 Visitation Return, uncatalogued in Kent County Archives; A. Cronk, *op. cit.*, p. 39.
25. J. C. Wigram, A Charge delivered to the Clergy and Churchwardens of the Diocese of Rochester in November, 1864, London, 1864. For Murray's opinions see above p. 97.
26. in the Rochester Diocesan Registry.
27. J. C. Wigram, *op. cit.*.

Chapter 11: Epilogue: A Bishop's Vision.

- 1 J. C. Wigram, *op. cit.*.
2. W. Gibson, Church State and Society, 1760-1850, MacMillan, London, 1994, p. 118.
3. A. Savidge, *op. cit.*, p. 145.
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H.L. 1816	LXXIX	Population and church capacity in parishes with a Population of 2500 and over.
H.C. 1817	XV	Curates in each Diocese. Augmentations of Poor Livings. Livings without Parsonage Houses.
H.L. 1818	XCIII	Benefices and Population.
1819	IX	Committee on the Education of the Poor.
1821	X	First Report of the Commissioners for building New Churches (and subsequent annual reports).
1824	XVIII	New Churches. Parishes with greatest deficiency of accomodation.
1830	XIX	Number of Curates.
	XX	Applications to Church Building Commissioners.
1833	XXVII	Resident and non-resident Incumbents.
	V	Report of Select Committee on Agriculture.

	1836	VIII	Report of the Select Committee on the State of Agriculture and into the Causes and Extent of Distress.
		XXX	Dissenting Meeting Houses and R. C. Chapels.
		XLIV	Church Patronage.
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	1837	XLI	Report of the Church Building Commissioners.
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	1837-8	VII	Education of the Poorer Classes.
	1852-3	LXVIII	Dissenting Places of Worship.
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H.L.	1857-9	XX	Deficiency of Spiritual Instruction.
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