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BEVERLEY MINSTER FROM THE SOUTH

Three main phases of building are visible: from the East End up to, and including, the main transepts, thirteenth century (commenced c.1230); the nave, fourteenth century (commenced 1308); the West Front, first half of the fifteenth century. The whole was thus complete by 1450.

THE CONSTITUTION AND THE CLERGY
OF BEVERLEY MINSTER
IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

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[1980]



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

I record my gratitude to the late Canon J. S. Purvis and the late Mrs. Norah Gurney for their help with York Diocesan sources, to the staffs of the Bodleian Library and the British Library for copies of documents in their custody, and to English Life Publications Ltd. for permission to use the photographs of Mr. S. W. Newbery.

ABBREVIATIONS

- B.C.A. Memorials of Beverley Minster: The Chapter Act Book of the Collegiate Church of St. John of Beverley A.D. 1286 - 1347, ed. A.F. Leach.
- C.C.R. Calendar of Close Rolls.
- C.C.W. Calendar of Chancery Warrants.
- C. Charter R. Calendar of Charter Rolls.
- C.F.R. Calendar of Fine Rolls.
- C.P.L. Calendar of Papal Letters.
- C.Pap.Pet. Calendar of Papal Petitions.
- C.P.R. Calendar of Patent Rolls.
- C. & Y.S. Canterbury and York Society.
- Dade Materials of Compiling the Histories and Antiquities of Beverley, Collected from Torre's Manuscripts in the Cathedral at York by William Dade.
- E.Y.R.S. East Yorkshire Record Society.
- E.Y.C. Early Yorkshire Charters.
- Emden, Oxford A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to A.D.1500, by A.B. Emden.
- Emden, Cambridge A Biographical Register of the University of Cambridge to 1500, by A.B. Emden.
- E.H.R. English Historical Review.
- Fasti Ebor Fasti Eboracenses. Lives of the Archbishops of York, by W.H. Dixon, ed. James Raine.
- Fasti Parochiales Fasti Parochiales, being Notes on the Advowsons and pre-Reformation Incumbents of the Parishes in the Deanery of Doncaster, ed. A.H. Thompson and C.T. Clay.
- D.N.B. Dictionary of National Biography.
- J.E.H. Journal of Ecclesiastical History.
- le Neve John le Neve, Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1300 - 1541 (New Edition - 11 vols.) N.B. Where the appropriate volume is explicit in the text (i.e. where a volume of the new le Neve corresponds to a cathedral church mentioned) the name of the church is not given in the reference which follows.]
- Lettres Communes Lettres Communes des Papes d'Avignon analysees d'apres les Registres dits d'Avignon et du Vatican per G.Mollat.
- Mill Stephenson A List of Monumental Brasses in the British Isles (1926) by Mill Stephenson with Appendix.

Monasticon	Monasticon Anglicanum, ed. W.Dugdale.
O.H.S.	Oxford Historical Society.
Miscellanea	Miscellanea, ii, containing Documents relating to Diocesan and Provincial Visitations from the Registers of Henry Bowet and John Kempe, ed. A.H. Thompson.
Poulson, Beverlac	Beverlac; or the Antiquities and History of the Town of Beverley and of the Provostry and Collegiate Establishment of St. John's, by George Poulson.
Reg.	Register of
R.S.	Rolls Series.
S.S.	Surtees Society.
Test Ebor.	Testamenta Eboraceses, 6 vols.
Valor Ecclesiasticus	Valor Ecclesiasticus temp. Henrici VIII, auctoritate regia institutus, ed. J.Caley and J. Hunter, vol. v.
V.C.H.	Victoria County History.
Y.A.J.	Yorkshire Archaeological Society.
Yorkshire Chantry	Surveys. The Certificates of the Commissioners Appointed to survey the Chantries, Guilds, Hospitals, etc. in the County of York, ed. William Page.
Y.D.	Yorkshire Deeds.
York Fabric Rolls	Fabric Rolls of York Minster, ed. James Raine.
York Statutes	The Statutes, etc. of the Cathedral Church of York (Second Edition).

INTRODUCTION.

Notwithstanding his singular contribution to our knowledge of them, A. F. Leach professed little time for the canons of Beverley. Those who inevitably came to his notice as editor of the extant Chapter Act Book received, on the whole, unsympathetic handling, and a search for the identity of the remainder he roundly declared an unprofitable exercise.¹

In the near eighty years which have elapsed since then no one, so far as we are aware, has questioned his conclusion to the extent of translating disagreement into effort. The medieval collegiate church of St. John at Beverley remains, therefore, one of the few instances of its kind in which the compilation of a 'close catalogue' of the chapter has been neglected. Leach, indeed, subjected the provosts to lengthy and entertaining scrutiny, and his list of them has left little room for additions. It may be fairly argued, however, that, since it was the canons, not the provost, who alone presided over the Minster, their discovery is more relevant to a history of the church than that of a succession of exalted officials, who, not necessarily members of the chapter, for the most part held aloof from its affairs.

The problems involved in establishing a continuous succession to the eight prebends, to the vicarages associated with them, and to the three dignities, and also the measure of success achieved in this, are outlined in a separate introduction to the lists. In the chapters which now follow it has been our purpose to set the men who feature in these lists in the context of their church; first recounting something of the material and constitutional heritage upon which they entered.

The late medieval church of Beverley embodied within this heritage more traces of its Anglo-Saxon origins than, perhaps, any other comparable institution. The fame arising from its association with St. John of Beverley, the ordainer of Bede, the unusual benefactions and privileges attributed to Athelstan, notably the donation of thraeves, and the

¹. B.C.A., ii, pp.vii - viii.

constructive attentions of the last archbishops of the Old English succession, all exerted an abiding influence upon its ultimate constitution.

An introductory chapter recognises this indebtedness, and attempts to discern an element of fact in the numerous unsupported legends which surround these early years. A second sets the constitutional scene by describing the probable circumstances and considerations which brought into being the main institutions - chiefly the provostry, the prebends and the dignities - in the formative period which followed the Conquest.

Endowments came early to Beverley, and set limitations upon Norman innovation. It was almost certainly the complex and indivisible character of thraves, that extraordinary corn render from the parishes of the East Riding, and the awkward disposition of lands (not to mention tithes accruing from a single vast parish and the unpredictable offerings of the faithful), which inhibited the early introduction of a prebendal scheme. Instead, these factors prompted the appointment of a provost, whose task it was to relieve the canons of burdensome administration. The second part of this thesis is an examination of the nature and value of these assets.

Leach's treatment of the economy of the provostry is by no means exhaustive, nor is his description of the Bedern, which it was the chief purpose of the provost to sustain. Consideration of these institutions, together with an account of the prebends and the Grammar School (probably the Minster's best contribution to both Church and State), is the concern of Part III.

Here we hope to have established, in particular, the true and full character of Beverley's prebends, especially in view of Professor Hamilton Thompson's doubts regarding their reality. "The possessions of the canons," he wrote, "were regarded as one common prebend in which each canon possessed an annual dividend. The corpus of each prebendal share was regarded as consisting in the corrody of daily rations derived from the Bedern Although, in the course of time, thraves from certain

specified parishes were appropriated to some of the canons, the scattered nature of such property prevented the establishment of separate prebends with a fixed area."¹

The prebends were never, indeed, territorially based, but, in so far as each consisted of a fixed and inalienable portion of the church's assets, they were, nevertheless, prebends in the full sense. The partitioning of thraves, apart from those from the deanery of Holderness (which were retained by the provost), was both formal and total. So, also, was the allocation of tithes from the parish of Beverley, and most prebends drew modest rents from lands. The original apportionment, undertaken, we think, in the latter half of the twelfth century, in the primacy of Roger de Pont l'Évêque, persisted with remarkable stability up to the Dissolution, and it is our contention that Hamilton Thompson did less than justice to its clarity and completeness.

The method adopted for the concluding survey of the composition of the chapter, during the last three centuries of its existence, is outlined in a short preface in the text (pp. 205-206). It begins with the primacy of Archbishop Walter Gray, by which time the prebends were already supporting canons whose main business lay away from Beverley. Most of them were diocesan clerks, devoted to their bishop, and though subsequent vacancies in the see allowed the intrusion of royal servants, in the hundred years that followed this northern representation continued to predominate. In the Act Book period it supplemented a small residentiary group of similar background and outlook. The tenures of perpetual absentees, though numerous in such a small chapter, tended to be of short duration, and papal provisors were few and far between.

Prebends with diverse revenues, the major part bitterly contested by East Riding rectors and parishioners, cannot have been among the most attractive to clerks not at hand to collect their dues. There is no doubt that this, together with the demands of a cure of souls (which a prebend was held to involve), given a resolute archbishop, offered a deterrent

¹. V.C.H., Yorkshire, iii, p.354.

against unwelcome intruders.

The Papacy is frequently seen as the chief nominee of the latter. Contrary to what one might expect, however, the decline in papal power to make effective provisions seems not to have benefited the humbler diocesan clerk in his search for a prebend at Beverley. Indeed, admissions to the chapter in the late fourteenth century suggest that this left archbishops open to pressures from prevailing factions at home, which they were unable, or unwilling, to resist. They were pressures which scarcely favoured the powerless.

These same decades saw also, we think, a consolidation of prebendal incomes, consequent upon a solution, or abatement, of the problem of thraves. The effect of this was to draw the prebends more completely into the general market place of preferment, where competition virtually eliminated from the chapter the homely northern clerk of few benefices in favour of successful, well-placed, pluralists, who were, at best, resident at York, but more often, far away in the royal service.

In the absence of any recognised residentiary body at Beverley, of the kind which presided over York Minster, we can discover no co-ordinated scheme of residence. Probably none existed in these later years. In the fifteenth century, apart from an indeterminate representation of those able clerks who administered the see on behalf of their absent master, prebends were in the hands of men of whom no residence can have been anticipated. Though the former group no doubt kept a peripatetic surveillance over the church, little concern could be expected of prebendaries chosen on account of closeness to the seat of government, academic associations, or, not least, kinship with the archbishop of the day.

It is arguable that the default and neglect, so evident in the period approaching the Dissolution, was in tune with the climate of the times, but now Beverley was at a special disadvantage on account of its geographical situation. A certain remoteness, which had once helped to make it the ecclesiastical centre of an area equal to that of a small diocese, in later years, and in changed circumstances, rendered it

something of a backwater, a cul-de-sac into which, one imagines, only the purposeful ecclesiastic chose to enter.

The movement of this centre of gravity away from the great church, and the long, slow decline in care and concern on the part of its chief custodians which accompanied it, probably went unperceived by contemporaries. Nevertheless it helped to remove the last prebendaries far, both in spirit and in habit, from the early canons around their common board.

Sources.

Both primary and secondary sources consulted in this dissertation are listed in a separate bibliography. Books providing only general background have not been included unless they have thrown particular light upon the subject in hand. Sources most helpful in identifying clerks holding preferment at Beverley have received comment in the introduction to the Clergy Lists (pp.A.3-5), and their value has generally held good for the chapters which now follow.

Many of the primary sources relating to the medieval collegiate church have been published, not a few in the latter pages of Leach's edition of the Chapter Act Book. Among these is much of the Provost's Book, the manuscript of which remains in the custody of the Vicar and Churchwardens of Beverley Minster. Compiled, in part, by Simon Russell, the official of the provostry under Robert Manfield, in 1416/17, it also includes a wide variety of documents relating to the rights, assets and administration of the peculiar. One still has to consult the original, however, for the extensive rental of the provostry in areas beyond the bounds of the borough of Beverley, and for the complete list, by parishes, of the thraves due to the provost from the deanery of Holderness. The latter, featuring in a composition between a provost and the executors of his predecessor, offers conclusive proof^{of} the formality of the partitioning of thraves, with all the implications this had for the nature of Beverley's prebends. It has apparently been overlooked in all surveys of the church's constitution, with the exception of Poulson's

Beverlac,¹ where the subject is not pursued.

The Valor Ecclesiasticus (1535) lists in its pages the corn renders (now commuted to money payments) associated with all but one of the prebends. Its scattered entries, brought together, supply an almost complete coverage of the East Riding. The Taxatio Ecclesiastica auctoritate P. Nicholai iv, c.1291, records the value of the prebends a century after their creation, and invites comparison with figures of the Valor and of the Chantry Commissioners at the eve of the Dissolution.

Most unpublished manuscripts relating to institutions at Beverley reveal little information not already in print, and frequently turn out to be copies or variations of well-known documents. Such is not the case, however, of 'The Statutes Regulating the Vicars of Beverley approved by the Chapter on 15 November, 1462,' in Registrum Statutorum Ordinationumque ad ecclesiam collegiatum S. Johannis de Beverlaco spectantium in the Bodleian Library (MS. University College 82). Though holding no surprises, these at least give assurance of what one would otherwise have been left to assume.

More useful for an insight into life in the Minster precincts are isolated records of domestic transactions and wills. A collection of the former, made by William Brown, is included in vol. v of the Transactions of the East Riding Antiquarian Society, under the title 'Documents from the Record Office relating to Beverley'. A notable example of the latter is the will of Alan de Humbleton (d.1329/30), a senior vicar, printed with other interesting Beverley documents in Yorkshire Deeds (Record Series, vol. ix) by the Yorkshire Archaeological Society.

Two Fabric Rolls of the Minster survive. The earlier, for the years 1445-1446, was edited by Leach in the Transactions of the East Riding Antiquarian Society (vol. vi), and the other, for 1532, appears in Poulson's Beverlac. Both include the lengthy accounts of the manor of Bentley, the mainstay of the Fund in later years.

1. George Poulson, Beverlac; or the Antiquities and History of the Town of Beverley and of the Provostry and Collegiate Establishment of St. John's, pp. 596-600.

Constant reference has been made to the registers of the archbishops of York, from which important relevant entries (though by no means all) have been extracted by Leach for inclusion in the second volume of the Act Book. Acknowledgement of the continuing value of these and other sources, notably the Calendars of Papal Letters and Papal Petitions, and the Calendar of Patent Rolls, is made in the introduction to the Lists. To them must now be added Accounts Rendered by Papal Collectors in England, 1317-1378 (transcribed and introduced by W. E. Lunt, and edited, with additions, by E. B. Graves), a mine of information regarding the comings and goings of prebendaries in the fourteenth century.

By far our chief source is, of course, the Memorials of Beverley Minster: The Chapter Act Book of the Collegiate Church of St. John of Beverley A.D. 1286-1347 (Surtees Society, vols. 98 and 108), the editing of which by A.F. Leach has placed every student of Beverley in his debt. As arranged in chronological order by Leach its entries cover in detail only the years 1304-1330. Thereafter they become markedly sparser and more selective. This was precisely the period when John de Risingdon, one of the vicars, was auditor of the chapter. The reader is constantly reminded of the hand of this able and active official in many of the transactions recorded, and, regardless of the one-time existence of earlier and later act books, it is difficult not to associate the compilation of this particular collection with him.

Few records of its kind afford such detailed insight into every aspect of a church's life, or reveal so fully the preoccupations and anxieties of its personnel. Coming at a time when the constitution had long reached its ultimate form, but before the prebendaries, as a body, lost their lively, personal interest in the church, it leaves an image of collegiate life which remained valid throughout the later middle ages.

The ten turbulent years at Beverley which began in 1381 with the descent upon the chapter of Alexander Neville, and ended with the Statutes of Thomas Arundel, produced a spate of enlightening documents. These, and the Dissolution records, confirm the durability of forms and customs evident at the outset of the fourteenth century, and speak of an

institution substantially unchanged over the years. Yet without its relatively brief Act Book it is an institution which would surely have remained in the shadows.

We have found recently published accounts of the Minster on the whole unhelpful to our purpose. Most of them are of the nature of introductory handbooks, and none is substantial, apart, that is, from the dated work of Poulson. Professor Hamilton Thompson's survey in the Victoria County History, Yorkshire, vol. iii, is, of course, most authoritative, but is necessarily brief. Leach's introduction to the Act Book is always engaging, often at the expense of his subject, but it rarely probes deeply, and often with doubtful accuracy.

One of Leach's more kindly critics felt "that he tried to get too much done in too little time and error inevitably resulted."¹ No matter how numerous his errors, this particular charge, at least, cannot be levelled at the present writer. This dissertation has been seventeen years in the writing. That it should now have reached completion is due, in a very large measure, to a forbearing wife and family, the kindness and counsel of Professor H.S. Offler, the generosity of my former Bishop, Dr. J.R.H. Moorman, whose gift of a copy of the Chapter Act Book prompted its beginning, and, not least, to Mrs. K.E. Williamson who has typed it throughout.

¹. Mr. K.A. MacMahon, lately of the Department of Adult Education in the University of Hull.

I INTRODUCTORY



INTRODUCTORY (1) - THE PRE-CONQUEST CHURCH

Beverley, it is said, has been a hallowed place from the beginning of the eighth century. Tradition has it that it was there that the Blessed John, bishop first of Hexham and later of York, established a monastery, and that there he retired, having resigned his see, to die in 721.

Tradition it must remain, for Bede, recording what he knew of John's life, never mentions Beverley, referring to the site only as Inderauuda.

'In the beginning of the aforesaid reign',¹ he writes, 'Bishop Eata died, and was succeeded in the prelacy of the church of Hagulstad (Hexham) by John, a holy man, of whom those that familiarly knew him are wont to tell many miracles; and more particularly, the reverend Berthun, a man of undoubted veracity, and once his deacon, now abbot of the monastery called Inderawood, that is, In the wood of the Deiri.'²

Having recounted some of these miracles Bede concludes his chapters on the Saint thus:

'John continued in his see thirty-three years, and then ascending to the heavenly kingdom, was buried in St. Peter's Porch³ in his own monastery, called Inderawood, in the year of our Lord's incarnation 721. For having, by reason of his great age, become unable to govern his bishopric, he ordained Wilfred, his priest, bishop of the church of York, and retired to the aforesaid monastery, and there ended his days in holy conversation.'⁴

1. i.e. of Aldfrid, king of Northumbria from 685 to 704.

2. In silva Deirorum. Historia Ecclesiastica, ed. C. Plummer, v, 2.

3. Porticu - here presumably meaning a chapel. Folcard alters the dedication to that of St. John the Evangelist to whom Ealdred, his patron, had recently dedicated his new presbytery. (H.C.Y., i, p.260).

4. Historia Ecclesiastica, v, 6.

Apart from naming John's former deacon, Berthun,¹ as the first abbot Bede tells us nothing of the church or of the community which it sheltered. Possibly the monastery served also as a baptism church and a centre for evangelism, but this is mere supposition. The undeveloped nature of the surrounding terrain certainly supports the conclusion that the establishment of a retreat for the practice of the devout life was uppermost in the good bishop's mind.

Folcard, writing his Life of St. John in the mid-eleventh century at the request of Archbishop Ealdred, incorporated Bede's account, but substituted, without explanation, the name Beverley for Inderawood.² This, by then, was no unwarranted assumption, however, for a few years earlier Archbishop Aelfric Puttoc had with great ceremony translated the relics of St. John to a new and splendid shrine in another part of the Minster.³ Clearly the cult which now surrounded the Saint had long drawn pilgrims to the place, and his canonization in 1037 can only have followed many years of veneration by pious north-countrymen.

It is, unfortunately, impossible to relate with confidence the fortunes of John's church in the intervening centuries. Several terse accounts, all emanating in their existing form from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, purport to bridge, in part, the gap. In the absence of any indication as to their provenance, however, we must

1. The bones of Abbot Berthun were also treasured by the medieval clergy of Beverley. (B.C.A., i, pp. 313, 317).
2. H.C.Y., i, pp. 246, 260.
3. H.C.Y., ii, p.343. See also below, p.14 . An almost contemporary writ of Edward the Confessor of the period 1055 - 1064 declaring the archbishop of York to be the sole lord of Beverley under the king refers to 'St. John's minster at Beverley', and concludes "..... so as he will be safe as regards God and St. John and all those saints to whom the holy place is forehallowed" (E.Y.C., i, No. 87).

The D and E manuscripts of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (the former, at least, being of much the same period) both associate John with Beverley: for the year 721 they record that "In this year passed away the holy Bishop John, who was bishop thirty-three years, eight months and thirteen days: his body rests at Beverley". (The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. Tr. G.N.Garmonsway, p.43).

consign them to the realm of legend,¹ acknowledging only the possibility that some form of religious assembly maintained a faltering existence on the site throughout the Danish occupation.

Clearly, if we can believe two writers of the earlier twelfth century, William Kettel and Alured the Sacrist, the church was far from abandoned in 934. It was then, so they record, that the community received a visit from King Athelstan - an event thereafter regarded as inaugurating a new beginning at Beverley.

Whatever our assessment of the early accounts of Athelstan's visit the Beverley clergy of later years regarded the occasion as one of the greatest importance for their church, and saw in that King the true founder of the constitution and privileges of the Minster as they knew it.

1. The chief contributors to this unsupported tradition are (1) Simon Russell, a clerk of Beverley, writing in the Provost's Book in 1417. Having attributed the initial foundation, not to Bishop John, but to Lucius, "most illustrious King of Britain", in A.D.126, Russell continues: Et iterum renovate et fundate per predictum Beatum Johannem, Archiepiscopum Eboracensem, et in monasterium nigrorum monachorum sanctimonialium virginum, et aliorum diversorum ministrorum, vii. Presbiterorum secularium Deo servientium ordinate ac etiam iterum destructe per Paganos Hubbam et Ingwarum, Danos, filios Swayn, Regis Danorum; deinde reformatate et augmentate per illustrissimum Regem Anglie Adthelstanum, qui diversis privilegiis donis et beneficiis dictam ecclesiam dotavit. Et sic dotata honorifice remansit sub gubernatione vii. canonicorum regularium usque adventum Willelmi dicti Bastardi Conquestoris et Regis (B.C.A., ii, pp. 305 - 306). (2) The unknown sixteenth century compiler of an isolated document, De abbazia Beverlaci (MS. Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, No. 298). This source alleges that John adapted to his purpose an already existing parish church, and adds to the new community nuns headed by one "the Blessed Polfrida", together with "seven clerks, Levites" (doubtless an attempt to explain the existence of the seven clerks of the Barfell or Berefallerii. See below pp.329 - 335). Three abbots are named, taking the succession to 783. The church continued happily, however, for 146 years after its founder's death, i.e. until 867. In that year, it is said, the Danes massacred or scattered the inhabitants and burnt the buildings. Only the priests and clerks returned, three years later, to form the community which greeted King Athelstan in the next century. (B.C.A., ii, pp. 343 - 344). The whole sequence has great plausibility, and was accepted without query by both Leland (Collectanea, iv, Ex.1 parte; B.C.A., ii, p.348) and Dugdale (Monasticon, i, p.127).

All contemporary documents relating to the visit have disappeared, but it seems unreasonable to doubt that it ever took place. William Ketell¹ and Alured the Sacrist,² writing, as we have noted, in the first half of the twelfth century, describe it at length. Their accounts, which are doubtless much embroidered, concur in telling us that Athelstan made the diversion to St. John's Shrine whilst marching against the Scots and Danes. Alured tells us that the king, 'commending himself to the merits and protection of the glorious Confessor, the most holy John, vowed before ^{his} the altar that if by his patronage he returned a conqueror he would exalt his church with royal magnificence.' Victory gained, Athelstan, good as his word, returned to Beverley and, Alured continues, 'gave perpetual alms to St. John; namely four thraves from each plough throughout the whole of the East Riding for coulter and ploughshare'. At the instance of the archbishop, and with the assent of his earls, he also established the Peace of St. John within the space of one league around the church door.³

Ripon and Chester-le-Street, sheltering at this time the shrines of St. Wilfred and St. Cuthbert, shared in the royal munificence.⁴ If Sir Frank Stenton is right, Athelstan's pledges to these churches mark his progress towards the Border in the campaign of 934,⁵ but whether their fulfilment followed the success of this venture must remain an open question. It is possible that the gifts were actually made after the battle of Brunanburgh in 937, though general inference supports

1. H.C.Y., i, pp. 263-264.
2. Sanctuarium Dunelmense et Sanctuarium Beverlacense, pp. 98-99. ✓
3. ibid.
4. Memorials of Ripon, i, pp. 33-55, 89-93; E.Y.C., i, No. 114; Symeonis Dunelmensis Opera et Collectanea, i, pp. 64, 77, 149-150.
5. F. M. Stenton, Anglo-Saxon England (2nd Ed.), p. 338. Simeon of Durham supports this date as regards the visit to the shrine of St. Cuthbert (op. cit., 64). The king was at Winchester at the end of May, when he held a great court, by 7 June he was at Nottingham (E.Y.C., i, p. 5; Cartularium Saxonicum, ed. W. de G. Birch, pp. 702-703).

the earlier date.¹

We must accept the caution that medieval clerks found in Athelstan, 'who first of the English obtained the monarchy of all England', an attractive patron as proof against the cavils of Norman lawyers. On the other hand, as we shall see, post-Conquest writs in favour of Beverley make no reference to him, the Conqueror and his successors being satisfied to confirm privileges existing under Edward the Confessor.

The nature of the gifts themselves lend authenticity to the story of the visit. These were essentially royal donations. To commit the entire East Riding to the rendering of thraves to a local church in perpetuity, with any hope of fulfilment, required sanctions and the will and assurance of a very powerful man. Bearing in mind the subsequent history of the North it is difficult to find another likely donor of such grants.

It might be thought that Archbishop Ealdred, the last of the Old English succession and a notable benefactor of Beverley, was responsible for obtaining these privileges, were it not for an interesting explanation of the origin of thraves appended by Alured to his account of Athelstan's coming.² We gather that the thraves awarded to the Minster represented no new tax, for 'of a truth these were paid by the laws of former kings through the whole of the East Riding for the king's horses and messengers every year.'³ This, as the Meaux chronicler, who repeats the statement, makes clear, referred to the Scandinavian render of hestcornes, which, it would seem, was levied on Deira for the provender of the Danish army and officials.⁴

1. Simeon of Durham also associates the grants with the year 934 (loc.cit).

2. Sanctuarium, p.98.

3. ibid, pp.98 - 99. '.....Hoc in perpetuam elemosynam dedit Sancto Johanni, scilicet quatuor travas de unaquaque caruca per totum Austriding ad culturam et vomerem: si quidem ex priorum Regum statutis persolvebatur communiter per totum Austriding regiis equis et emissariis suis praedicta armoria (?) per singulos annos.'

4. Chronica Monasterii de Melsa, ed. E.A.Bond, ii, p.236 'Quae etiam fruges antiquitus hescornes vocabuntur'. This is an extremely early instance of the use of the plough as a unit of taxation.

Now Athelstan's campaign of 934 was launched partly with a view to destroying the last vestiges of Danish influence in the North, and after its successful conclusion hestcornes were presumably no longer required by the civil power. What more natural than that he should find a new recipient in the great local church in whose debt he stood? Certainly the king would have a splendid gift ready at hand for pious purposes, and we understand that Archbishop Wulfstan was capable of making timely suggestions.

Of the royal charters relating to the privileges of the Minster that of Stephen (1135/6) is the first to refer to the endowments of Athelstan,¹ but a writ of the later years of Henry I (c.1125 - 1135)² indicates that canons of Beverley were accustomed to collect thraves in the reigns of William I and William II. Writs of Edward the Confessor (of the period 1055 - 1064)³ and of William I (of the period 1066 - 1069),⁴ although they do not specifically mention these rights, at least imply that the Minster already enjoyed notable privileges.

The most interesting witness to the existence of Athelstan's charter, however, comes at the end of the thirteenth century. In 1289 Archbishop le Romeyn wrote to James, Cardinal Deacon of S.Maria in Via Lata, to account for his delay in awarding a prebend to an Italian papal provisor. He explained that on a recent visit to Beverley he had seen and perused the charter of the king of the English who had founded the church. It was written, he said, in the English tongue, and was couched in such terms as to be appalling to those who presumed to contravert it, and, in particular, [it allowed no place for alien absentees]⁵ There can be

1. E.Y.C., i, No. 99.

2. ibid, No. 97.

3. ibid, No. 87

4. ibid, No. 88.

5. Reg. Romeyn and printed in full B.C.A., ii, pp.156 - 157. 'Rex vero quidam Anglorum quondam sanctissimus in Dei honorem et venerationem B. Johannis archiepiscopi et confessoris specialiter dictam fundavit ecclesiam Super quibus dum locum ipsum jure ordinario personaliter visitavimus cartam prefati regis vidimus Anglica lingua conscriptum cuius sententia intuentibus est piissima et horribilis profecto presumentibus contra ipsam'.

no doubt as to which king the archbishop was referring, for in the following year, in a solemn ordinance regarding residence, he cited the original statutes of Athelstan, sometime illustrious king of England, founder of the aforesaid church.¹

Even if this document were a forgery it was almost beyond doubt of pre-Conquest origin, and proved adequate to deceive both archbishop and prebendaries at this later date. Certainly it was treasured by the chapter throughout the middle ages as the foundation of its privileges. In 1325, when the Minster's right to thraves was being hotly contested by influential East Riding rectors, this same charter was despatched by the canons to their fellow prebendary, William de Soothill,² who was pleading Beverley's cause at the King's court. Soothill was instructed to urge that the chapter be allowed to collect thraves as they had done 'for 400 years and more, that is, from the time of King Athelstan of happy memory, the donor of the said thraves'.³ Whether the charter impressed parliament as much as it had the archbishop we are not told, but since the collection of thraves continued undiminished we may conclude that its authenticity was capable of withstanding the sternest test.⁴

Close to the High Altar in Beverley Minster there still stands the ancient Frithstool or Chair of Peace. It occupied a similar place in Alured's day,⁵ and is far older than the church itself or anything else

1. B.C.A., i, pp.190 - 192 '.... Tam a jure communi quam praecipue ex constitutione seu ordinatione primaria Athelstani, quondam regis Angliae illustris, fundatoris ecclesiae praedictae S. Johannis, notorie debitam....'
2. For a biographical notice of Soothill see below, pp. A.202 - A.203.
3. B.C.A., ii, p.68.
4. It is unlikely that the dispute was resolved at this time. This was a troubled year at court: Queen Isabella had already departed for France, and tragedy was soon to end the reign of Edward II.
5. Sanctuarium, p.99 '.... Et Juxta altare sedem lapideam quae ab Anglis dicebatur Fridstol, id est pacis Cathedra, ad quam reus fugiendo perveniens omnimodam pacis securitatem habebat'.

in it. It is certainly of pre-Conquest date, as is indeed inferred by the Sacrist himself, and represents the best testimony to the antiquity of the Peace of which it was the centre. It is possible that a reference in the Chronicle of the Archbishops of York to Ealdred's confirmation of peace at Beverley alludes to the Peace of St. John, but a more natural interpretation is that it refers to that archbishop's ordering of the domestic affairs of the church.¹ If this is so, we have only twelfth-century evidence of the Old English origin of the privilege, apart, that is, from the witness of the chair itself. Ripon and Hexham, however, also looked to Athelstan as the founder of their Peace, and so lend support to Beverley's claim; certainly all three claims must stand or fall together. King Stephen's Charter affords the first extant recognition of Athelstan as the founder of Beverley's Peace,² though Pope Adrian's confirmation of it in 1154 is, perhaps naturally, silent on this point.³ This much is certain, the clergy and people of Beverley throughout the middle ages never doubted that such was the origin of the honour paid to their saint.⁴

Well might the clergy of the Minster at their daily chapter mass pray for the soul of King Athelstan, chief among their benefactors,⁵ and with reason might those who found sanctuary at Beverley be required to swear to be ready at his obit 'at the dirig^e, and the masse, at such tyme as it is done....for to offer at the masse on the morne'.⁶

1. H.C.Y., ii, p. 353.
2. E.Y.C., i, No. 99 'Presentis carte attestacione confirmo ecclesie Sancti Johannis de Beverlaco pacem suam infra leugam suam et ejusdem violate pacis emendacionem, sicut est a rege Alestano ipsi ecclesie collata et a ceteris Anglorum regibus confirmata'.^e
3. B.C.A., ii, pp. 254 - 255.
4. For Archbishop Melton on this subject in 1332, see Letters from Northern Registers, p. 362.
5. B.C.A., i, p. 241. 'In primis ordinatum est, quod missa capitularis, pro anima regis Adelstani et animabus omnium benefactorum huius Ecclessiae, cotidie cum nota, submissa voce, celebretur'. See also Archbishop Arundel's statutes (1391) B.C.A., ii, p. 272.
6. Sanctuarium, p. 111.

Clearly Athelstan was regarded in a real sense a founder, as well as a benefactor - founder, that is, of the basic collegiate constitution which endured up to the Dissolution. According to the letter of Archbishop le Romeyn, to which reference has already been made, the king established at Beverley seven priests in perpetuity receiving a daily diet of cooked food, and bound to strict personal residence.¹

We have been able to attach little importance to sixteenth-century sources when they speak of seven secular priests being attached to Bishop John's church, and of the return of their successors to Beverley after the Danish destruction. It must be said, however, that the well-known rhyming version of the alleged charter of Athelstan gives the impression that what the king did was to give formality and a rule to seven priests who were already there:

Be it alfre ay and ay
 be it almousend, be al fre,
 Wit ilke man and eek wit me;
 That will i (be him that me scop,)
 Bot til an Ercebiscop
 And til the seuen minstre Prestes
 That serues god thar Saint Johan restes.²

Whatever the truth of this, it is most unlikely that there was anything more than an informal assembly at Beverley in the years prior to Athelstan's coming; certainly there can scarcely have been any disciplined 'minster life' as it was understood in the following century. This being the case it is inconceivable, on a realistic view, that an immensely increased endowment was unaccompanied by a careful ordering of the recipients. All the later sources concur in this belief. Indeed the De abbatia document of the sixteenth century which has most to say of earlier priests at Beverley is the most emphatic in stating that Athelstan's actions constituted a new foundation. It asserts that the king, acting on the advice of Archbishop Wulfstan,

¹. B.C.A., ii, p.157 '.....Stabiliens inibi septem presbiteros perpetuos missas celebrantes, qui, in esculentis coctis et poculentis cotidianum victum recipientes, Deo dictoque confessori in loco ipso sub personali residentia officiosissime deservirent'.

². ibid, p.280.

'made and ordained' the collegiate church, establishing the seven priests as secular canons.¹

Simon Russell, writing in the Provost's Book a century earlier than this regrettably late manuscript implies much the same, adding simply that this constitution remained till the foundation of the provostry.² Certainly these statements accord well with the alleged original constitution as it was understood by Romeyn, and provide a satisfactory background to what we are told of the reforms of Archbishop Ealdred in the years before the Conquest.

Romeyn's careful reference to the canons' daily receipt of cooked food was obviously intended to underline, for the benefit of the cardinal, the fact that there was no place in Athelstan's foundation for absentees, let alone for aliens; but it also carries the implication that the clergy lived, or at least ate, in common. Communal living - the sharing of a single dormitory and refectory and a regular chapter - is what we should expect of canons at this time. This is what obtained at St. Paul's, London, for which alone a part of a pre-Conquest regula survives.³

1. ibid, p.344 'Adelstanus Rex anno regni sui xiii^o, qui est A.D. dccccxxviii^o, et a primeva fundatione abbacie Beverlaci cxxlvi annis, et a depositione Beati Johannis cxxvii^o, de consilio Wlstanti Eboracensis Archiepiscopi fecit et ordinavit ecclesiam Beverlacensem collegium, et statuit prefatis septem presbiteros fore decetero canonicos seculares, et habitum gerere canonicalem; septem vero clericos alium habitum convenientem, et eos statuit fungi officio Levitarum. This source clearly believed that Athelstan's grants followed the battle of Brunanburgh. For consideration of the last sentence see below p.329.
2. ibid, p.306. Russell here mistakenly gives the year of the foundation of the provostry as 1082, ten years earlier than is stated elsewhere.
3. A fragment of six chapters based on the Institutio Canonicorum of Amalarius of Metz, it is thought to represent a rule introduced in the tenth century, possibly by Theodred (Bishop of London from before 926 till after 950-951). 'This is the first and last glimpse of the community of St. Paul's before the Conquest; a group of canons living together, apparently in a dormitory and certainly in chapter and choir; but having other concerns too, jobs to perform in the world; and each having a stipend for his private needs.' C.N.L.Brooke in A History of St. Paul's Cathedral (ed. W.R. Matthews and W.M. Atkins), pp. 12-15. We shall have occasion to note the similarity between the Beverley and St. Paul's constitutions in more than one particular.

A disciplined common life for the clergy of their cathedrals and minsters was the aspiration of numerous bishops of the following century,¹ and the ideal certainly appears to have been realised at Beverley under the last Saxon archbishops. The records of their achievements at least imply that they found some similar, if imperfect, constitution on which to build.

As it is, for the tenth century we have to depend heavily upon the evidence of an archbishop writing three-and-a-half centuries later, and of a rhyming charter of c.1330 and of doubtful authenticity. But if Archbishop le Romeyn was faithfully describing an authentic charter (and the canons themselves in another context accepted his interpretation of it)² then we have here a clear indication of minster-priests living under a definite rule (i.e. canons)³ as early as any in England outside Canterbury⁴ and London.

Little or nothing is heard of Beverley and its church in the hundred years which followed Athelstan's visit. Alured tells us that the king had established the place as capital of East Riding,⁵ and Leland, enlarging on this, adds that it was during this time that it grew into a substantial town.⁶ It was as the chief port of the Riding, as a centre of trade, and as a resort of pilgrims that Beverley rose to prosperity in the tenth and eleventh centuries. It is no surprise to learn that

1. Frank Barlow, The English Church, 1000-1066, passim.

2. B.C.A., i, p.190; ii, p.166; and see above p.8.

3. For the origin and definition of the term 'canon' see K. Edwards, English Secular Cathedrals in the Middle Ages, pp. 1-5.

4. Archbishop Wulfred's early ninth-century ordinances for Christ Church, Canterbury, are exceptional (see Margaret Deansley, The Pre-Conquest Church in England, pp. 274-275). It is not suggested here that Beverley was unique in England, even at this early date. The injunctions of the Council of Aenham of c.1009 (Wilkins, Concilia, i, pp. 292-293), and the fifth and sixth codes of Ethelred (Laws of the Kings of England from Edmund to Henry I, pp. 80-81, 92, 93) suggest that moves to make acceptance of a rule general had a history stretching well back into the tenth century. Even so definite instances of a rule being enforced are very rare.

5. Sanctuarium, p.99.

6. B.C.A., ii, p.350.

the increased population called for the erection of two new chapels in the town, dedicated to St. Mary the Virgin and St. Thomas, attached constitutionally if not structurally to the Minster.¹

Obviously the cult of the Blessed John prospered, for the long silence is first broken by notice of his canonization, 'perhaps' promulgated by Pope Benedict IX, in 1037.² It was doubtless to mark this occasion that Archbishop Aelfric Puttoc, amid scenes of rejoicing and splendour, translated the relics of the Saint to a magnificent new shrine on 25 October of that year.³ It may have been pure coincidence, but it is attractive to think these memorable events were by way of centenary celebrations commemorating the good fortune of 937.

Aelfric, who came to the see of York in 1023, was the first of three archbishops who, bringing to an end, as they did, the Old English succession, lavished wealth and care on their four great Minsters. Their work at Beverley alone is a salutary reminder of the vitality of the Northern Church - indeed of the English church as a whole - in the pre-Conquest years. Aelfric inaugurated a period of building which must have transformed the old church. He began work on a new

1. ibid. What relation they bore, if any, to the chapels of these same dedications later attached to the prebends of St. Martin and St. Michael (B.C.A., i, pp. 57, 194-196; ii, p.335) is uncertain. Although Athelstan's alleged recognition of the two seems unlikely and premature (it was probably a tradition which developed gradually to combat the rising claims of Hull in the later middle ages), Beverley appears to have grown apace with the advent of more stable conditions. Archbishop Ealdred secured a fair for the town before the Conquest (H.C.Y., ii, p.354), and in 1121-1122 Henry I increased its duration from two to five days (E.Y.C., i, No. 94). At this latter time, in one of the oldest extant town charters, the merchants of Beverley are seen to have already formed their 'hansa' (ibid., No. 95).
2. Scarcely a person of whom the Blessed John would have approved.
3. H.C.Y., ii, p.343. Iste capsam auram et argento et lapidibus pretiosis opere incomparabili apud Beverlaci fabricari fecit et elevatum de sepulchro ligneo mirabili artificio insculpto pretiosum corpus gloriosi patris Sancti Johannis archiepiscopi, cum ingenti cleri plebisque exultatione, multis additis reliquiis in eam honorificentissime collocavit.

refectory and dormitory,¹ but died in 1051 with the work unfinished. It was continued under his successor Cynsige (1051 - 60) who, besides furnishing the church with books and ornaments, also built a lofty stone tower housing two bells.²

The greatest work, however, was accomplished during the primacy of Ealdred (1061 - 69), who came to York from Worcester and for a short time held both sees together. Not only did he complete the refectory and the dormitory but he was also responsible for the erection of a magnificent presbytery, which he dedicated to St. John the Evangelist. Like the king's daughter it was all glorious within. He covered the whole church from the presbytery to the tower of Cynsige with a painted and gilded ceiling, and installed at the entrance to the choir a magnificent bronze pulpitem of Teutonic workmanship, with a rood above. Flanked with arches and embellished with gold and silver, the chronicler of the archbishops could only marvel at its splendour.³

All this was presumably brought to nothing by catastrophes which befell the fabric at the end of the twelfth and beginning of the

1. ibid, p.353, where it is said of Ealdred: 'Nam refectorium, et dormitorium, Beverlaci a predecessore suis Alfrico et Kinsio inceptum fuerat, sed ipse perfecit'. See also Leland in B.C.A., ii, p.351.
2. ibid, p.344. 'Kinsius ad ecclesiam Sancti Johannis apud Beverlacum turrim lapideam excelsam adjecit, et in ea duo praecipua signa posuit, et ipsam ecclesiam libris et ornamentis ornavit'.
3. ibid, p.353. 'Veterem quoque ecclesiam adjecto novo presbyterio ampliavit, quod in honore Sancti Johannis Evangelistae dedicavit, totamque ecclesiam a presbyterio usque ad turrim ab antecessore suo Kinsio constructam, superius opere pictoris, quod caelum vocant, auro multiformiter intermixto mirabili arte constravit. Supra ostium etiam chori pulpitem opere incomparabili, aere, auro argentoque fabricari fecit, et ex utraque parte pulpiti arcus, et in medio supra pulpitem arcum eminentiorem crucem in summitate gestantem, similiter ex aere, auro, et argento, opere Theutonico fabrefactos erexit.'

thirteenth centuries.¹ More lasting were the constitutional reforms initiated by Ealdred and in part implied by the completion of the new domestic offices. Unfortunately, the Chronicle of the Archbishops, our most reliable source, does not specify the changes which he made. We are simply told that he improved the customs of the church, 'tightened discipline', especially in the matters of observance and dress, and, it would seem, restored peace and order in and around the precincts.²

Professor Barlow credits Ealdred with endowing prebends at York, Beverley, Ripon and Southwell.³ All that we know of Ealdred's background and capacity for innovation brings this well within the bounds of possibility. He had travelled widely, and was conversant with continental customs. During his year's sojourn with Archbishop Herman of Cologne he had studied first-hand the constitutions of the Rhineland churches, and, we are told, had committed them to memory so that he might apply

1. On 22 September, 1188, a fire of the first magnitude swept Beverley, devastating at least part of the Minster; almost certainly the East end suffered most. Having recorded Aelfric Puttoc's translation of St. John's relics Leland tells us that 'Hec scriptura inventa postea in theca reliquarium S. Johannis. "Anno D.1188, mense Septembr: combusta fuit eccl: S. Johannis in sequenti nocte post festum Mathei apostoli"' (B.C.A., ii, p.350). This is presumably to be distinguished from an early inscription on a piece of lead found in a vault in 1664, recording the fact that, nine years after the fire, a search was made for St. John's relics and that it was then that they were discovered (K.A.Macmahon, The Pictorial History of Beverley Minster, p.8).

Some 25 years later (c.1213) a heightening of the tower of Cynsige by Norman builders resulted in the collapse of the whole structure, and once again destroyed the choir, which had then to be moved to the nave. An anonymous collector of the miracles of the St. John records a graphic account of the calamity which seems to have prompted the building of the present church. (H.C.Y., i, pp.345 - 347).

2. '..... et consuetudinibus ammelioravit; siquidem sicut intra ecclesiam ita intra rectorium, et sicut intra atrium ita infra claustrum rectorii, pacis securitatem et violatae pacis emendationem confirmavit' (H.C.Y., ii, p.353).
3. Barlow, op. cit, p.89.

them to English churches on his return.¹ Few pre-Conquest bishops can have been in a better position to anticipate their Norman successors in the introduction of the prebendal system than was Archbishop Ealdred, the most distinguished ecclesiastical administrator of his day.²

In fact, however, the chronicler of the archbishops mentions only the introduction of prebends at Southwell during his primacy,³ and it is certainly odd that he should have singled out this one church if similar arrangements were effected at the other three. The prebendal system certainly did not commend itself to Old English churchmen generally, and there is no evidence to suggest that they adopted it on any noteworthy scale. In this connection, therefore, it would be unwise to assume anything more than this, our best source for the period, tells us, especially as there are other strong reasons for believing that its omissions were not oversights.

In the case of Ripon, where there were ultimately only seven prebends, we know that those of Sharow and Stanwick were founded by Archbishops Thurstan and Gray respectively,⁴ and Domesday's record of the canons holding fourteen bovates suggests that at that time they held them in common.⁵

Hugh the Chanter pronounces Archbishop Thomas I the founder of the prebendal system at York.⁶ He clearly indicates that in the

1. Et quia in conciliis et tractatibus regni magnae prudentiae et multae erat strenuitatis, cum ingentibus exennis ad imperatorem Allemanniae regis Edwardi fungitur legatione. A quo simul et Heremanno Coloniensi Archiepiscopo magno susceptus honore per annum integrum cum eis commoratus, multa quae ad honestatem ecclesiasticae observantiae, multa quae ad rigorem ecclesiasticae disciplinae pertinent audivit, vidit, et memoriae commendavit, quae postea in ecclesiis Anglorum observari fecit. (H.C.Y., ii, p.345).
2. See H.C.Y., i, pp.241 - 242, ii, pp.344 - 354; Florence of Worcester, Chronicon ex chronicis, ed. B.Thorpe, pp.203 - 218; W.H.Dixon, Fasti Eboracenses, pp. 138 - 146; Barlow, op.cit, pp. 86 - 90 et passim.
3. Terras multas de suo proprio emit et eas ecclesiis suis adjecit, et de quibusdam praebendas apud Suthwellam fecit. (H.C.Y., ii, p.353).
4. Memorials of Ripon, i, pp. 93 - 95; Lucius Smith, The Story of Ripon Minster, p.65.
5. Memorials of Ripon, i, p.46. 6. Hugh the Chanter, ed. C.Johnson, p.71.

first years after the Conquest the canons lived together, and that the dormitory was repaired to enable them so to do. He further implies, what we might reasonably assume, that with the creation of prebends they foresook the dormitory, which in any case became inadequate as numbers increased. Norman innovation along the lines of the customs already accepted in northern France is sufficient to explain the change at this time, for it occurred at the other secular cathedrals in the post-Conquest decades. Hugh hints, however, that at York it was partly prompted by the impoverishment of the estates after William had taken vengeance on the North, the enterprise of individual prebendaries being thought the best means of restoring them to prosperity.¹

For Beverley we have the testimony of an account of the creation of the provostry in 1092 which asserts that at that time the canons still held their lands in common. This has all the appearance of having originated from a much earlier document which has been written into the Provost's Book by its compiler Simon Russell in 1417.² We are informed that Archbishop Thomas I's foundation of the provostry arose from the frequent disputes between absent and residentiary canons regarding the burden of administering chapter endowments.³

1. Annis pluribus canonicis communiter sic vescentibus, consilio quorundam placuit archiepiscopo de terra sancti Petri, que multum adhuc vasta erat, singulis prebendas partiri; ita enim et canonicorum numerus crescere posset, et quisque, sicut per se, partem suam studiosius et edificaret et excoleret. Quod et sic factum est (loc. cit).
2. B.C.A... ii, pp. 332 - 334.
3. Huius itaque patris temporibus, residentibus itaque quibusdam Beverlacensis ecclesie canonicis et quibusdam in remotis agentibus, suborta est sepius inter eosdem canonicos et alios in eadem ecclesia beneficiatos questionis materia, quis eorum in dominicis ecclesiis et circa ea que adhuc illis erant communia pro communi operas daret, et ea singulis, prout res exigebat, fideliter ministraret (ibid, p.332).

In subsequent centuries there were frequent quarrels and misunderstandings on the question of an absentee's right to his corrody in the Bedern, but at this time the issue involved more than the sharing of the common fund or daily entitlement. This is made clear in the account, quite apart from the fact that the new provost was given charge of all the church's temporal assets outside the precincts. The latter's functions were apparently identical to those of ^{the}provost established at York by the same archbishop prior to the foundation of prebends.¹ At York the office passed away when the change was made, but at Beverley the complex problem of thraves ensured its continued usefulness.

Mr. Leach has questioned the accuracy of this record, and has gone so far as to dub it a legend.² More will be said of this in the context of the provostry, but it must be said here that there seems no good reason for rejecting its evidence, either as regards the provostry or the canons. It is unlikely that Russell, with all his faults, would be unaware of the origin of the major dignity of his church, which we may reasonably assume was well documented. Indeed he appears to have had before him some such evidence; how else could he have been in a position to list the livestock handed over to the provost?³ Medieval chroniclers are often accused of exaggerating the antiquity of their churches and constitutions, and it is therefore novel to find one of their harshest critics dismissing one of his culprits for not so doing. Russell's account, if accepted, as we think it should be, not only rules out Ealdred as the founder of prebends at Beverley, but puts their establishment back to the closing years of the twelfth century at the earliest.

1. Hugh the Chanter, loc.cit.

2. B.C.A., i, pp.xxxvii-xlii; ii, p.332.

3. ibid, p.334.

Circumstantial evidence supports this conclusion. The scattered yet substantial fragments of the Southwell estates were certainly more amenable to partition than were the thraves and more localised lands of Beverley. Here the unusual endowments were, if anything, an obstacle to the creation of prebends, and they almost certainly inhibited the founding of new ones in later years. Furthermore, the persistence of Ealdred in the construction of a new dormitory argues strongly against the break-up of communal living at precisely the time of its completion.

There was never any question of this building proving inadequate, as was the case at York after the Conquest, for the number of canons at Beverley remained unchanged at seven throughout the period. Even after the introduction of prebends it was only increased by the addition of one inferior prebendary.¹ If poverty were ever a motive for the creation of a prebendal system elsewhere it can scarcely have been pressing at Beverley in the time of Ealdred, for we gather that these were years of unwonted prosperity for both church and town. Nor was this ended by the vengeance of the Conqueror, since Beverley appears to have escaped the 'Harrying of the North' which ruined the church of York.²

Ealdred almost certainly left his mark on the constitution of church no less than on its structure, but 'improvement' of its customs rather than a wholesale re-organisation seems to have been the keynote of his work. No doubt Beverley received a version of the principles laid down by Chrodegang of Metz or, perhaps more likely, of the Institutio Canonicorum of Amalarius, with which Ealdred must have been well acquainted.

1. See below, p. 113.
2. One of the anonymous collectors of miracles gives a lengthy account of Beverley's immunity, attributing to the intervention of the Blessed John (H.C.Y., i, pp. 265-269). Perhaps the sons of Sweyn and the Danish fleet which 'lay' all winter in the Humber, where the king could not reach them' (A.S.C., D. 1068), also contributed to the deliverance.

It has been necessary to dwell at this length on the achievements of Ealdred's primacy because our sixteenth-century sources concur in crediting the archbishop with founding much more than the seven major prebends. The De abbatia...¹ manuscript, followed by Leland,² places the whole of the finalising of the later medieval constitution, with the exception of the establishment of the provostry, in the pre-Conquest period. Aelfric, it is said, first appointed the three officers, i.e. a sacrist, a chancellor and a precentor; whilst Ealdred founded the eighth as well as the major prebends, housing their occupants in separate prebendal mansions in 1064, with a vicar allotted to each.³

This is too much. The claim to Old English antiquity for the officers and vicars is so unlikely to be well founded as to undermine confidence in the other statements regarding the foundation of the prebends.

The origin of these lesser posts - the officers were always much inferior to the prebendaries - must be left for another chapter. Suffice it here to say that evidence is not lacking to show not only that their creation was of a much later date, but also that they were not instituted at the same time, with the implication that they could

1. B.C.A., ii, pp. 344 - 345.

2. ibid, p. 351.

3. A.D. millesimo xxxvii^o canonizatus est Beatus Johannes tempore Johannis Pape xxmi et eodem anno translatus est per Alfricum tunc Eborum Archiepiscopum, per quem etiam eodem anno ordinati sunt primo in ecclesia Beverlaci custos ecclesie, cancellarius et Precentor.

A.D. millesimo lxiiv^o Aldredus, Eborum Archiepiscopus, statuit prefatos septem canonicos Beverlaci, qui usque tunc cum suis clericis et aliis ministris in uno refectorio et dormitorio infra Bedernam simul conversabantur et cohabitabant, ut de cetero haberent extra Bedernam singulas mansiones prebendales, in quibus ad libitum habitarent. Et eodem anno constituit et ordinavit supradictos septem canonicos habere sub se singulos vicarios; et eodem anno ordinavit idem pater octavum canonicum cum suo vicario (ibid, pp. 344 - 345).

not possibly be all the work of one archbishop.¹ Moreover in this respect it is unlikely that Beverley anticipated developments at the mother church of York where it is quite clear that they were of post-Conquest origin.

Thus the Minster at Beverley reached the better documented Norman era with a long history behind it. We have found no good reason for rejecting the tradition of the Blessed John's association with the place, but have shared the view of later medieval writers that Athelstan, two centuries later, was the true founder of the collegiate constitution. The most permanent contribution of Archbishop Ealdred was to improve on this, but, we believe, he left the formalising of the later medieval system to his post-Conquest successors. How and when this was accomplished will be considered in the chapters which follow.

¹. See below, p. 46.

INTRODUCTORY (2)

POST-CONQUEST DEVELOPMENTS.

The immediate impact of the Conquest upon the Church of Beverley was less than the wider events of those first turbulent years might lead us to believe. Remoteness from the mainstream of events preserved the Minster and its clergy from major repercussions, and the continued presence of Archbishop Ealdred ensured a measure of stability, not only for Beverley, but for all his churches in the first aftermath.

Peace and continuity for the Northern Church were Ealdred's main concern in the months remaining to him.¹ He secured, apparently without difficulty, the Conqueror's recognition of his own primatial rights and those of his see,² and also the ancient titles and privileges of the great minsters upon which he had lavished so much attention.

The Church of St. John was confirmed in its possessions, not only as they had existed in the days of Edward the Confessor, but also in Ealdred's more recent endowments.³ So far from suffering deprivation the Minster, if we accept Leland's record, actually gained the addition of the church of Sigglesthorn at the hands of William himself.⁴

Even in 1069 the canons' lands, though by no means unscathed by the Harrying of the North, appear to have been spared the full impact of a disaster that laid waste so much of the diocese. Indeed both the town and church of Beverley, in complete contrast to the fate of York,

1. He lived until 11 September 1069 - just long enough to see the destruction of the Church of York, together with much of the city, in the northern rising (Hugh the Chanter, ed Charles Johnson, pp1, 11; F.M.Stenton, Anglo-Saxon England, pp 594 - 595).
2. E.Y.C., i, No. 12
3. Ibid, Nos. 88, 89
4. Gulielmus 1 dedit Siglesthorn ecclesiae Beverlaci, et praecepit ne eius exercitus ecclesiam Beverlac laederet (Lel. Coll.iii, p.103. See also B.C.A., ii, p.351).

survived untouched the calamity and the troubles which occasioned it.¹ Only in the matter of thraves, rendered as they were by the whole of the East Riding, did the canons share fully in the disaster. We can only conjecture the loss, but so great was the ruination of the countryside at large that it is difficult to see how the payment of thraves continued, at least during the ensuing decade, as an appreciable source of income.

The effects of the Conquest upon Beverley are evident, therefore, only in the longer term. Then they were constitutional, rather than material, in character.² The re-ordering of the Minster along lines familiar on the continent, bringing into being the organisation which persisted with little change up to the Dissolution took place in the hundred years which followed. With the exception of the fifteenth century record of the institution of the provostry, however, we have no account of how the changes were effected or of the occasion for them: we are left to make a "before and after" comparison.

The Minster which entered this period was, we believe, essentially Athelstan's church, supporting the communal life of seven canons, invigorated by the recent reforms of Archbishop Ealdred. It emerged, at first dimly, in the latter half of the twelfth century with a constitution, which, though it bore more than most collegiate churches the marks of its earlier state, can only have been based upon some sort of prebendal system, with a provost in charge of a major part of its temporal concerns.

1. For consideration of the effects of the Harrying as revealed in the Domesday Survey see below, p. 55. Whether Beverley itself owed its good fortune to the Conquerors' favour (the destruction of York was not directly his doing), the miraculous intervention of the Blessed John - as local folk believed (H.Y.C., i, pp.265 - 269) - or the presence of the large Danish fleet in the Humber (see above, p.10 n.1; ASC, p.204) we do not know. Since the latter was presumably sustained by more than fish during its prolonged stay in the Estuary it is conceivable that much of the 'waste' on the northern banks and in Holderness found in the Survey of 1086 is attributable to Scandinavians rather than Normans.
2. That is, apart from a partial rebuilding of the church itself: small but certain evidence remains in the fabric of the present church of a complete reconstruction of the nave within the Norman period. No matter of urgency, it doubtless awaited the turn of the century.

In order to set the scene for an account of the institutions and clergy of the Minster in the later middle ages we must, therefore, conclude this introductory survey with a consideration of

- (a) the foundation of the provostry
- (b) the emergence of prebends
- (c) the establishment of the "offices" of Sacrist, Chancellor and Precentor.

(a) The foundation of the provostry.

Simon Russell's fifteenth-century account of the creation of the medieval provostry has been alluded to at some length on an earlier page.¹ Whatever reservations we may hold regarding details in his record as a whole, we find no good reason for rejecting either 1092 as the date of its foundation or the alleged circumstances which made it expedient.

How great a novelty was the office of provost in the closing years of the eleventh century? Mr. Leach argued that it represented nothing new, to the extent that the whole notion of its post-Conquest creation is unnecessary, and Russell's evidence fanciful legend.² It is true that a provostship, normally financial in function, was commonplace in continental cathedrals, and that such an institution must have been known to Archbishop Ealdred. Like prebends, however, both title and office seem never to have commended themselves to the Anglo-Saxon Church.³ Certainly no hint of a provost anywhere in the northern church occurs prior to the coming of the first Norman archbishop.

This is not to say that some less dignified official, responsible directly to the canons, did not already exist, but the distinction is not

¹. Above, pp.18 - 19.

². B.C.A., i. pp xxxvii - xxxviii.

³. A. Hamilton Thompson, The Cathedral Churches of England, pp. 18 - 19.

merely a question of title, but rather one of status and independence.¹ The difficulty at Beverley lies in our complete ignorance as to how the pre-Conquest canons conducted their temporal affairs. We do not know, for instance, whether one of the canons performed the duties usually associated with a monastic cellarer. Clearly, subordinate officials must have operated some system of realising and disbursing revenues, but there is no suggestion that anyone but the canons themselves was ultimately responsible.

As prosperity returned to the Minster estates, and the revival of agriculture throughout the Riding restored the value of thraves (and hence the opposition to them in the parishes²) the burden of administration must have become considerable, especially if, as is alleged, some of the canons were absent.

We need not suppose that absenteeism at this stage was the problem it later became. In the closely-knit community of a small chapter the prolonged, even legitimate, absence of a single canon, reaping where he had not sown, was likely to cause friction.³ What was clearly needed was a semi-independent structure of administration, not necessarily radically different in character from what may already have existed, but finding its identity in a single official apart from the chapter.

We will do less than justice to Thomas de Bayeux, the first Norman

1. This implied a profound constitutional departure, and we must reject Leach's assertion that "It required no special incident to give rise to the introduction of a Provost at Beverley when one had already been established at York....." (B.C.A., i. p.xli).
2. We may suppose that the Conquest, bringing newcomers in its wake, and the depopulation of the Harrying, required a forceful re-assertion of this imposition in a much changed society.
3. It happens that the only canon of Beverley known to us by name from the eleventh century (Richard de Maton - see below p.A31) appears as an absentee in this very decade, the archbishop having found wider use for him. (Priory of Hexham, i. p.50).

archbishop, if we see him as an innovator bent on introducing, for their own sake, forms familiar to him. His introduction of a provost at York was, as we have noted, a response - in the event a temporary one - to a pressing need. So at Beverley we should see nothing more than a practical solution intended to facilitate, rather than to modify, the communal life of the canons.

Perhaps we ought to avoid placing any great emphasis on the personage and personal activity of the provost, and see him rather as the figurehead he was probably from the outset intended to be. Thomas appointed to the office his nephew, also Thomas, who himself became archbishop in 1109.¹ He and almost all his successors were men of wider, even national, significance. Their prolonged absence from Beverley is scarcely to be wondered at, for none of them accords well with on-the-spot supervision of remote estates. What, we believe, was required of them was status and reputation to command loyalty of lesser men, influence to represent their church's interests in high places and stature to provide an ultimate, if distant, sanction against reluctant payers of thraves. The provost in short was "a name to contend with", intended to be the focal point of a partially detached administration, rather than active agent.² The emoluments for these services, however, were not out of keeping with such dignity.

A detailed description of the provost's association with the chapter properly belongs to an account of the resources and administration of the provostry.³ In any case it was an evolving relationship, by no means permanently fixed in 1092, being considerably modified by new circumstances

1. B.C.A., ii, p.333; and see below p.A9.

2. The key figure in administration in the period of the Act Book was the Official of the Provostry, whose office probably existed from the outset.

3. Below, pp.134 - 142.

as prebends gained formality. Suffice it, at this point, to say that in the office of provost were vested the lordship and temporalities of the Liberty of St. John, with jurisdiction, temporal and spiritual, of its several parishes; oversight of the management of the manors of the Minster; the collection of the whole (we think, initially) of thraves throughout the East Riding¹; the ordering of the Bedern and its staff, involving the sustenance and other entitlements of the canons and lesser clergy; and the appointment of the sacrist, chancellor and precentor (as and when those offices were instituted) and of sundry other figures, including the seven clerks of the Berfell.²

On the other hand jurisdiction over clerks wearing the habit of the Minster was reserved to the chapter, in which the provost held no place in right of his provostry. Nor was he accorded a stall in the choir, and at no time did his authority and responsibility run to the internal ordering of the Minster itself - always the jealously guarded preserve of the canons in chapter. In short, as Russell puts it, the provostry was a dignity "not in but of the church."³

Moreover the rights and status of the canons were upheld by the arrangement that, though the provost was the nominee of the archbishop, it was the chapter which admitted him, received his oath and granted him seisin of the Bedern and manors of the church.⁴

1. Below, pp. 33 - 34, 39 - 41.

2. Below, pp. 121 - 122.

3. Verum, ut idem Prepositus et successores sui predicti circa communem utilitatem in bonis dicte ecclesie liberius et opportunius vacarent, operas darent, canonicos aliosque ecclesie ministros perpetuis futuris temporibus debite procurarent, dictam Preposituram Beverlacensem fore statuit non in set de ecclesia dignacione, unde nec stallum in choro nec locum in capitulo eidem Preposito eiusve successoribus Prepositis, qui pro tempore fuerint, appropriavit, nec etiam assignavit (B.C.A., ii, p.333).
In later years the provost normally found a place in chapter and choir as a prebendary.

4. B.C.A., ii pp.333 - 334.

Though anachronisms in the conduct of the Bedern, together with ambiguities of jurisdiction, were from time to time sources of friction, on the whole the general scheme worked well enough to survive the outbursts which occasioned its modification. The provost himself held aloof from ordinary administration,¹ the dignity of the chapter being satisfied by the issuing of imperious demands for his appearance before convocation, and his own by invariably ignoring them!

Once allowance is made for the posturing and overstated sense of outrage of official documents, the underlying impression conveyed by the later Act Book is one of mutual understanding and co-operation between the officials of both parties. It was, after all, these competent lesser men, nurtured in the affairs of their church and its locality, who effectively worked this unusual system, which by then ran in well-worn grooves.

1. We should view with misgiving the so-called Ordinance of the Refectory which the chapter of 1381 had occasion to produce in rebuttal of the claims of Alexander Neville. It affords a primitive picture of the provost presiding at a common board in the Bedern with the seven senior canons and their eighth inferior brother around him, each sitting in the place occupied by his predecessors (B.C.A., ii, p.250). Attributed to the late twelfth century (Leach, B.C.A., i, p.1) it can then only have recalled an ideal, which, even in earlier times, cannot have held much reality apart from exceptional occasions.

The detachment of the provost from the affairs of his church receives astonishing confirmation in the record of Archbishop Melton's visitation of the Minster in 1325. Though himself provost for the nine years preceding his consecration (1308 - 17) he displayed extraordinary ignorance of both the constitution, revenues and personnel of the Minster. (B.C.A., ii, pp. 56 - 60).

(b) The emergence of prebends.

It is not possible, at Beverley, to speak of the establishment of prebends, as though they were created by a single ordinance, or even as a matter of preconceived policy. The constitutional development of the Minster, and the character of the prebends which it brought into being, are both without parallel in the English Church. To attempt to understand what happened by reference to better documented establishments would therefore be wholly misleading. Beverley's prebends as they existed at the time of the Act Book evolved by stages under the pressure of circumstances, dictated by the peculiar nature of the church's endowments.

A further difficulty lies in the lack of precision we give to the term prebend. It is used, now as then, with equal ease and lack of explanation, to describe both the entitlement of a canon and its source. When the latter is implied, a fixed and distinct section of the endowments is assumed, and since the latter lay normally in lands a prebend is usually taken to mean a defined territorial unit yielding revenues inalienable from a particular canonry.

In its basic and primitive meaning, however, a prebend was the "provender" of a canon, that is, his daily distribution of food originating from a common source.¹ This recalls the early days of a common refectory. At York the nature of territorial endowments made it possible for Thomas de Bayeux to make the transition from the common board to a normal land-based prebendal system in a single step. At Beverley, on the other hand, such a course was not only unnecessary at this stage but also impractical on account of the church's unusual revenues. Instead, the growth of prebends with an independent identity was allowed to evolve over the ensuing century, often by giving formality to what had already become accepted practice.

¹. A. Hamilton Thompson, The Cathedral Churches of England, pp. 19-20; see also the same author's The English Clergy and their Organization in the Later Middle Ages, pp. 77-78.

So far as we can tell the creation of the provostry was Archbishop Thomas' only constitutional adjustment at Beverley, and it came in the latter part of a lengthy episcopate. He had found there an already venerable and wealthy church in reasonably good heart - one with which no prudent newcomer would gratuitously wish to tamper.

He found, too, seven canons, perhaps of no great eminence, but of great significance and influence in a district distant, as the East Riding has always tended to be, from the mainstream of events. So long as their number remained at seven the recently completed dormitory and refectory must have seemed more than adequate for the foreseeable future. The date of origin of the eighth inferior canonry is uncertain, but we may be sure that no substantial enlargement of the chapter was even envisaged.¹ Since the minster estates were not readily divisible, and with thraves at a low ebb after the recent troubles, there can have been neither reason nor opportunity for either increasing the number of canonries or for altering the status of those which already existed. Everything, we think, militated against change, and confirms us in the view that the services of a provost were calculated to maintain, rather than modify, the continuity of 'minster life'.

One of the prime functions of the provost was to ensure that the canons and their subordinates received a carefully stipulated round of meals in the common hall, and the general assumption was that they would all be present to receive and eat them together. What line Archbishop Thomas took regarding alleged absenteeism we do not know, but, if the case of Richard de Maton is recalled,² authorised absence must have been anticipated. Certainly it was not penalised in the so-called Ordinance of the Refectory which affords our only account of communal eating.³ No doubt it was

1. The eighth canon, who later became the prebendary of St. Katherine's Altar, had no place in chapter, and was sustained almost solely from the offerings at the Shrine of St. John (see below, p. 113)

2. See above, p. 26 n3.

3. B.C.A., ii pp 249-252; see below p.A.31.

accepted from the outset of the new regime that the daily 'corrody in the Bedern', as it was officially called, could be commuted to a money payment in special circumstances.

The forsaking of the dormitory and refectory for individual canons' residences must have been an early temptation, however, and whenever it became normal practice - probably by the mid-twelfth century - its natural consequence would be to make money payments customary.¹ At Beverley this was undoubtedly the first, and natural, step in giving formal independent identity to what was later recognised as the corpus of the prebend.

During this period, on the other hand, this allowance, whether in money or kind, probably continued to represent the full extent of a canon's receipts. So long as it did so we can accept the view that the provostry in fact constituted a single huge prebend, similar to that of Combe in Wells with its fifteen portionaries, in which each canon had an equal share.²

Change came slowly at Beverley, no major variation in this early ordering of things occurring in the first sixty years of the provostry - or so we conclude from admittedly general observations.

The most eloquent testimony to the persistence of primitive forms is the fact that Archbishop Murdac was only prevented by his death in 1153 from introducing the Augustinian Rule at Beverley.³ Such a step would be scarcely conceivable had the canons become entrenched in an independent style of living, especially if this had gained the formality associated with prebends. It may be that this archbishop, an austere Cistercian, found his prolonged sojourn in the Minster precincts congenial, not merely as haven from troubles at York, but on account of the simpler life led by his canons there.

1. In collegiate life, however, tenure of private apartments has never necessitated eating in solitude, and there are no grounds for believing that canons in residence ever gave up the practise of "dining in hall", as a matter of convenience if not of obligation.
2. V.C.H. Yorkshire, iii, p.354
3. M. D. Knowles, Monastic Order in England, p.256

There is no need to assume, in this instance at least, that Murdac was high-handed in his purpose, or that such a course "would inevitably have raised a hornet's nest".¹ The distinction between secular canons, even when they led a communal life, and regulars was, of course, clear enough, but at Beverley, and indeed elsewhere, there are reasons for believing that in spirit and aspiration it remained narrower than was to become the case by the end of the century.

Some years earlier, in the primacy of Archbishop Thurstan, the provost and canons granted away half their thraves in the parishes of Bridlington and Hunmanby to the Augustinians of Bridlington Priory, in whose alms they were to share to the amount of one mark. Each church was to remember the other's dead in its prayers, and to this compact Thurstan gave his blessing in the warmest terms.²

In the earlier twelfth-century climate of reverence for the religious life, when numerous canons of York themselves took vows - to the extent that Thurstan (who died a Cluniac) sought to make smoother their path³ - this token of kinship may mean more than it says: certainly a later generation of canons prayed more naturally for their brothers in their mother church. At least we must believe that neither Thurstan nor Murdac, whose initiative was essential, was likely in these circumstances to institute prebends at Beverley.

The grant to Bridlington is of further significance. No account of Beverley's ultimate constitution has ever recognised that the eventual creation of prebends involved a radical partition of thraves - not merely the allocation of a few to each canon, but between those henceforth due to the chapter and those reserved to the provost:⁴ when division was made

1. Donald Nicholl, Thurstan, Archbishop of York, pp.125 - 126.

2. B.C.A., ii, pp.289 - 290.

3. E.Y.C., i, No.150

4. For consideration of the subject of thraves see below pp.75 - 110.

the thraves of the provostry, with isolated exceptions, were strictly confined to the wapentake of Holderness.¹ The remainder over the rest of the East Riding were apportioned among the prebends.² At the time of the grant (c.1135) provost and canons were clearly acting in concert. The thraves in question were from parishes outside Holderness, and after partition became the jealously guarded concern of the chapter alone. Moreover had they been appropriated already to a prebend (in later years St. Martin's had thraves in Bridlington³) the special consent of the prebendary would certainly have featured in the charter.

In fact there is no hint of the existence of any independent prebend in any document relating to Beverley until some thirty years later. Charters in this intervening period are admittedly sparse, but they and all confirmations of the rights and properties of the church imply a corporateness of oversight and concern. Only unsupported general assertions emanating from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries speak of prebends existing in these years, and they accord to them an antiquity wholly unacceptable and obviously impossible.⁴

The first explicit reference to a prebend in Beverley occurs in a local charter originating from the years 1154 - 1163 (probably, as we shall see, later rather than earlier in this period). It is a grant by one Walter de Huggate and his wife, Alice, to the convent of St. Mary of Watton of one carucate in the vill of Hawold ("Howald"), between Huggate and Tibthorpe, which they had held hereditarily de ecclesia Sancti Johannis de

1. The most comprehensive account of the provosts' thraves in the later middle ages is given in an agreement between Provost John de Bernyngham and the executors of his predecessor, Robert Rolleston. Included in the Provost's Book at Beverley Minster (ff 113b - 116) it is merely noted by Leach in his summary of the Book's contents (B.C.A., ii, p.339).
2. Hamilton Thompson's acknowledgement (V.C.H., Yorkshire, iii, p.354) that 'in the course of time thraves from certain specified parishes were appropriated to some canons' does less than justice to the completeness and the formality of the division.
3. B.C.A., i, p.216. By 1308 they had probably long been rendered as a pension.
4. See above, pp. 16 - 21.

Beverlaco, et nominatim de prebenda Simonis canonici eiusdem ecclesie.¹

Unfortunately a query hangs over this apparently conclusive evidence, for what seems to be a related grant, now embodied in the Provost's Book, may well reveal the true nature of Simon's interest in Hawold. It is a document belonging almost certainly to the years 1162-1164 in which Provost Geoffrey granted to Simon's nephew, Ralph de Hanton, properties, including 6 oxgangs at Hawold, hitherto held by the canon:

Sciatis me consensu Domini Rogeri Eboracensis Archiepiscopi et assensu Capituli nostri concessisse et dedisse Radulpho de Hantona nepoti Simonis canonici, terras quas ipse Simon tenebat de Sancto Johanne, et per idem servitium quod idem Simon eas tenebat; scilicet et in Howald sex bovatas terre pro x^s annuatim ²

Clearly this latter parcel of land was part of the estates of the provostry, which in fact continued to hold the lord's interest in Hawold throughout the later middle ages.³ Even so, though we hear nothing later of a prebendal holding in this locality, it would be wrong to assume that lands of the two charters were one and the same. The notion of Simon holding an independent prebend certainly seems to have been the impression of participants of the first charter, and clearly his activities in this matter were not characteristic of a canon leading a communal life.

All that has been said, however, leads us to believe that he had not enjoyed this status for long, and that this evidence in fact belongs to the period when prebends gained a formal separate identity - that is, in the early years of the primacy of Roger de Pont L'Evêque.

Canon Simon by this time was probably an elderly man. His family as the second charter declares had at least a modest landed interest in the East Riding, and his past twenty years as a canon of Beverley, if his record as a witness of charters is proof, had been lived close to the Minster. In all this he appears typical of the chapter as a whole.

1. E.Y.C., i, p. 158.

2. B.C.A., ii, p. 328

3. Provost's Book f 156, f 33

In the mid-twelfth century - in Murdac's episcopate - it is possible to assemble the names of all six of his brethren. Consideration of them belongs elsewhere, but here several fairly definite assertions can be made about their careers. Firstly, six (including Simon) almost certainly kept a high degree of residence, possibly to all intents continuous.¹ There is at le_ast no evidence to show that they were erstwhile episcopal clerks or diocesan officials, or that they were so occupied whilst canons. Nor is there any suggestion that they held other preferments, certainly not in the mother church of York. Of these six, three (including Simon)² held canonries for a minimum of thirty years, and must have been preferred not long after acquiring Holy Orders. The other three, though canons for barely half this time, also went back to the days of Thurstan (d.1140), an archbishop whose ordering of his minster does not suggest that he countenanced, still less encouraged, plurality of canonries.³

These men feature as witnesses in numerous charters, nearly always in groups of two, three or as many as six,⁴ with the implication that they were then on home ground. Indeed in the few instances where the place of origin of these documents is given it is invariably 'before the chapter' or in the archbishop's hall nearby. None of them relates to strictly chapter business, however, still less were they acts in convocation: the canons were therefore answering no special summons, but happen to have been at hand when their services were required. So readily available for

1. For individual notice of these clerks see below pp.A 31 - 32. They were: Aylward, first appearance 1130/1135 (Historians of the Church of York, iii, p.65); Simon, Ralph and Roger, occur c.1140 (Chartulary of Bridlington Priory, pp.69, 74; E.Y.C., i, No.104); Philip Morinus, first appearance 1148/51 (E.Y.C., x, No.67) and William Moryn (his kinsman?) who is almost certainly the William who witnessed the same charter, but who first occurs with a surname in 1162/64 (B.C.A., ii, p.328).
2. The other two were Aylward and Philip Morinus.
3. Of a seventh canon, Nicholas, we know nothing beyond a single appearance as a witness to charter at Beverley. Since he alone disappears from the scene in the early 1150s Thomas Becket, if the tradition of his canonry is believed, was his probable successor.
4. See, for example, pp.A38 - A40 below.

transactions not their own, we may believe that their own chapter act book was littered with their names.

The implication of all this is that these canons were still essentially "Beverley men", chosen with the interests of a close community in mind, rather than from consideration of diocesan administration, noble birth or kinship. It has been suggested that Thurstan viewed the outlying chapters as an extension of his familia at the Mother Church,¹ but this must certainly not be taken to imply any great interchange between Beverley and York, and is true only in the sense that the former had become the ecclesiastical centre of the East Riding, and its canons the most notable clerks in those parts to whom an archbishop could turn.

It is with the coming of Roger de Pont l'Evêque to the see of York in October 1154, that we detect a marked change in the character of the personnel of the Beverley chapter. It was not a wholesale departure from the past: the three canons of long standing, referred to earlier, Simon, Aylward and Philip,² still had several years left to them; indeed Philip actually outlived the new archbishop.

They were joined, in the course of time, however, by men whose character and occupation were incompatible with any notion of a common life, and whose material support in their work, since they were evidently not pluralists, can only be explained by the existence at Beverley of independent emoluments in the form of prebends.

We must leave out of consideration here the case of Thomas Becket, alleged by Simon Russell to have held St. Michael's prebend.³ That he held the provostship from the second half of William Fitzherbert's

¹. Donald Nicholl, Thurstan, Archbishop of York, pp. 123 - 124

². See below pp. A31 - 32

³. B.C.A., ii. p. 335.

primacy is firmly established,¹ but his tenure of a canonry is so questionable as to be valueless in this context.²

Becket, even were we to accept him, would remain a quite exceptional figure in the Beverley chapter at any time prior to ^{the}fourteenth century. Many years were still to pass before it attracted the attention of clerks of national importance, who, preoccupied with great matters, usually the king's service, regarded a distant benefice solely as pecuniary advantage.

The men who begin to appear as canons early in the episcopate of Archbishop Roger were active diocesan officials, significant only in the northern church. Such men were Osbert Arundel, Miles (probably to be identified with Mr. Milone de Beverlac) and Peter de Carcassone.³ All three enjoyed Roger's confidence, and were frequently in attendance as he travelled the diocese. Miles and Peter were certainly household clerks, and Osbert Arundel, though never so described, clearly held an important place in Roger's conduct of the diocese, and was the most wide-ranging of the three. Like Miles, Osbert was a graduate, and we have in him a forerunner of those notable Yorkshire clerks of later years whose prosperous families,⁴ rooted for the most part in the eastern half of the county,

1. E.Y.C., i, No.155. In this most interesting charter Fitzherbert handsomely augmented Becket's prebend of Apesthorpe in York out of consideration of the expenses he had incurred in coming to York to assist in the affairs of the church. It conclusively disproves the assertion of Dr. Saltman that Becket inherited the provostship from Roger on the latter's consecration, and also dismisses his extraordinary belief that the provostship was possibly annexed to the archdeaconry of Canterbury. (Avrom Saltman, Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury, p.168). Moreover it underlines doubts as to whether Roger de l'Évêque was, in fact, ever provost (below p.A11)
2. For the possible accuracy of Russell's statement see below p.338 & n.
3. See below pp.A33 - A34 for biographical notices.
4. His family, seemingly centred on Sneaton, near Whitby, held a knight's fee of the Percys, consisting of lands in Foston-on-the-Wolds, Nafferton and Auburn, and which had also acquired interests in Scarborough, near Beverley. He was a kinsman, if not actually brother of that William Arundel whose son, Master Roger, was a well-known king's justice and a canon of Southwell towards the end of the century, and whose sisters Maud and Agnes were ancestresses respectively of the Constables of Flamborough and the Hothams. Another kinsman was Reginald Arundel, a clerk of Archbishop Roger, who was precentor of York by 1199. (E.Y.C., xi, pp.196-202; xii, pp.144-145; York Minster Fasti, i, p.12, ii, p.75).

continued to supply the diocese with some of its ablest servants throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Of such came the Pickering (Brus) brothers, the Ferribys, Ravensers and de la Mares. These men, like Osbert, contrived to combine an active career in the diocese or the royal service with a more than passing interest in the benefices which supported them.

Nevertheless, however great their concern for Beverley, the old communal character of the chapter has gone, and the appearance of such clerks in our lists of canons spells the end of that certain aloofness from diocesan affairs which we detect only a few years earlier. It is hard to escape the conclusion, therefore, that Roger, early in his episcopate, initiated changes which made their wider service possible.

We have already noted suggestions in local charters which support this conclusion - the first territorial evidence of the emergence of distinguishable prebends belongs to this time. The shadowy evidence relating to the partition of that greater source of revenue, thraves, implied by the creation of prebends, at least points in the same direction.

This re-ordering of thraves is quite crucial to our understanding of the formal independent status of prebends at Beverley. Overlooked in all accounts of the Minster's constitutional development, it is proof against the suggestion that, in fact, the canons were never more than portionaries in a common heritage. Once it is recognised that definite parts, derived from specified localities, of this major asset of the church, became inalienably identified with individual canonries, it is impossible to deny the existence, however unusual, of a prebendal system in the full sense, or that this was the purpose and view of those who brought it into being.

Reorganisation, as we have said, involved the confining of the provost's entitlement to the thraves of Holderness (with one or two isolated and minor exceptions), and the apportionment of the remainder (i.e. in the rest of the East Riding) among the seven prebends of the 'ancient' canonries. Each prebendary was henceforth responsible for the collection of his thraves

from named parishes with backing of the chapter, not the provost.¹

It is reasonable to assume that division and sub-division were the subject of one single constitution. The natural increase in the quantity of thraves, keeping pace with the return of prosperity to the Riding, must have made the need for re-adjustment obvious. As the twelfth century progressed the revenues retained by the provost after satisfying his statutory obligations must have greatly exceeded Archbishop Thomas' intention, to the extent of defeating the original purpose of the donation of Athelstan.²

When this radical re-adjustment was effected we are not told, but, again, our belief is that it was the work of Archbishop Roger, and that it gave basis to his establishment of prebends.

The first indication of a division having taken place is an injunction of King John, issued at Rochester³ in 1204, addressed to "all men of Holderness":

"Mandamus omnibus hominibus de Holdrenesse, firmiter praecipientes, quod sine conditione et difficultate reddant de carucis suis ad hostia grangiarum suas travas Sancti Johannis Beverlacensis per manum propriam, vel servientium suorum, sicut facere solebant, antequam travae illae datae essent ad firmam⁴, cum etiam sic faciamus de dominicis nostris in Waldo similiter tam in dominicis nostris quam alibi....."⁵

¹For a fourteenth century account of how collection of thraves ought to operate see the chapter's response to the complaints of the rectors/Harthill wapentake in 1329. (B.C.A., ii, pp 87 - 89)

²Though no record suggests that it was ever a bone of contention, it is doubtful whether the provost was ever regarded as being legally entitled to retain any of the fruits of thraves for personal use. Athelstan's donation was solely for the sustenance of the seven ancient canons, and, whilst this usage was legitimately extended to include their subordinates, even the eighth canon was excluded from its benefits. This being the case some revision of the system must have become imperative.

³Poulson Beverlac, ii, pp 547 - 548, who translates this document in the context of a confirmation of the Minster's right to thraves of Edward ii, gives the place of origin as Rheims - wholly impossible at this date.

⁴This particular development possibly occasioned the letter (see below p.91)

⁵B.C.A., ii, pp. 15 - 16; C.P.R., 1307 - 1313, p.286.

Had the severence of Holderness thraves not already taken place there is no obvious reason why John should not have made his command to "the men of the East Riding", since all rendered thraves. Moreover, when another similar mandate of John, this time to "the men of Holderness and Wold", refers to thraves "as well pertaining to the provostship as to the same canons" (in whose catchment area the royal demesne in the Wolds lay) it is reasonable to assume that a clear distinction is implied.

It could well be that the king was acting, in both instances, at the behest of his exchequer clerk, Simon de Wells¹, who had recently succeeded to the provostry. Like more than one of his successors he was doubtless having trouble with powerful interests in Holderness who were notoriously reluctant to meet their obligations.²

Conclusive evidence that the sub-division of the thraves of the remainder of East Riding among the prebends took place about the same time, or had not been long delayed, comes in 1225. In that year Mr. Richard de Cornubia, prebendary, we think, of St. Peter's Altar, was well established in possession of his share when he granted to the chapter of Beverley, for 12 marks a year, the thraves from 80 carucates belonging to his prebend.³ By this time Cornubia was also Chancellor of York⁴, and wished to be relieved of the burden of collecting his dues.

¹ See below, p.A13.

² Several were religious houses, others powerful rectors. Even so it is surprising to find a royal mandate invoked in such a matter. That it should be deemed necessary may be indicative of the lack of dedicated oversight of the diocese at this time.

³ Reg. Gray, p.2; not dated, but entered between documents issued in April, 1225. For identification of Cornubia's prebend of 'Risby' with that of St. Peter see below p.A.153.

⁴ See below pp. 92, A.154.

Since so delicate and weighty a matter as the wholesale re-application of thraves within the church required the full participation, indeed the initiative, of the archbishop, it is unlikely to have taken place in the turbulent primacy of Geoffrey Plantagenet. On the other hand there is good reason for believing that the isolation of the Holderness thraves had not taken place c1135! Moreover, collection of the render in the rest of the Riding, now more onerous than before, can scarcely have been put back upon the chapter as a body, and since sub-division necessarily implied the existence of prebends, we are forced once again to the episcopate of Archbishop Roger.

Roger's antagonism¹ to Thomas Becket earned him the almost unanimous condemnation of contemporary writers, and even the gentlest of recent historians has found him "an unattractive figure, wealthy, ambitious and unspiritual."² Even so, as a lawyer and an administrator, he has also been described as being "with exception of Thurstan, the ablest archbishop of York since the Conquest."³

That he devoted his energy, ability and considerable personal wealth to the welfare of his great collegiate churches is not in doubt: he rebuilt the choir of York⁴ and much of the church of Ripon,⁵ and in his last years founded the Chapel of St. Mary and the Holy Angels, adjacent to York Minster,⁶ with its sacristy and thirteen canonries. It would, in any event, be surprising if Beverley escaped the attention of such a man.

To attribute the foundation of formal prebends to Roger is circumstantial, to attempt a date for this within a long primacy would be pure conjecture. Whenever it was effected, we may assume that it required at least the acquiescence of the provost, upon whose personal revenues it

¹ See below, pp. 343 - 345.

² M. D. Knowles, Thomas Becket, p.65

³ G. V. Scammell, Hugh du Puiset, Bishop of Durham, p.167

⁴ H.C.Y. (Rolls Series), ii, p.398.

⁵ H.C.Y. (Rolls Series), iii, p.82; Lucius Smith, The Story of Ripon Minster, pp56-57

⁶ A. Hamilton Thompson, The Chapel of St. Mary and the Holy Angels, otherwise known as St. Sepulchre's Chapel, at York, Y.A.J., xxxvi, pp.63 - 77

would be most detrimental.

In the primacy of Roger de Pont l'Eveque, there are three possibilities in this respect: (1) He coerced Thomas Becket, a hostile rival; (2) he possessed or acquired the goodwill of Geoffrey, his own nephew and Thomas' successor; or (3) he seized one or other of the opportunities provided by the two vacancies in the provostship, both of uncertain duration, which occurred during his episcopate.

Hints and circumstances can be mustered to give plausibility to any of these, but in the last resort it is merely intriguing guesswork.¹ It must suffice to say - with some confidence - that Roger's tenure of the see, 1154 - 1181, saw the conclusion of a century of evolution in the Beverley constitution, which produced the prebendal system explicit in Archbishop Gray's Register and so familiar in the Chapter Act Book.

1. See below, pp. 343 - 347.

(c) The establishment of the Offices of Sacrist, Chancellor and Precentor.

Not least among the unusual constitutional features of Beverley Minster was the relatively humble status accorded the dignitaries, or officers, as they were more properly called. Though the formality of their office preserved them from being identified with the vicars and other inferior clerks, the Sacrist, Chancellor and Precentor always ranked far below the occupants of the seven ancient canonries, which alone commanded a place in chapter.

Once again it was, in the last resort, the economy of the church which ordained that this should be so. The nature of revenues which ensured the pre-eminence and limited size of the chapter, and also the basic equality of its members, afforded neither place nor funds for exalted dignitaries characteristic of most other secular collegiate churches.

To determine the antiquity of the three offices, and the occasion for their establishment is a doubtful, if not an impossible exercise. In origin they were mere functionaries of the Minster, performing duties necessary from the earliest times in any church of standing. Someone, whatever his title, must, even in pre-Conquest days, have done the work of custos ecclesie, scholasticus, and chanter, and as elsewhere it was in such appointments that the office of sacrist, chancellor and precentor had their roots.

As at other great churches, however, their work came, in practice, to be undertaken by others, their deputies: the sacrist's by his clerks, the chancellor's by the auditor causarum and the schoolmaster, and the precentor's by the succentor. By this time the offices, having gained formality but not significance, had become in reality sinecures, and the frequent absence of their occupants, sometimes perpetual, clearly created no great hardship, let alone storm of protest, at Beverley. In the Act Book they are usually seen to have found a wider usefulness, appearing in its pages most often as moral delinquents requiring correction.

The 'De abbacia' manuscript, the work of an unknown author which survives only in a document of the sixteenth century, credits Archbishop Aelfric with the creation of all three offices in the first half of the eleventh century. We have found reason, however, for rejecting the granting

of ultimate formality to whoever did their work at so early a date. Quite apart from the unlikelihood that Beverley anticipated York in this, there is evidence to suggest that they were established under their final titles at different times, long after the Conquest. This document, in its closing paragraphs has, we feel, all the fallibility of a zealous son of his church seeking to claim pre-Conquest origin for the entire constitution of the Minster.

Such a person, indeed, was William Ketell, who compiled a collection of the miracles of St. John within the first half of the twelfth century. It is he who gives us, somewhat incidentally, our first clue to the true evolution of the officers, or at least two of them.

Having described the cure of an apoplectic Irishman, which he claims to have witnessed, Ketell continues

"A certain scholasticus a little after this came to Beverley, wishing to teach school there, since the place was full of clerks; and was received by the prelates of the church with wholehearted zeal, as he was both an excellent schoolmaster and was ennobled by his character; his manners lowly and kindly pleased all; so did his skill in his art, made up as it was of pleasant exercise and judicious severity. Outside the church he taught a crowded school diligently; inside he exercised the rule of the choir in like spirit; in both no lazy steward,¹ but an active official."²

Neither modern scepticism regarding medieval miracles, nor the amusing sequel to this particular story should allow us to dismiss Ketell's passing references to collegiate life in what was, after all, his own day. Writing as a contemporary he describes a rather informal situation which suggests the absence of both a chancellor and a precentor: as scholasticus the newcomer corresponds to the magister scholarum at York, who, in part, was a forerunner of the chancellor,³ and inside the

1. Leach, whose translation this is, makes provisor mean prebendary.

2. H.C.Y., i, p.281

3. Kathleen Edwards, The English Secular Cathedrals in the Middle Ages, pp.181 et seq.

church he was, on any ordinary reading of the account, performing the prime function of the later precentor.¹

In fact the first definite evidence of the existence of an officer at Beverley comes in the fourth decade of the twelfth century in the person of Alured the Sacrist,² a scholar of literary interests, whose ability, if not his preferment, made him a man of standing in the collegiate body. He was definitely sacrist by 1143, and then and in subsequent years is found as a witness, after the canons, of a number of important local charters. He was dead some ten years later when his successor, Robert, witnessed an early charter of Archbishop Roger.³

'Sacrist' was the designation invariably assumed by all twelfth-century holders of the office witnessing charters. It is just possible, however, that at this early stage it has reference to one aspect of their work, that of keeper of the Shrine of St. John and its treasures, upon which the wider fame of the church rested. We think this because in domestic matters the sacrist was almost certainly the same person who answered to the title custos ecclesie. He is thus described in the so called 'Ordinance of the Refectory' of uncertain date, but which is said to belong to the latter half of the century. In summarising the clerks to whom an allowance of food in the refectory is due it places the Custos Ecclesie and the Magister Scholarum next after the canons, and towards the end of the list is mentioned a clericus custodis.

Clearly a particular clerk was then being assigned to each of these defined offices within the church, but as yet we cannot be sure of the degree of formality they had received within the constitution. This is underlined by the omission of any mention of a cantor, let alone a precentor. Leach is surely right in asserting that had such an officer existed he would certainly not have been denied a place in the refectory.

¹. Ibid, pp.165-166. It could be, as Leach suggests, that his functions in the choir were limited to those later performed by the chancellor (B.C.A., i,plx), but this is not the obvious impression conveyed by Ketell.

². For a summary of what is known of Alured and his writings, see below, ppA228-230

³. G.V.Scammell, Hugh du Puiset, Bishop of Durham, p.266.

The appearance of a precentor, however, was not long delayed. He does so in the person of one, Master William, in c.1199, but apart from the fact that he was a graduate nothing at all can be said of him. On the evidence available he could well have been the first holder of a formally constituted precentorship.

Fortunately there was never the same ambiguity about this office as that surrounding the custos and the magister scholarum. All that we can conclude regarding these is that it was the title 'sacrist' which gained permanence, and that the chancellorship was in being, presumably set over the now magister scholarum, as elsewhere, by the middle of Gray's primacy (i.e. by 1234).

Finally we must note that all three officers were appointed, not by the chapter, to whom they were accountable, but by the provost. Probably this was partly because it was he who paid their stipends, and partly in order to avoid disputes among equals in chapter.

Though their position within the Beverley constitution was almost certainly finally regularised towards the end of the twelfth century there are no definite grounds for attributing this, too, to Archbishop Roger. One of the more constructive acts of his successor, Archbishop Geoffrey, seems to have been the establishment of the Chancellorship of York as one of the four personae of the Minster, and it could just be that it was he who gave similar recognition to these lesser figures in the daughter church.

II ASSETS AND INCOME

1. THE ESTATES AND REVENUES OF ST. JOHN

The Blessed John's beneficence towards Beverley did not cease with his death. The fame of his shrine and the wonders wrought there attracted to the church not only pilgrims from every walk of life but also endowments almost unsurpassed in the North. From its earliest days, especially after Athelstan's visit, the Minster enjoyed great and, for the most part, assured prosperity.

Apart from the many minor, but together substantial, sources of income accruing to a foundation which was at once a great parish church and the possessor of an important peculiar jurisdiction, the wealth of Beverley rested primarily upon three major assets. The first, the land of St. John, was unusual only in its extent and undoubted antiquity; the other two, thraves and the offerings of pilgrims, were exceptional, if by no means unique.

Together they established the church in the financial category of the wealthier cathedrals, producing an income comparable with that of Lincoln, and almost equalling at times the combined values of the sister churches of Southwell and Ripon.

Domesday Lands

Though we have little reliable information concerning the extent of minster properties in the Anglo-Saxon centuries it would appear that territorial endowment came early to Beverley. Certainly the Domesday Survey confirms that the bulk of the church's estates were of pre-Conquest donation. Little reliance, however, can be placed upon the brief assertions of later chroniclers as to when and by whom they were granted, for almost certainly they depend upon tradition, not upon established fact.

It may well be true, of course, that it was Bishop John himself who acquired for his church that extensive area immediately to the east of Beverley known as Ridings, which later constituted a manor of the provostry.¹

¹. Leland, iv, p.99; also in B.C.A., ii, p.349

We can give little credence, on the other hand, to the belief that it was he who appropriated the more distant lands at Middleton, to the north-west of the town, and at Bilton, Welwick and Patrington, deep in the Holderness peninsula.¹

Other claims of doubtful origin, but coming to the notice of Leland, purport similar antiquity to minster estates to the west of Beverley. Lands which later formed the provostry's manor at Walkington are claimed to have been the gift of a grateful Puch,² the thane whose wife, according to Bede,³ was cured by Bishop John, and who is alleged by Folcard to have been lord of South Burton.⁴ Another character named by Bede,⁵ Addi, identified this time as lord of North Burton,⁶ is said to have granted that lordship to Beverley, together with the advowson of his church,⁷ whilst that, by all accounts, unsatisfactory king of Northumbria, Asred, is recorded by Leland as the donor of the church of Dalton.⁸

More plausible, at least, is the belief that Athelstan granted the lordship of Beverley itself to God and St. John, though by the time of Domesday it had passed to the archbishop. That he also contributed estates at Lockington to the north of Beverley, and at Brandsburton further away to the north-east is possible but, to say the least, questionable.⁹

1. B.C.A., loc. cit.

2. B.C.A., loc. cit.

3. History, v, 4

4. H.C.Y., i, pp.249 - 250. Folcard does not mention Puch by name, but there is no mistaking the incident in which he was involved.

5. History, v, 5

6. Folcard calls him Adam (H.Y.C., i, p.250). In extant records it is left to Leland to connect him with North Burton.

7. B.C.A., loc. cit.

8. Ofredus (sic) rex ob amorem S.Johannis dedit Dalton eccl: Ebor: in qua villa eatenus fuerat manerium regis (B.C.A., ii, p.349). Beverley, however, was the ultimate beneficiary.

9. B.C.A., ii, p.350

There is no good reason to doubt that Archbishop Ealdred prevailed upon Edward the Confessor to grant to St. John the lordship of Leven, between Beverley and Brandsburton.¹ For Ealdred's own donation of lands to Beverley we have the reference to it in the Conqueror's confirmation of the church's privileges.² What these lands were we do not know, but they possibly included territory at Risby, title to which was questioned at the Domesday Inquest. Finally, we have already noted King William's alleged gift of the church of Sigglesthorn to the Minster - close to its estates at Leven and Brandsburton; it certainly belonged to the canons in 1086.³

It is possible to see most of the major portions of the lands of St. John listed in Domesday vaguely comprehended by these statements. The aim of most of them seems to have been to assert antiquity of possession, and it is difficult to regard those relating to pre-Athelstan times as anything but fanciful. In any case they leave open the still more important question of who precisely was the ultimate recipient of such grants. Anglo-Saxon charters were usually vague on this point when great churches were the object of the gift: grants were most frequently made Deo et ecclesiae, or, in the case of Beverley, Deo et Sct. Johanni, whilst sometimes they were made simply to the bishop as protector or custodian of a church's patrimony. In earlier years, at least, a clear distinction was rarely made between the lands of the bishoprick and those of the minsters. We know little of the economic relationship between the Anglo-Saxon archbishops and the church of Beverley, and, whilst some division of the two mensae obviously took place in the process of time, it is impossible to say at what juncture it became more than a domestic arrangement. The fact that Ealdred himself endowed the church is itself evidence of a formal distinction having been made, and it may be that the drawing of it was part of his own reform of the place.

1. Ibid, p.351

2. E.Y.C., i, No. 89

3. See above, p.23.

Just how much of the common heritage the archbishops reserved to their see cannot be known exactly. The lordship of Beverley was retained by them, as were a number of its berewicks named in Domesday, and if Patrington, perhaps the plum estate of Holderness, ever belonged to Beverley, it ended up in episcopal hands. Domesday Book, however, proves that the lands remaining exclusively to St. John, though still of the archbishop's fee, were more than adequate for their purpose.

The Inquest of 1086, giving as it does a comprehensive list of Minster lands, is of added significance for Beverley in that it was held just six years before the foundation of the Provostry by Archbishop Thomas 1.¹ Since almost all the temporalities of the church were then vested in this institution we thus have from the outset a clear picture of the extent of the estates administered by the provost and his official.

According to Domesday the lands of St. John comprised 185 carucates and 4 bovates.² By far the most valuable property lay in Beverley itself, but detailed information about this is lacking, doubtless because the 'carucate of St. John' was accepted as being quit of geld. The rural estates were distributed over the three hundreds of the wapentake of Holderness and those hundreds nearest to Beverley which were subsequently included in the wapentakes of Harthill and Dickering.³ Anticipating the creation of Harthill and Dickering, the following table shows the concentration of land in each of them and in Holderness, together with the salient statistics relevant here.

1. Domesday statistics relating to the Church of Beverley are derived from the translation of the Yorkshire Survey of William Farrer in V.C.H., Yorkshire, Vol. ii, pp.191-327 (see especially pp.215-216), and that of Robert H. Skaife, Yorkshire Domesday. For general reference see also F.W. Brooks, Domesday Book and the East Riding (East Yorkshire Local History Society, 1966) passim pp.58-59.
2. Professor Hamilton Thompson (V.C.H., vol.iii, p.11) puts the total at "between 190 and 191 carucates", adding that 70 carucates, contained in 23 berewicks of the manor of Beverley in Holderness belonged, in fact, to the archbishop, leaving only two berewicks of the manor (both in Harthill) to the canons. Subsequent records of the provostry, however, leave little doubt that an alternative interpretation of the Survey is correct: namely that only 8 carucates and 4 bovates in five Holderness berewicks were in episcopal hands.
3. In 1086 the East Riding contained eighteen hundreds. Three were in Holderness, and the remaining fifteen were, by the time of Henry I, grouped in the four Wapentakes of Dickering, Buckrose, Ouse and Derwent and Harthill.

	LAND		WASTE		RECORDED POPULATION			
	Car.	Bov.	Car.	Bov.	Bordars	Villeins	Others	Total
Harthill	88	4	10	0	15	83	4	102
Dickering	34	5	34	4	0	3	1	4
Holderness	62	3	3	4	25	113	9	147
TOTALS	185	4	48	0	40	199	14	253

	PLOUGHS			Estimated Ploughlands	Recorded Value T.R.E.	Recorded Value 1086
	In Demesne	Out of Demesne	Total			
Harthill	11	$34\frac{1}{2}$	$45\frac{1}{2}$	50	£31 - 0	£26 - 8
Dickering	0	1	1	19	£4 - 5	- 1 ¹
Holderness	$4\frac{1}{2}$	$35\frac{1}{8}$	$39\frac{5}{8}$	$34\frac{1}{2}$	Not Stated	
TOTALS	$15\frac{1}{2}$	$70\frac{5}{8}$	$86\frac{1}{8}$	$103\frac{1}{2}$	£35 - 5	£26 - 7

¹. See note 1 on p.53.

'St. John's carucate' in Beverley for which 7 ploughs (1 in desmesne), 15 bordars and 18 villeins are mentioned, and which was valued in both valuations at £20, is here included in the figures for Harthill. Since the important manor of Riding was presumably embraced by this - it features nowhere else in the Survey - the term 'carucate' can scarcely have been used here as a precise unit, and the land involved was probably much larger than this. Nor is any account taken here of lands amounting to 11 carucates, 2 bovates, the canons' claim to which was disputed in 1086.² The settled total of the Minster's lands may therefore have approached, and even exceeded, 200 carucates.

About 63% of lands of St. John lay within 10 miles radius of Beverley, and all but ^{the} manor of Welwick in the South Hundred of Holderness was within 20 miles. The largest concentration centred around Cherry (North) Burton (a berewick of Beverley), the manor of Dalton, Etton and Bishop (South) Burton, all in Harthill to the west of the town. The extensive but wasted areas in Dickering were all close together in the region around Driffild on the road to Bridlington. The lands in Holderness, on the other hand, were scattered the length of the wapentake, the largest groupings being around Leven and Patrington, in the North and South Hundreds respectively.

The economic implications of these statistics must properly be reserved for our later consideration of the Provostry. Here it is sufficient to observe that the Minster estates, with the exception of the Dickering carucates and a few lesser areas to the south of Beverley, reached the Domesday period in remarkably good heart.

If we ignore, for the moment, the lands in Dickering, which seem to have been temporarily written off by the canons themselves, we find that only $13\frac{1}{2}$ of the remaining 150 carucates were waste; that there were as many ploughs as there were ploughlands; and that overall these were served by three times as many bordars and villeins taken together. Drogo de Bevrere whose vast holding lay entirely in Holderness, had only 600 men

1. Excluding Minster's lands at Lowthorpe (see below)

2. V.C.H., ii, pp.292, 293, 295. See also R. Welldon Finn, The Making and Limitations of the Yorkshire Domesday (Borthwick Papers, No.41) pp.22-26.

on 500 ploughlands.¹

When we come to values we find (again ignoring Dickering) that the decline, whilst by no means negligible, was comparatively light when compared with that of neighbouring estates.² At Beverley itself, where the values recorded may include those of the Holderness areas, which seem to have been regarded as berewicks of the manor of Beverley, the Minster property retained its worth at £20, whereas the lands of the archbishop sank in value from £24 T.R.E. to £14 in 1086. In the Harthill areas outside the manor, and therefore excluding its berewicks of Cherry Burton and Skidby, the total value declined from £11 to £6.8.0. The loss entailed in Dickering can only be estimated, since the value T.R.E. of Lowthorpe and its berewicks of Ruston Parva and Haisthorpe is not stated, but from a total of about £6.10.0 it was diminished to a mere 8/- in 1086. All this meant that the total value of the Lands of St. John (including the Dickering carucates, with Lowthorpe estimated at £2.5.0) had fallen by rather less than 29%: the fee of Drago de Bevrere had declined by about 83%.²

The reason for the comparative immunity of Beverley from the Conqueror's harrying of the North is, as we have noted, the subject of a legend. Whether we accept it or not we may believe its statement that the Norman army stopped seven miles short of the town. That the Minster property received favourable treatment seems incontrovertible. Even if we share Mr. Leach's scepticism regarding miracles, we would be rash to discount Norman credulity as the most likely explanation.³ It is unlikely that the Conqueror was deterred from entering this prosperous

1. T.A.M. Bishop, The Norman Settlement of Yorkshire, in Studies in Medieval History Presented to F.M. Powicke, p.10

2. Ibid, p.11. The relative good fortune of the Beverley Minster lands is further emphasised when their values are seen in relation to those of other major church holdings in the County: "Irrespective of the Archbishop's lands in the city of York, the lands of St. Peter, St. Wilfrid and St. John had fallen in value from about £320 in the time of the Confessor to about £166 at the Survey." (Farrer, V.C.H. vol.ii, p.152).

3. B.C.A., i, pp.xviii - xix; above p.24 and n.1.

town, having come thus far, by a Danish fleet wintering in the Humber.¹ It may indeed have been the latter which was responsible for the wasting of the areas between Beverley and the Estuary, and not the Normans, who appear to have turned north-east along a line between Market Weighton and Bridlington, returning to the Plain of York via Malton.

The canons' Dickering lands lay across this route, and, as we have seen, they shared the fate of the surrounding countryside. Depopulation was almost total; only three villeins and one other (and, presumably, their families) remained in 1086 to glean a living on all the 34 carucates and 5 bovates.²

It is most unlikely that these areas were numbered among those intact estates of upland regions which, according to T.A.M. Bishop's thesis, were depopulated as a matter of policy, to provide inhabitants for fertile lowland regions devastated by the harrying.³ The plight of Dickering is all too clear to require such an explanation. No doubt the villeins of these luckless Minster lands had swelled the multitude of refugees which is alleged to have flocked to Beverley. Certainly, if the lands around the Minster and in Harthill suffered as little as we think they did, there can have been no call for a subsequent planned migration in that direction.

In these latter parts the Survey records 15 bordars and 83 villeins serving some 50 ploughlands - a comparatively satisfactory, but certainly not excessive population, and not one which suggests any artificial influx.

If the Dickering refugees were not absorbed in Beverley Town itself, for which no figures are given, their ultimate destination is more likely to have been the South Hundred of Holderness. This is a possible, but not an altogether satisfactory explanation of why, in an otherwise sparsely populated area, which had experienced no obvious wasting, there should have been in 1086 a concentration of 32 villeins and 13 bordars in an

1. Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (Gärmonsway ed), p.204.

2. V.C.H. vol. ii, p.215

3. Bishop, op.cit, pp.1 - 14

estate of less than 7 carucates at Welwick.¹ This was three times the density of the next most populous grouping of canons' lands - in the North Hundred around Sigglesthorne, where 45 villeins and 10 bordars occupied 25 carucates, and twice that of the archbishop's well-populated manor of nearby Patrington, where an unusual community of 10 sokemen, 15 villeins and 86 bordars was found on rather less than 36 carucates.²

Other factors, however, better account for the apparent prosperity of this geographically remote district. It may be that the true occupation of the inhabitants of both Welwick and Patrington has been obscured by the gradual movement of Spurn Point westwards. The constant battering of the North Sea which in the fifteenth century destroyed Ravenser (the Ravenspurgh of Shakespeare's Richard II) and its sister town of Ravenser Odd, was also responsible for the creation of Sunk Island within the Humber Estuary. Until this time Patrington had a haven with immediate access to the sea, and, like Hedon further upstream, was a notable fishing port.³ Possibly we have here a community composed of free and semi-free fisherfolk, descended, perhaps, from Danish settlers of pre-Conquest times.

Moreover, it was undoubtedly its easy access to the Humber which transformed the manor of Welwick from an impossibly remote asset of the church into the provostry's main stock-raising estate.⁴ How soon this potential was realised we do not know. Large flocks were being kept on the exposed peninsula in the fourteenth century, and it would not be surprising to learn that wool and meat had been coming in light craft to the markets of Beverley from at least the Domesday period. Certainly there need be nothing mysterious about the existence of a thriving community in southern Holderness in these years.

¹ V.C.H., vol.ii, p.216

² ibid, pp.209 - 210.

³ See June A. Sheppard, The Draining of the Marshlands of South Holderness and the Vale of York (East Yorkshire Local History Society, 1966), pp. 3-7

⁴ See below, p.130.

Prosperity, however, if gauged by population, was confined to ecclesiastical estates. A view of Holderness as a whole in 1086 invites a striking and obvious comparison between the lands of the archbishop and the Minster on the one hand, and those of Drogo de Bevrere on the other: against the latter's 600 men on 500 ploughlands the archbishop had 145 villeins alone on but $46\frac{1}{2}$ ploughlands, and the canons 122 on $34\frac{1}{2}$.

The holdings of all three were intermixed throughout the wapentake, and the fact that the population of Beverley lands was three times the density of those of Drogo at first sight seems remarkable. Ecclesiastical titles in Holderness, however, were among the most ancient in the Riding, and it would be strange indeed if such early acquisitions were unfavourably placed. The Norman tenant-in-chief on the other hand came late in the day, his fee representing the wide undeveloped areas that remained. Though eventually the potential of these proved great, at this point in time they must have lacked the background of husbandry and advantageous situation of the church estates. Small wonder, then, that the canons had trouble with Drogo in the Domesday period.¹

(a) Estates of the Provostry

We have considered the Domesday references to Beverley in some detail not merely because they afford the only clear comprehensive statement we have of the actual estates held by St. John at a given time, but also because they describe both the basis of the Minster's landed wealth in the later middle ages and also the initial extent of the provostry, which, as we have noted, was created but six years afterwards, in 1092.

The Survey entries are, of course, by no means a final statement, even of the lands of the provostry, but it was, in the main, the

¹. V.C.H., ii, p.295. The canons of Beverley apparently had little difficulty in denying Drogo de Bevrere's claims to their Holderness lands. As on numerous subsequent occasions, they were able to produce impeccable evidence of their privileges and titles. See also R. Welldon Finn op. cit. pp.22-26.

development of the areas named, rather than their further extension, which brought about the much increased land revenues of later years.

Perhaps we should not look for sizeable increases in the extent of the provost's holdings in the ensuing centuries. A powerful lord, readily resorting to litigation and ecclesiastical censure in defence of his jurisdiction and unique revenues (a constant source of hostility), was unlikely to present an attractive object for charity. Moreover the purpose of the founders of the provostry had been to establish an institution with resources enough to meet its carefully specified obligations. Benefactions to the Minster, of course, continued, and some indeed fell to the provost, but clearly both donors and chapter had a natural reluctance to augment further the assets of a distant official whose income was already in excess of his statutory disbursements.

Instead, new acquisitions were normally directed towards needs and funds outside the scope of the provostry; in the first instance the Fabric Fund and occasionally individual prebends and the vicars' corporate endowment, but in later years chantries and the Chapel of St. Mary, which rose to become Beverley's 'town church', were the most popular beneficiaries.

It would be tedious and of little value to enumerate such grants as came the provost's way in the later middle ages. Occasional acts of generosity on the part of certain landed East Riding families were of local significance,¹ but for the most part additions came in the form of single tenements, tofts and pastures.

The accumulation of these over the years, especially in the town itself, was, however, appreciable. The late fourteenth century rental in the Provost's Book lists about 120 separate properties in Beverley, mostly modest tenements.² Together they added £11. 17. 4d to the £15 yielded by

1. Thomas de Hotham, for instance, granted $9\frac{3}{4}$ bovates of the manor of Foston in the wapentake of Dickering, c.1223 (V.C.H., East Riding, ii, p.180), and two carucates and six bovates near Lockington were acquired from the Mauley Fee in 1284/5 (E.Y.C., ii, p.412). King Stephen's spreading of largesse brought the Minster 100s from his farm of Great Driffild - since it was 'for the augmentation of the maintenance of the refectory, it presumably fell to the provost's administration. (E.Y.C., i, pp. 96 - 97).
2. The entire rental of the provostry occurs in the manuscript of the Provost's Book in Beverley Minster, ff 25 - 37. The Beverley Town (continued next page..)

the rich pastures of Ridings, on the outskirts, now an asset of the provostry. By this time their contribution was already diminishing with the declining commercial fortunes of the town.

Beyond Beverley, the provostry's acquisition of the whole of the Minster's Domesday holdings must be qualified by one notable exception: the rich manor of Bentley, to the south, was kept apart, and in a rather mysterious way eventually became the most notable single asset of the Fabric Fund.¹ Its loss was in a large measure balanced, however, by the development of the neighbouring manor of Walkington, not credited to Beverley in the Survey.

Elsewhere, later accounts of the provostry show that it was to the north-west, in and around the manor of South Dalton, and to the east, in those parts of Holderness centred on the Manor of Leven, that the most notable additions were made. How and when they occurred is not apparent, but they were clearly well integrated a great deal earlier than the pre-Reformation documents which alone bring them to light. The other most lucrative grouping of estates, that comprising the manor of Welwick in the South Hundred of Holderness, seems to have extended but little, its greatly increased worth being the result of intensive husbandry, notably drainage.

On the eve of the Dissolution, in 1532, the total income derived by the provostry directly from property amounted to £272. 3. 2½.² Two years earlier, when the clearest statement of revenues occurs,³ it was slightly less at £269. 10. 6½, and was made up as follows:

Note 2 continued from previous page.....

portion of it is printed by Leach (B.C.A., ii, pp.615-619). Rents, as we shall see, accounted for barely half the provost's revenue from land, and the town rental is rather less than we might have supposed - much less than that of the Fabric Fund, which may have benefited to a greater extent from ancient holdings within the town.

1. See below, p.67.

2. This sum is derived from Poulson, Beverlac, ii, p.641.

3. Ibid, pp.615-619

	Rents	Issues of Demesne	Receipts from Woods and 1 Mill	Total
Manor of Middleton	6. 1. 10 ¹	9. 0. 0		15. 1. 10
" " South Dalton	17. 8. 0 ¹ / ₂	16. 0. 0	2. 13. 4	36. 1. 4 ¹ / ₂
" " Walkington	9. 5. 4	8. 0. 0	5. 3. 0	22. 8. 4
" " North Burton	6. 3. 5	9. 0. 0		15. 3. 5
" " Leven	19. 11. 5 ²	30. 0. 0		49. 11. 5
" " Welwick	7. 1. 3	37. 0. 0 ²		44. 1. 3
Finmer	11. 4			11. 4
Sigglesthorne	4. 9. 8			4. 9. 8
Rudston	9. 17. 6		3. 0. 0 ³	12. 17. 6
Weighton	8. 6. 9			8. 6. 9
Officium Ballivi forinseci	34. 15. 8 ¹ / ₂			34. 15. 8 ¹ / ₂
Officium Ballivi intrinsici	5. 14. 3 ¹ / ₂			5. 14. 3 ¹ / ₂
Lockington		5. 13. 4		5. 13. 4
Riding	15. 3. 4			15. 3. 4
	£144. 9. 10 ¹ / ₂	£114. 13. 4	£10. 16. 4	£269. 19. 6 ¹ / ₂

Comparisons with the summary of accounts for 1532 are made difficult by differences in arrangement and certain omissions of details which make up the totals. In particular the sum of 'external' receipts is not given, and though their individual sources are stated it is impossible to

1. Includes, presumably, 19s 6d for lands called Stocksland (Poulson, op.cit., ii, p.615).
2. These figures include sums (£2.9.0 and £1.18.11 respectively) deducted in the accounts for the repair of the sea wall. The issues of demesne, being fixed amounts, a comparison with 1532 summary of accounts makes it clear that whereas in the case of Leven the deduction was made from the rental, in that of Welwick it was made from the farm of the manor.
3. Rudston mill would seem to correspond to that of 'Brafurth' (also producing £3) in the 1532 accounts. The other three mills named in the latter summary, i.e. those of South Dalton, Walkington and Welwick, have apparently been accounted for in the rental figures.

distinguish them from other rents. Nevertheless the main sums are substantially the same: rents collected by the provost's own officials from within the manors came to £78. 9. 4 $\frac{1}{2}$, rent farms to £52.13.10, and these together with the fixed sum of £15.3.4 from the pastures of Riding brought the total income from rents to the slightly higher figure of £146. 6. 6 $\frac{1}{2}$. The issues of demesne, obviously made up of fixed payments by the farmers of the several manors, remained unchanged at £114. 13. 4, whilst those of woods and mills together added a further £11. 3. 4. Hence a total overall of £272. 3. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$.¹

It is unfortunate that equally comprehensive and reliable accounts are lacking for earlier centuries. The Taxatio Nicholai of 1291 is based on wholly different calculations, the sum of £232.19. 0 shown against the provostry being the total valuation of the churches under its jurisdiction, not its annual income.² The provostship itself, i.e. the amount remaining to the provost after meeting his obligations, is assessed at a mere £40, but this figure almost certainly takes no account of thraves, which, even after disbursements, must have contributed a sizeable sum to his clear balance.

Moreover, when we come to examine the provost's obligations towards the prebendaries it will be seen that these were considerably greater at the end of the thirteenth century than was the case in 1532. Such was the reduction in the latters' corrodies over the years that the provostry's total annual disbursements in their favour were reduced by as much as £66³ - a saving only partially offset by increased payments to the lesser clergy.

Such considerations make the personal income of the provost a questionable basis for deducing the total revenues of the provostry in earlier times. When recognised, however, they do suggest that, if the provost was receiving £40 on the limited basis of the Taxatio, the lands

1. Poulson, loc cit. The perquisites of the courts of the provostry have, of course, been excluded from these figures.
2. Poulson, op. cit., ii, p.540.
3. See below, pp.148 - 157.

in his custody must already have reached the potential evinced in pre-Reformation accounts. In other words, though this sum fell far short of the £109. 8. 8½ credited to the provost in 1532¹, it is difficult to see how it could be realised from land revenues in 1291 of much less than £260.

Assuring evidence that this sum was being realised a few years later is gained from a valuation of the spiritualities of the provostry made in 1332 for the levy of a tenth.² If the amounts against the 32 localities listed in this assessment represent a tenth of the worth of the provost's interest in these places - as they almost certainly do - then the value placed on the lands of the provostry at this point was £262. 0. 0.

Obviously the provostry, like any other similar institution, experienced its hard times, as in the earlier thirteenth century, under Fulk Bassett, allegedly through inflation and the inordinate demands of the Bedern³, or, as in 1371, through the suspected dishonesty and mismanagement of Provost Adam de Lymbergh.⁴ Of the effects of the Black Death and of the dreadful storms which from time to time brought ruin to large areas of Holderness we hear nothing. No doubt they were reflected in lost account rolls, but the general impression is one of remarkable resilience, if not complete stability.

Such evidence as we have of the provostry accounts of the later middle ages shows that curious immutability of receipts common to so many land-owning institutions of the time. The explanation lies in the increasing practice from the mid-fourteenth century onwards of farming out both rentals and manors to reeves and other officials, the amounts expected by the official of the provostry and his receiver being 'pegged' to conventional figures. A similar expedient, as we shall see, was adopted

1. Poulson, op. cit, ii, p.644

2. Ibid, p.554

3. Reg. Gray, p.175, and below, p.149.

4. Beverley Documents from the Record Office (ed. William Brown) in The Transactions of the East Riding Antiquarian Society, v, pp. 36 - 37.

even earlier in the matter of thraves,¹ the annual render of the bulk of these being replaced by money 'pensions'. By the sixteenth century there was little room for variation in the overall revenues of the provostry - a development no doubt congenial to its absentee lord.

It only remains to observe that by 1530 the real value of the income of the provost's estates was being eroded by the inflation of the Tudor period. By then representative agricultural prices, applicable to the economy of the East Riding, had risen 59 points above the average level for the period 1451-75.² The now static revenue from land was therefore of considerably less worth to its last recipients than it had been to the clergy of the Act Book.

(b) The Prebendal Lands

Contrary to what is frequently supposed the individual prebends in Beverley did possess lands of their own - not very much, but sufficient to assert that they were more than mere portions in a common fund. The belief that the prebendaries - Professor Hamilton Thompson grudgingly accorded them that title³ - received the whole of their income at the hands of the provost, in other words, that each had a share in what was recognised as a single prebend, as had the 15 portionaries in the great prebend of Combe in Wells,⁴ is very far from the truth of their position.

Such may have been the case in the early years of the prebendal system, for the corrody in the Bedern was always regarded as the corpus of a prebend, but by the early fourteenth century this amount, then £12.13.4, accounted for considerably less than half the revenues of each prebendary.⁵

1. See below, pp. 80, 84.

2. R.B. Outhwaite, Inflation in Tudor and Early Stuart England (Studies in Economic History), p.10

3. V.C.H., Yorkshire, iii, pp.354 - 355

4. K. Edwards, English Secular Cathedrals in the Middle Ages, pp. 41, 241

5. See below, pp. 147 - 157.

By this time even the greater part of the render of thraves - always the major source of their income - had been divided among the prebends.

As a matter of fact the earliest contemporary evidence of the existence of prebends at Beverley, dating from the mid-twelfth century, refers to prebendal land.¹ At no time did property produce more than a fraction of the income of any prebend, and, being scattered in small parcels, for the most part in the vicinity of Beverley, it in no instance resembled the territorial units which formed the basis of the York and Southwell prebends.

Nevertheless these modest estates were the jealously guarded preserves, legally and administratively, of the prebendaries to whose prebends they were attached. When Henry de Carlton, prebendary of St. Stephen's Altar, defended his possession of lands in Cherry Burton against William de Brigham, valet of Roger de Clifford, lord of Westmoreland, in 1321 the chapter, after an inquisition, asserted that they had belonged to his prebend ab initio foundationis ecclesiae.² Patently an overstatement, it was nonetheless true that several prebends had possessed lands from time out of mind.

Save in a few insignificant instances no prebendary ever had a monopoly, even of the church's estates, in a particular locality. Thus St. Andrew's, St. Mary's and St. Stephen's all had lands in Cherry Burton;³ St. Peter's held four bovates in the middle field at Etton, adjacent to a holding belonging to St. Andrew's;⁴ and when, in 1307, Robert de Pickering endowed a chantry with eight shops he had erected on his prebendal property in Fishmarketgate in Beverley, the land was described as lying between holdings of St. Katherine's and St. Mary's prebends.⁵

1. For the caution to be set against this document see above p.35.

2. B.C.A., i, p.399

3. B.C.A., ii, pp.341, 395

4. *ibid*, pp.159 - 160

5. *ibid*, i, pp.206 - 207. For the likelihood that these properties were, in fact, prebendal mansions see below p.183.

The richest in property, however, was St. Martin's. It is also the only one for which a reasonably early rental is available. In 1307/8 its properties in Molescroft, to the north of Beverley, on the road to Leconfield, were yielding £6. 13. 10 in rents, and lands in Etton £4. 4. 1, a total of £10. 17. 11.¹ In 1535 these same estates were producing £9. 4. 3, the rents of Molescroft having increased to £7. 6. 3, but those of Etton contributing a mere 34/-.² The overall decline, however, was more than made good by income from additional lands to the tune of £3. 5. 0. Evidently we must look elsewhere to account for the fall of St. Martin's from the richest to one of the poorer prebends of the sixteenth century.³

Nevertheless St. Martin's to the last remained the chief landowner, as the following details from the Valor⁴ (1535) show:

P. of St. Peter's Altar		
Rents in Risby, Etton and Beverley.		£7. 8. 4
P. of St. Martin's Altar		
Rents in unspecified localities.	£3. 5. 0	
" " Molescroft	7. 6. 3	
" " Etton.	<u>1.18. 0</u>	12. 9. 3
P. of St. Katherine's Altar		
Rents in Beverley.	1. 5. 4	
" " Garton.	<u>2.12. 4</u>	3.17. 8
P. of St. Mary's Altar		
Rents in Beverley.	4.13. 4	
" " North Burton.	<u>2. 6. 4</u>	6.19. 8
P. of St. Stephen's Altar		
Rents in Cherry Burton.	13. 4	
" " Beverley.	<u>6. 5</u>	19. 9
P. of St. Andrew's Altar		
Rents in Cherry Burton.	2. 0. 0	
" " Tickton.	<u>1. 7. 2</u>	3. 7. 2
P. of St. James' Altar		
Rents in North Burton and Beverley.		19. 0
P. of St. Michael's Altar		
Nothing stated.		- - -
		£36. 0.10

1. *ibid*, p.215 - 216

2. Valor, v, p.130

3. *Below*, p.163

4. Valor, v, pp. 130 - 132.



THE CROSSING AND THE SOUTH TRANSEPT

The Valor omits all details of St. Michael's prebend, possibly because it was providing sustenance for a suffragan bishop at the time.¹ Its total value, however, is given as £31. 8. 4,² making it the poorest of the seven ancient prebends. It is most unlikely, therefore, that its property brought the total annual value of prebendal lands to any more than £40.

None of the canons seems to have been concerned to add^{to} the property of his prebend, at least after the thirteenth century. Most of the possessions in the localities mentioned above, as we have seen, are accounted for by incidental references in the Act Book and other fourteenth-century documents. Though some holdings declined in value over the years, others can be seen to have risen, and there seems no reason to suppose that their overall rental varied greatly from its Dissolution total.

(c) The Fabric Fund.

The formation of this account is nowhere recorded. Under one name or another it was probably as old as the church itself. It was naturally of the greatest significance in the latter half of the thirteenth century and throughout the fourteenth, when its custodians handled large sums for the ambitious building programme then in progress. At the time of the extant Chapter Act Book it was the recipient of monies from all manner of sources, ranging from the gleanings of the numerous collectors who toured the country in search of funds to local tokens of piety, to fines levied on errant members of the collegiate body.

By the mid-fifteenth century, when it had become ostensibly a repair fund, it was also the repository for several chantry endowments, its Receiver-General being charged with the payment of the appropriate chaplains. It was in this connection that it acquired many of the estates credited to it.

1. William Hogeson, titular bishop of Daria, see below, pp.A.150 - 151.
2. Valor, v, p.130

The most important single asset of the Fabric Fund in later years was the lucrative manor of Bentley, to which reference has already been made. In the Survey of 1086 it was listed among the lands of St. John as consisting of two carucates and a wood a league long and four furlongs in breadth¹ - surely one of the largest, and certainly one of the most rewarding in this part of the Riding. It had subsequently fallen into the hands of the Roumare family, but in the mid-twelfth century, through pressure, generosity or for conscience sake it was handed back to the Minster.² Who then had the administration of it we do not know, probably the provost and a number of trustees, but it never appears in the accounts of the provostry. In fact little further is known of its history until 1379, when, largely through the agency of Richard de Ravenser, who had recently relinquished the provostship, it was made over to the Fabric Fund to provide incomes for three chantry priests and to augment that of a fourth.³

Owing to substantial arrears and accepted falls in rent, not to mention varying expenses of management and methods of accounting, the precise value of the manor in a particular year is not easy to find.

In both 1445/6⁴ and c1542⁵ the gross rental was about £26, but in the former year, after allowing for rent falls, the amount actually due was only just over £20. In 1532 this latter total amounted to £18.16. 6,⁶ having deducted 17s in respect of decline in rent.

1. V.C.H., Yorkshire, ii, p.215.
2. E.Y.C., i, Nos. 106, 107
3. Poulson, Beverlac, ii, p.606. Ravenser was acting with 'three other lords of the manor of Bentley'. The chantries established were largely for the benefit of himself and his family. By what right he effected this arrangement we cannot say, but our belief that the transaction was a trifle dubious is further encouraged by Ravenser's involvement in a not dissimilar settlement at Waltham by Grimsby in the Lincoln diocese, by which he seems to have obtained the benefit of another chantry "on the cheap". (cf K.L.Wood-Legh, Perpetual Chantries in Britain, pp.108 - 109)
4. T.E.R.A.S., vi, pp. 62 - 87. Because certain relevant deductions have in most instances been made the figures which follow do not necessarily correspond with any appearing in the accounts cited.
5. Chantry Surveys, ii, pp. 551 - 552.
6. Poulson, op. cit., ii, pp. 624 - 627.

In addition to rents, the making of faggots in Bentley woods for sale in Beverley brought in a sizeable income: in 1445/6 it was, after deducting costs, £13. 14. 3,¹ but by 1532 it had fallen to £8. 4. 11. The Chantry Survey (c.1548) put this source of revenue at £10. 10. 0.²

In the former year, therefore, the total income from the manor, with the inclusion of one or two minor additions,³ amounted to £34. 10. 11, compared with £27. 6. 9 in 1532. Arrears in rent meant that in neither instance was the full revenue due actually realised: those brought forward in 1445/6 amounted to £21. 11. 11,⁴ but this was an accumulated total, and it is extremely difficult to say how much of this sum arose from the previous year's default.

Nor is allowance made for fees and repairs, which further reduced the amount for disbursement by the Receiver. The result of all these deductions was that, after the statutory payments had been made to the chantry priests, only a few shillings remained for the use of the Fabric Fund.

Over the years the sharpest decline had been in the proceeds from the 11 shops in Beverley which for some reason were included among the manor's assets. In 1445/6 they brought in £4. 0. 2, though their gross rental was £7. 7. 4;⁵ in 1532 only £3. 11. 0 was received.⁶ This points to the decline of Beverley Town in the later middle ages, and prepares us for yet more significant falls when we come to consider the bulk of the

1. T.E.R.A.S., vi, pp. 64, 66, 76. £4 for sale of trees is not included in this amount, since this item was non-recurring. Small amounts in respect of agistment and oak tops are added in the summary at the end of this section.
2. Chantry Surveys, ii, loc cit.
3. i.e. agistment, perquisites of courts etc.
4. T.E.R.A.S., vi, p.62
5. *ibid*, pp. 62, 68, 70.
6. Poulson, op. cit. p.625

Fabric Fund's holding in the immediate vicinity of the Minster.

In 1445/6 these last properties, nearly all of them small tenements, ought to have yielded a gross rental of £74. 18. 3¹ - nearly seven times that of the provostry in the same area. Rent falls, however, even after noting odd rises amounting to £1. 12. 0, reduced this figure by £15. 8. 4,² bringing the total rent due down to £59. 9. 11.

In fact only £43. 19. 11 was actually collected for handing over to Thomas Sprotley, Receiver and Warden of the Fabric, and this in spite of the carrying over of no less than £51. 1. 11³ in accumulated arrears from the previous years. Already it had become a permanent running deficit, never made good, but never written off, which, remaining fairly constant, continued little diminished up to the Dissolution.

The long list of defaulting tenants, some of them hopelessly in arrears, is perhaps the most eloquent evidence of the distress and decline in Beverley's fortunes in the late middle ages. The decay which later impressed Leland had long since set in, following, as it did, the departure of the cloth and dyeing industries to the West Riding, and the rapid rise of Kingston-upon-Hull as the principal sea-port and centre of commerce in the Humber area.

By 1532⁴ the malaise had reached a further stage. The arrears, featuring now only in the account of Robert Flee, the Receiver, remained - at the beginning of the year they amounted to £51. 16. 2 $\frac{3}{4}$,⁵ at the end of it to £48. 5. 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ ⁶ - but we hear more of prolonged vacancies and diminished values. From the collector's account we learn that the gross rental had sunk to £53. 19. 8, a decline of 28% from the 1445/6 figure,

1. T.E.R.A.S., vi, pp. 86, 88. i.e. £76.10.3 less £1.12.0 rent rises.

2. *ibid* p.96. i.e. £17.0.4 less £1.12.0

3. *ibid*, p.86

4. For this account, from which the figures which follow are deduced, see Poulson, Beverlac, ii, pp. 628 - 635

5. *ibid*, p.635

6. *ibid*, p.640.

but accepted falls in rent reduced the sum due from tenants who actually paid their rents to £42. 16. 2.¹

Since we are here concerned only with rents due, and other receipts accruing directly from land ownership, the overall income of the Fabric Fund (including that earmarked for chantry chaplains) from these sources in the two periods may be summarised as follows

	1445/6	1532
Rents and Farms of Bentley.	20. 5. 8½	18.16. 6
Proceeds from Bentley Woods	13.18. 4½	8. 4.11
Rents of Beverley.	59. 9.11	42.16. 2
	£93.14. 0	£69.17. 7 ²

1. *ibid*, p.635
2. The corresponding figures given in the Valor (1535) and the Chantry Survey (c.1552) respectively are:

	1535	c1552
Rents and Farms of Bentley	(22. 5. 0	25.19. 3
Proceeds from Bentley Woods	(	10.10. 0
Rents of Beverley	36.14. 4	42.10. 6
	£58.19. 4	£78.19. 9

The earlier total undoubtedly represents income after every expense of management has been deducted, but it does seem that the rent of the Bentley shops in Beverley has been transferred to the town rental in this reckoning. (Valor, v, p.132)

The later figures refer to gross income. The Chantry Survey gives the total value less reprises as £62.14. 8, but there is faulty reckoning here: the sum value of Bentley (rents and woods) less the bailiff's fee should read £33.15.11 (not £28.15.10). By a slip of the pen xxxiii has been written xxviii. The total, less reprises should therefore read £67.14.9. (Chantry Surveys, i, p.552).

(d) The lands of the minor corporations and chantries

There remain to be considered the landed assets of the lesser clergy. Small individually when compared with those already described, they were by no means insignificant when taken together. They will be considered more fully in connection with the clerks they helped to sustain.

(i) The vicars of Beverley are known to have held land as a body corporate from at least the last quarter of the thirteenth century. Sometime before his death in 1271 Simon de Evesham, archdeacon of Richmond and prebendary of St. Michael's Altar, granted a tenement in Minstermoregate to them to be held in frankalmoin in perpetuity.¹

From time to time similar donations came their way, usually at the hands of prebendaries, and as a rule for the performance of works of piety in the Minster: John de Nassington, that industrious servant of the Church of York and prebendary of St. Martin's Altar, left them £20 for a rent in his will in 1322,² whilst towards the end of the same century John de Burton of St. Katherine's granted 'to the vicars of the collegiate church of Beverley seven messuages, one acre of meadow, 8s 8d rent, and half an acre of land', all in the confines of the town.³

No full copy of the vicars' rental is extant, and not until the Dissolution are we given a clear statement of its value. Then it appears to have amounted to £12. 0. 0½.⁴

(ii) The berefellarii, known after their incorporation in 1471/72 as the 'seven parsons in the choir', accumulated rather less property, but in similar circumstances. It, too, lay for the most part in Beverley itself, but, again, no rental is available. In 1535 its annual value was assessed at £8. 13. 7.⁵

1. Yorkshire Deeds, ix, p.19.

2. B.C.A., ii, pp. 6-7.

3. T.E.R.A.S., v, p.40.

4. Poulson, op. cit., ii, p.645

5. ibid, p.644.

(iii) Sixteen chantries in the Minster and its precincts, and three more established in outlying prebendal chapelries, survived till the Dissolution.¹ Founded at various times from the mid-thirteenth century onwards, many had suffered from changing circumstances, especially in the fifteenth century. Some indeed had required virtual refounding, so great had been their decay. Little purpose is therefore served by attempting to assess their cumulative value save at the time of their abolition, when the Chantry Survey for Beverley affords a comprehensive account of their worth.¹

By their nature chantries did not as a rule accumulate endowments, and nearly all those at Beverley reached the sixteenth century supported only by their founders' (or refounders') initial benefaction. In years of declining fortunes few therefore enjoyed the security of income of the best endowed chantry, that of Holy Trinity, the two chantry priests of which received a fixed joint income of £14. 13. 4 from the manor of Bentley via the Fabric Fund.²

The highest paid individual chaplain, however, was the one who served the chantry of Corpus Christi and the Annunciation, founded by Canon Stephen Wilton in 1455. After deducting reprises from a gross income of £14. 2. 10 he was left with £11. 13. 5,³ considerably more than the stipend of a vicar, and not much less than that of the chancellor or the precentor. At the other end of the scale the chaplain of Grant's Chantry received only £3. 10. 4 clear,⁴ but he, one Nicholas Mell in 1548, was also one of the seven parsons, and so had a further income of £6. 13. 4.

We see, then, that taken together the value of the Minster's chantry lands was very considerable. Though some of these properties - a relatively small proportion of the whole - were held of the provost or of

1. Chantry Surveys, ii, pp. 531 - 537.

2. *ibid*, p.532; T.E.R.A.S., vi, pp. 72 - 73.

3. Chantry Surveys, ii, pp. 535 - 536; T.E.R.A.S., v, pp. 44 - 45.

4. Chantry Surveys, ii, p.535.

one of the prebendaries, they are included here, not having received consideration under earlier headings. Others, however, namely those of the chantries of Holy Trinity, St. John the Evangelist and St. Katherine's (in part) were vested in the Fabric Fund, and must therefore be excluded from present reckoning. If we deduct the value of these the total income from rents of the remainder is found to amount to no less than £120. 4. 11, a sum reduced by reprises to £105. 11. 6.

Such was the extent and value of all the lands of St. John in the late middle ages. Their total annual yield in the sixteenth century, allowing for accepted rent falls, but not for costs of administration, may be summarised in round figures as follows:

Lands of the provostry.	270
Prebendal lands	40
Lands of the Fabric Fund	70
" " " Vicars	12
" " " Parsons of the Choir	9
Chantry lands	120
	£521

So few comprehensive accounts for any section of these lands being extant, it is impossible to speak with assurance of the overall figures for earlier centuries, but it seems probable that the total income from estates varied little during the later middle ages, except, perhaps, in times of general disaster, notably in the decades of the Black Death. We have found hints that the revenues of the provostry lands were much the same in fourteenth century as they were in the sixteenth, and the same appears to have been true of prebendal holdings - examples of that strange immutability of dues and payments of the countryside, characteristic of England as a whole in the medieval period.

The yield of the Fabric Fund lands had clearly followed the decline of Beverley in later years, and it may be that those of the vicars and parsons suffered similarly, but the resultant loss to the overall value was balanced by the spate of chantry endowments of the fifteenth century.

Inflation, even more than actual decay, was the prime factor undermining the wealth of Beverley Minster in the pre-Dissolution years. Unlike the more provident monastic houses, great collegiate churches, such as Beverley, with most of their rents and farms fixed, their most gifted and responsible personnel frequently absent, and lacking the corporate will and effort to adapt their economies, were not well placed to meet the unprecedented inflationary spiral experienced by Tudor England.

The figures given above relate to a time when the rise in prices was well under way. Whilst it is hazardous to compare the real value of these sums with similar amounts two centuries earlier, it may well be that in the fourteenth century, that is, at the time of the extant Chapter Act Book, the same total would have been worth £850 or more in Dissolution terms.

2. THRAVES

The second and certainly the most unusual source of income for the collegiate body was its entitlement to a render of corn in respect of every plough in use in the East Riding, with the exception, it seems, of those within the liberty of Durham (i.e. Howden)¹. The unit of measurement was the thrave, allegedly derived from the Danish levy of hors-traffa, synonymous with what the Meaux chronicler calls hestornes, which raised provender for the Scandinavian occupation of Deira.² Though no longer in common parlance, there are still elderly farmers in various parts of Yorkshire who recall the term as describing a bale of threshed straw.

In the medieval north country, however, it represented a precise quantity of corn as it stood in the field. Best's Farming Book links the two notions in stating that "two stooks or twenty-four sheaves make a thrave of straw".³ Since the canons of Beverley were primarily interested

1. In the Valor (v, pp.3, 103, 130-132), however, prebends in York are shown as participating fully in the levy, i.e. Holme, Bugthorpe, Wilton, Wetwang, etc.. No instance has been found of a render being made from Howdenshire, which was almost certainly exempt.
2. See above p.7.
3. Henry Best, Rural Economy in Yorkshire in 1641 (S.S. vol.33), cited by Leach, B.C.A., i, p.xcviii. Though Master Fitzherbert has ten sheaves to the stook - "Set four sheves on one syde and iiii sheves on the other syde and ii sheves above" (The Booke of Husbandry, ed. W.W. Skeat) and the Danish trave has been held to mean a score of sheaves - the consensus of North English usage associates the thrave with 24. viz. N. Bailey's Dictionary, 1726 (3rd edn.): "A Thrave - 24 sheaves or 2 shocks of corn set up together N.C. (North Country)"; Dr. Samuel Johnson's Dictionary, 1792 (8th edn): "Thrave 2 - The number of two dozen", Skeats' Concise Etymological Dictionary (New Edn.) 1901: Thrave - ".... Swed. dial. trafve, 24 or 30 sheaves set up in shocks (F. Moller)". The reason for such a unit, apart from a unit of levy, is not obvious. One would like to believe that it arose from the practise of loading stooks in pairs, one from either side of the wagon as it was drawn between the rows, as was usual up to the coming of the combine harvester. It is unlikely, however, that any strip approximating to the ideal acre (40 perches long x 4 perches wide), on known medieval yields, would allow for more than one row of stooks of 12 sheaves each. Two factors alone are constant in all references to thraves: its Scandinavian origin and, in the context of a levy, its association with the plough (as opposed to the acre or boate) - an imprecise basis which provided a constant source of contention.

in grain it is more useful to learn that, according to Finchale Priory estimates of 1335-1339, five thraves yielded one quarter of corn.¹

This last reference is a reminder that the thrave was an accepted unit far beyond the East Riding, and that, though unusual, it was by no means unique, even as the basis of a render. In the Boldon Buke of 1183 it features as an emolument of the punderus, the medieval pounder or pinder, throughout the see of Durham, where this keeper of the pinfold almost invariably "has from each one plough one thrave of corn."²

The Hospital of St. Leonard, York, was the recipient of the most widespread render of thraves. Here the original donation, also attributed to Athelstan, allowed one thrave from every plough ploughing throughout the whole far-flung diocese of York i.e. in the counties of York,

1. The Charters of Endowment, Inventories, and Account Rolls of the Priory of Finchale (S.S., vol.6) Inventories and Account Rolls, pp. xvi-xxi. Wheat, barley and oats are all as a rule rated at five thraves to the quarter, though occasionally four thraves, and sometimes five-and-a-half, are reckoned to give this yield. The accountant's calculations in these equations are frequently erratic. The implications of this Finchale ratio are illuminating: if we apply Lord Beveridge's Winchester yield of 9.36 bushels of wheat per acre to the East Riding, then, on the basis of 10 stooks (5 thraves) giving 8 bushels, and one stook 0.8 bushels, an acre at wheat harvest cannot have held more than 12 stooks. The canons' entitlement of four thraves to the plough therefore represented almost two-thirds of an acre yield.

The Finchale equation seems somewhat on the heavy side: Beveridge puts the medieval quarter at 395lb (as opposed to the 480lb modern quarter) which means that a thrave of wheat yielded 79lb, a single stook half that amount, and a sheaf (at 12 to the stook) about 3.3lb (Lord Beveridge, The Yield and Price of Corn in the Middle Ages, Essays in Economic History, i, pp. 13-25). Such a heavy sheaf yield becomes more acceptable if indeed "wheat was cut with a sickle half way or more up the stalk...." (W.O.Ault, Open-Field Farming in Medieval England, p.28. See also H.S. Bennett, Life on the English Manor, p.83), and if we remember that the stalk was, in any case, much shorter then than now.

2. The Boldon Buke, A Survey of the Possessions of the See of Durham, ed. W. Greenwell (S.S. vol.25) pp.45, 50, 51, 54 (see also p.lxix)

Cumberland, Westmorland and Lancashire.¹ Nottinghamshire, however, may have been exempt.

Under the terms of the original donation attributed to Athelstan² the canons of Beverley laid claim to four thraves in respect of every active plough in the East Riding,³ that is, throughout the whole region bounded by the Derwent, the Humber and the sea. We may well wonder whether the donor in those early days fully appreciated the scope, still less the potential, of his largesse. It may well be that initially the levy was effective only in the more accessible areas between the High Wolds and the as-yet undrained Humber marshlands, and that a worthwhile extension of it to these remote and unpromising parts was wholly unforeseen.

Even so, though we know nothing of the proceeds of the Danish hestcornes, or of pre-Conquest arrangements for their collection, this award of thraves must have seemed one of extraordinary, almost unbridled, generosity. When added to the Minster's substantial land resources it

1. Dugdale, Mon. Angl., vi, pp.607 - 608; V.C.H., Yorkshire, iii, pp.336, 342; H.C.Y., iii, p.162. Originally granted to the Minster without reference to the Hospital, Petercorn, as it was known, was temporarily retrieved by the Crown for the purpose of exterminating wolves. Restored by William the Conqueror in 1069, it became illam antiquam elemosinam supra qua dictum hospitale fundatum existit. At their most profitable thraves produced £425.19.8 for the Hospital in 1376/7 (V.C.H., Yorkshire, iii, p.340), but their collection presented an even greater problem than did those of Beverley - not least in the East Riding, where we learn that the Abbey of Meaux, in 1420, was 20 years in arrears. (ibid). It is worth remembering, therefore, that East Riding parishes were called upon, throughout the middle ages, to render not four, but five, thraves to the plough, and this before the exaction of tithes. Neither the provostry nor any Beverley prebend is recorded as paying Petercorn, a strange omission were our Minster not exempt.
2. See above, p.7.
3. The plough here did not, as we shall see, necessarily equate with the carucate, as suggested by the Meaux chronicler - De unaquaque carucata terrae, id est ad cultrum et vomerem, quatuor travas de suis frugibus assignavit (Chronica Monasterii de Melsa, ed. E.A. Bond, ii, p.236).

meant not merely assured sustenance for the canons, but also a perpetual insurance - save in times of general calamity - against the misfortunes and mismanagement which beset other religious establishments throughout the middle ages.

(a) The Problems of Assessment

The bitterest and most vocal opponents of Beverley's thraves were the East Riding rectors upon whose parishes rested the basis of their assessment and collection. There is no evidence that the local clergy were ever held formally responsible for realising the canons' entitlement, yet it was to them that the chapter and the archbishop turned for the coercion of reluctant contributors.¹

The objections of the rectors, however, were founded on grievances deeper than distaste of a disagreeable task for which they had no sympathy. More often than not, as all concerned well knew, they themselves were prominent among the defaulters, and frequently the real obstacle to peaceful collection. Not only was a rector's own glebe subject to the levy but also his tithes.²

The fact that thraves were assessed by reference to the plough, whereas tithes taxed the crop, raised obvious confusion and sense of outrage. It meant in practice that the Minster had a prior and overall claim, and that parish clergy had to await the arrival of its agent before exacting their dues. If, unmindful of their salvation, they were to step in first

1. As, for instance, in 1353, when Archbishop Thoresby, having received complaint from the provost and chapter that "certain degenerate and irreligious people, having no reverence for the glorious confessor and bishop St. John, have striven to withdraw certain portions of the said sheaves and for some time have withdrawn and unjustly retained them", ordered the parish clergy "in virtue of your obedience and under penalty of suspension to denounce solemnly before clergy and people in every parish church under you on three Sundays that all who detain or withdraw thraves have fallen under the sentence of the greater excommunication". (Y.D., ix, pp. 16-17)

2. B.C.A., ii, pp. 57, 67, 89.

they were liable to be dubbed sons of Belial, and accused of putting their sickle into another's crop.

A further advantage of the plough-basis was, of course, that it ensured a constant render, not subject, as were the rector's tithes, to the vagaries of East Riding weather and pestilence. Flooding after ploughing and other causes of crop failure were the misfortune of the parish clergy, not of the distant canons. In such circumstances, with collection often in the hands of insensitive and over-zealous agents, who were probably themselves hard-bitten corn merchants, the grievances of the parishes are not hard to imagine.¹

Disadvantages, on the other hand, were manifold, and raised many questions. Was a plough to be taken into account when it ploughed for only four or five days in the year? What was the position of a man who used the same plough in three different parishes? and, not least, who was to determine the number of ploughs in use, the agent, the rector, the chapter or the lord?²

Though the chapter was induced to dispense with, for a time at least, the services of professional agents,³ its response to these and many other queries was simple and unbending: If a plough was used, no matter how little, it attracted the customary levy.⁴ Where it ploughed was strictly irrelevant,⁵ its inclusion in the assessment of a particular parish being a matter for determination by the lord.⁶

Clearly such a system called for constant surveillance and review. Its niceties, and the fraud to which it was so patently open, never ceased to tax the vigilance of both provostry and chapter. The canons' reputation

1. ibid, p.88 - 89

2. All these questions, in the form of grievances, together with activities of agents, were raised by the rectors of the Harthill deanery in 1329 (B.C.A., ii, pp. 87 - 89)

3. ibid, p.98.

4. ibid, p.88, See also p.67

5. ibid, pp.34, 88.

6. ibid, p.89

as litigants was gained largely through their endless battle for thraves. A donation bestowed with more piety than consideration of its consequences set them grievously at odds with their fellow clergy and injected a gratuitous element of bitterness into the spiritual life of the community.

Arguments for modification of the means of assessment must at length have prevailed among all concerned. Though the striking absence of variation in parochial payments may, in the first instance, be put down to the immutability of rural and ecclesiastical arrangements, by the fourteenth century it probably indicates a pegging of annual quotas.¹ This, after all, was a necessary step towards the ultimate commutation of corn renders into the fixed money payments of pre-Reformation accounts.

The plough unfortunately lay at the root of only part of the issues surrounding the assessment of thraves. What of the corn itself? Was it to be rendered in oats or in the more costly hard corns?

One of the grievances of the Harthill rectors in 1329 was that whereas the chapter had formerly exacted in respect of each plough one thrave of wheat, one of barley and two of oats, it now claimed two of wheat and two of barley. Significantly the prebendaries did not deny this, responding that they simply followed ancient practice, and did nothing new.²

The point was not unimportant, since throughout the middle ages wheat retained its relative value at roughly three times that of oats. We would probably be right in seeing this particular complaint as a shot in the debate which ended in a change from an initial reckoning in wheat terms to the almost universal render of oats of later centuries. Such a transition, we believe, implied an effective tripling of the thrave render.

1. See below, p.94.

2. B.C.A., ii, p.88

Provostry accounts at the eve of the Dissolution explicitly value oats, in the context of thraves, at 1s 4d per quarter.¹ In Tudor England this was clearly a notional price from the long past, left far behind by subsequent inflation. In fact 1s 4d is found to have been the basic and unchanging 'denomination' in the valuation of all thraves over the centuries. From the mid-thirteenth century, when a number of remote parishes were already paying 'pensions' in lieu of thraves, money renders were, almost without exception, multiples or halves of this sum.²

Two possibilities, not necessarily mutually exclusive, may account for this strangely constant factor. 1s 4d certainly approximated to the prevailing price of oats at the end of the twelfth century³ - the precise period when we believe thraves outside Holderness were partitioned among the newly established prebends.⁴ We may suppose that it was also the time when pensions in outlying areas were assessed or at least reviewed (as they would have to be in the interests of equitable apportionment). Though the original donation was undoubtedly interpreted by the Church, as we shall see presently, as meaning a wheat render, oats, on the evidence of later thrave payments, was the main corn crop of the Riding. Realism and simplicity of reckoning would therefore suggest 1s 4d, the price of the most general and cheapest corn, as the basic unit of calculation.

Although the value of all corn was subject to short term fluctuation, and though the price of oats rose gradually over subsequent centuries, inflation was never so steep as to prompt an adjustment of a basis the stability of which was in the interests of all. Thus, when the time for general commutation at length arrived, equity naturally demanded that thrave-paying parishes should receive the same treatment as those already

1. Poulson, op. cit., p.640

2. See, for instance, pensions due to St. Martin's prebend as recorded in 1308. (B.C.A., i, p.216)

3. See below, p.156.

4. See above, p. 37.

yielding pensions. That this was indeed the case is borne out by the fact that new commutations were also in multiples of 1s 4d.

The second possibility, put forward by William Farrer, is that this basic sum of reckoning had a far more ancient origin, that it was indeed a vestige of the remote past. 1s 4d corresponded to the old Danish ore.¹ If the hestcornes due from certain communities had been the subject of commutation during the Danish occupation their payment in ores would doubtless have been inherited by the canons as pensiones.

This consideration has the attraction of endowing a rather curious amount with an almost sacrosanct quality, sufficient to explain its persistence throughout the history of thraves. It also accords well with the Scandinavian association of the ploughland (plogesland) and the plough as a unit of measurement and of taxation.² On the other hand, if the implication is that the terms of any Danish commutation were one ore for a quarter of oats, not of wheat, (a precarious assumption since we do not know the purchasing power of the ore relative to corn), then we should reject it in view of the strong evidence that thraves fell to the canons as a levy of wheat, or at least hard corn. We prefer to think of any parity as a happy coincidence which may well have been in the mind of medieval legislators to give permanent sanction to a practical arrangement.³

Even the East Riding rectors at their most vociferous acknowledged that half the render was customarily in hard corn,⁴ and the canons in no way conceded an oat element in the render strictly due to them. There are strong circumstantial reasons for believing the chapter to have been on firm ground on this point.

1. ETC., i, pp. 95 - 96

2. F. M. Stenton, Anglo-Saxon England, (O.U.P.), p.507

3. Nowhere in extant records is there explicit reference to the Danish ore in the context of thraves.

4. B.C.A., ii, p.88

If the thraves of the original donation had been in oats then, on the evidence/^{of} parochial assessments as they appear in provostry records, their relationship to the plough had lost all meaning. In fact their render at the rate of four to the plough remained the one incontrovertible factor throughout the middle ages, reiterated at every turn. If in addition we recall the perhaps optimistic contemporary reckoning that five thraves yielded one quarter of corn an oat-basis of the levy would confront us with a wholly absurd number of ploughs in every parish.

Take, for instance, the substantial parish of Hornsea, in the North Hundred of Holderness, which, before commutation, returned 65 quarters of oats to the provost.¹ If its original assessment had indeed been in oats its render would have been 325 thraves (65 x 5) which in turn would have imputed to it no less than 81 ploughs ($\frac{325}{4}$). Only by reducing Hornsea's contribution to wheat terms does it become realistic and meaningful.

Assurance that the price of wheat at the end of the twelfth century, in the episcopate of Roger de Pont l'Évêque,² was approximately three times that of oats is offered by Lord Beveridge's figures for the diocese of Winchester in the first half of the thirteenth century. There the value of wheat was then 4.01s per quarter, and that of oats 1.60s - the former rather lower, and the latter rather higher, than we might expect in the predominatingly oat-growing East Riding.³

If on this basis we express Hornsea's render in wheat (i.e. about 22 quarters) the number of ploughs envisaged is found to be 27.5. As it happens the number attributed to the parish as normal in the Domesday Survey is 27.⁴ This last fact is, no doubt, pure coincidence, but when

1. A full list of renders due to the provost from the parishes of Holderness and certain monastic houses having interests in the wapentake is given in an agreement between Provost John de Barningham and the executors of his predecessor, Robert Rolleston, contained in the Provost's Book (ff113b-116) and printed in Poulson, op cit, pp.596-600. It is of especial value since it reiterates a much earlier compact between Provost Aymo de Carto and the executor of Peter de Cestria c.1294.

2. See above, p. 37.

3. Beveridge, op cit, p.20

4. V.C.H., Yorkshire, ii, p.265

this same reckoning is applied to smaller Holderness parishes - say, for the sake of illustration, those paying 20 quarters of oats (i.e. Winestead, Halsham, Catwick, Burton Pidsea and Hollym),¹ the ploughs required to turn their soil number what a study of those places leads us to expect, namely 8.3 ploughs.

When, at length, the thrave renders of such parishes were commuted to money payments, the late twelfth-century wheat basis was in effect restored, or rather confirmed, oats being valued, as we have noted, at 1s 4d. These payments feature frequently in the Valor of 1535,² by which time the contributions of some had been varied according to their fortunes. Most, however, remained constant, to bear out the valuations we have mentioned i.e. Catwick with its 20 quarters of oats henceforward paid 26s 8d, etc.³

Whilst force of circumstances, such as a local transition from arable to pasture and land erosion in Holderness, sometimes necessitated reassessment of earlier renders in kind, instances are generally rare. The most notable characteristic of thrave renders overall is their immutability.

Writing c.1360 the chronicler of Meaux gave the contributions of his house's appropriated parishes as: Skipsea 43 quarters, Easington 44 quarters and Keyingham 17½ quarters (all of oats).⁴ By this time they were clearly customary annual payments of ancient standing. A few years before the dissolution of the Minster chapter precisely these amounts feature in the Valor as commuted payments (at 1s 4d per quarter): Skipsea 57s 4d, Easington 58s 8d and Keyingham 23s 4d.⁵

1. Poulson, loc cit.

2. Valor Ecclesiasticus temp. Henry VIII, auctoritate regia institutus, ed. J. Caley and I. Hunter, v, passim.

3. Valor, v, p.117.

4. Chronica Monasterii de Melsa, ii, p.236.

5. Valor, v, p.108.

The consistency of pensions, those early commuted payments, is yet more remarkable. Of money contributions due to the prebendary of St. Martin's in 1308 from Bridlington Priory and six parishes on the perimeter of the Riding¹ only the one paid by Skirpenbeck changed in the two centuries that followed. The sum of 5s 4d listed in the Valor as being the assessment of Settrington, near Malton,² was being sought by the chapter in 1310 on behalf of the old and blind Walter de Gloucester, prebendary of St. Andrew's,³ and the 4s expected of Sherburn in Hertfordlythe in 1535⁴ was the cause of the prior of Guisborough's excommunication in 1314.⁵ The 5s 4d pension due from the Meaux parish of Nafferton, which Farrer saw as representing four Danish ores,⁶ is also quoted unchanged in the Valor.⁷

Wholesale commutation, whenever it occurred, was not likely, therefore, to be a matter for bargaining, save, perhaps, in the case of the bulk payments of the religious houses. So far as individual parishes were concerned it simply followed the age-old basis of substituting 1s 4d for each quarter of oats due, thereby arriving at sums long recognised by the chapter in its calculation of prebendal incomes.

Both the prebends and the provostry must have lost considerably on the book value of the render by commutation. Even if it took place in the early fifteenth century (as it may well have done⁸), when the steady rise

1. B.C.A., i, p.216. Skirpenbeck paid 2s in 1308, 6s 8d c.1535 (Valor, v, p.106) See also Valor, v, p.120, where Bridlington's payment to St. Martin's is distinguished from that due to the provost.
2. Valor, v, pp.103, 131
3. B.C.A., i, pp.266 - 267.
4. Valor, v, p.131.
5. B.C.A., i, p.313.
6. E.Y.C., I, pp.95 - 96.
7. Valor, v, p.108.
8. A search for a date for general commutation would probably prove fruitless, since the process is likely to have taken place piecemeal. For evidence of some form of commutation in the deanery of Harthill as early as c.1338 see below, p.94. On the other hand some East Riding parishes were clearly contributing in kind in 1353 (Y.D., ix, pp.16 - 17). Though the oat renders of Holderness listed in the Provost's Book c.1451 (see above, p.83 n1)

of most basic commodities was sharply checked,¹ the Minster on the face of it, forfeited at least 8d per quarter. In practice, however, though the bulk of thraves had probably from the outset been sold on the spot, it is unlikely that the church in its dealings with agents and merchants had ever realised anything like the full market price. Good allowance, we may be sure, was at all times made for the latter's profit margin and transportation costs.² In later years, with absenteeism among the canons more the rule than the exception, and personal oversight and involvement not what it had been, the whole system must have become that much more vulnerable to fraud - fraud not only on the part of contributors, but also of men who by this time farmed the thraves on behalf of absent prebendaries.

Moreover only commutation could lay to rest the endless misunderstandings and costly disputes which surrounded payments in kind. Even in the latter half of the fourteenth century the writer of the Meaux Chronicle was apparently uncertain as to whether his abbey's render was based upon the carucate or the plough. Certainly he was recording the popular opinion of the East Riding rectors when he expressed the abiding belief that all

Note 8 continued from previous page:

do not necessarily imply actual contributions in kind, it may well be that the provost continued to receive corn from all these sources at a much later date than was the case of prebendal thraves. Since he was never wholly relieved of corn payments to the prebendaries, dignitaries and the Bedern some of his contributors were still making corn renders at the Dissolution.

1. Beveridge, op.cit., p.20, Table iv, where the price of oats derived from the account rolls of nine Winchester manors is shown as 2.05 shillings (1400-1449) as compared with 2.72 shillings (1350-1359). Thorold Roger's corresponding 'general average' figures (also given here) are 2.17 shillings and 2.61 shillings respectively.
2. See below, p.356 - 358.

were being duped by the Minster authorities in the matter of what type of corn was implied by the donation of thraves: Having described the latitude of the levy he continues

..... Quae quidem provincia antiquitus Deira vocabatur, de unaquaque carucata terrae, id est ad cultrum et vomerem, quatuor travas de suis frugibus assignavit. Quae etiam fruges antiquitus hescornes vocabantur. Sed perversi lectores partem inferiorem litterae h abrascentes, h in b ad libitum per clausuram partis h litterae abrasae transformant et sic h ibidem postponentes et bestcornes pro hestcornes sinistre nominantes, rectores ecclesiarum et cultores terrarum multipliciter inquietant. Nam eadem quatuor travae de colonis dictae provinciae per praefectos regios exigebantur et ad pabulum equorum regis singulis annis solebant persolvi et inter regia vectigalia computabantur. Sed qualiter rectores ecclesiarum ad solutionem dictarum travarum [tenentur], praesertim cum nihil aliud quam decimas suas percipiant de colonis, et quateria pro travis ipsis continue liberentur modernis temporibus, penitus ignoratur ¹

The chronicler was writing when Abbot Robert de Beverley ruled at Meaux (1356 - 1367). If at this late stage one of the largest contributors remained perplexed and disgruntled by the ambiguities of the system we must not be surprised if the whole truth of its working continues to elude us.

¹. Chronica de Monasterii de Melsa, ii, p.236. Much the greater proportion of the Meaux render was never commuted. To the last most of it was earmarked to meet the provost's statutory obligations (see below, p.102).

(b) The Problems of Collection.

The gathering of the thraves of Holderness, due in toto to the provostry,¹ seems to have been a comparatively straightforward and well-organised operation. Contributing parishes formed a consolidated area covering the length and breadth of an ancient deanery and wapentake in which custom and routine had been established from the earliest times. Apart from powerful sanctions at his disposal the provost could bring to the business an organisation run by recognised officials, who included among their number his appointed travatarius (thrive collector)².

Corn rendered in sheaves was to be collected, under normal circumstances, between Michaelmas (29th September) and Martinmas (11th November).³ In Holderness, however, this meant no hard labour, it being the responsibility of the payers to deliver their thraves at the door of the nearest provostry grange.⁴ For contributors in the northern part of the deanery this would undoubtedly mean Leven, one of the chief manors of the provostry, where the dairy herd, pigs, and much of the breeding stock were kept.⁵ Since the provostry understandably grew little corn on its own account, a fair proportion of the render reaching Leven was probably used as fodder, though the bulk, after the requirements of the canons and the Bedern had been met,⁶ doubtless went as threshed grain direct to the cornmarket at Beverley.

1. See above, p. 39.

2. B.C.A., ii, p.34.

3. ibid

4. ibid, pp. 15 - 16.

5. See below, p. 131.

6. Hard corn for the Bedern, however, seems to have been delivered direct from the contributing parishes of Sigglesworth and Rise (Poulson, op cit, p.621)

Welwick, the other Holderness manor, on the approach to Spurn, was probably the receiving point for the southern parishes. Here the provostry maintained its flock of some six hundred sheep¹ which, again, must have been sustained in the winter months by part of the render. The bulk of thraves from this seemingly isolated area were in all probability transported after threshing to nearby Patrington Haven for shipment, together with wool and lamb carcasses, along the North Channel of the Humber to Hull or Beverley itself.²

An efficient system of collection did not necessarily mean that 'the men of Holderness' invariably responded with a glad mind. Repeated exhortations to full and prompt payment suggest that they did not. The rector of Hornsea, who in 1323 happened to be Pilefort, Cardinal Priest of St. Anastasia, needed to be convinced that this unusual levy was indeed legitimate, and the rector of St. Nicholas', Beverley, had to be despatched to Rome to this end.³ Had the records of the official of the provostry survived to match the Chapter Act Book no doubt they would reveal the same unremitting resentment in this coastal area as we find elsewhere in the Riding.

Commutation, we believe, was applied later in Holderness than was the case in the neighbouring deaneries which yielded thraves to the prebendaries. Given established administrative facilities, together with a wide catchment area of adjacent parishes, the increased price of oats in the later middle ages clearly made it in the provost's interests to

1. See below, p.38.

2. June A. Sheppard, The Draining of the Marshlands of South Holderness and the Vale of York (E.Y.L.H.S. No. 20), p.6.

3. B.C.A., ii, pp.30, 35, 36. In the cardinal's protest probably lay the seeds of the crisis of thraves which brought the matter before parliament on more than one occasion. Pilefort had succeeded Archbishop Melton in the rectory of Hornsea, and was already influential in the curia at the time of the latter's long quest for consecration. (See below, pp.248 - 249).

realise and market his corn dues for as long as he could. With his total receipts from thraves well in excess of 1500 quarters of oats and over 160 quarters of hard corn¹ the basic commutation figure of 1s 4d per quarter must, in these circumstances, have made the collection of sheaves a worthwhile enterprise.

In any event 587 quarters of oats and 25 quarters 2 bushels of drag were required annually to meet the entitlements of the canons, the officers and the Bedern.² It was the duty of the travatarius to assign certain renders to meet these totals sometime before Christmas, and to collect them, presumably threshed, by 15th May.³ Arundel's statutes laid it down that the provost should make distribution of corn so reserved on the Feast of St. John the Archbishop (25th October).⁴ Though the statement of the Valor suggests that by the sixteenth century each of the canons received £3. 9. 4 in lieu of his 52 quarters of oats,⁵ the evidence of the provostry accounts is that any such commutation was effected after collection.⁶ If this were so the provost gained considerably in the process - possibly as much as £20.

Whatever problems may have confronted the provost in the realisation of thraves he was spared many of the hazards and personal frustrations experienced elsewhere by individual prebendaries. Though the full weight of the chapter was ever available to meet concerted opposition, and to deal with flagrant neglect of obligations, each canon was responsible for the collection of his prebend's thraves. Indeed it was of the essence of a true prebendal system that it should be so.

The best extant references to the actual gathering of thraves both date from the mid-fourteenth century. They show the canons, or "their

1. See below, p. 99.

2. See below, p. 102.

3. See below, p. 94.

4. B.C.A., ii, p. 273

5. Valor, v, pp. 130 - 132

6. Poulson, op.cit., pp. 640, 643

servants and ministers in the name of the same," taking their sheaves "from the fields where they grow" as they had done "throughout the time which memory of man knoweth not to the contrary". The coercive nature of Archbishop Thoresby's mandate to the East Riding clergy of 1353,¹ the first of these, itself questions his assertion that the chapter enjoyed its rights "peacefully and quietly". In fact it reminds us that the earlier battles of the Act Book decades had solved nothing.

The problem at this time clearly arose from the levy as it applied to the rectors' tithes, for there can be little doubt that the "degenerate and irreligious people" guilty of removing a portion of the crops were local clergy making sure of their dues undiminished by the canons' exactions. At harvest time four years later (August, 1357) the official of the court of York, specifically naming parishes appropriated to Watton Priory, directed that parishoners were to separate one-tenth of their crops as they stood in the strips, and not to remove them without licence from the clergy until the canons had taken their share.²

Our observations upon the collection of thraves, made in the detachment of a student's desk, are apt to minimise the practical difficulties it imposed upon individual prebendaries. The renders allocated to each followed, as we shall see, no regular pattern. Although they came, for the most part, from groups of adjacent parishes, this was not invariably the case. St. Andrew's prebend, for instance, drew its thraves from such diverse places as Driffild and Cottingham, whilst St. Martin's, with the bulk of its dues issuing from a string of parishes between Market Weighton

1. Y.D., ix, pp.16-17.

2. ibid, pp.17-18. The translation here given runs: "..... the parishoners shall faithfully separate the whole tenth part, without any diminution or subtraction, of the fruits growing on their lands from the nine parts and shall place them in the fields where they grow in full and separately, and that then they, or any others shall not lay hands on the said tithes nor move the same (since they are) the possession of the canons and prebendaries" The translator's insertion is misleading: the tithes were not the possession of the canons. The purpose of the exercise was to ensure that thraves were paid on these tithes before their removal.

and the River Derwent, also listed Kilnwick and Beswick, to the north of Beverley, among its parishes, and shared an interest in Etton's thraves with St. James' prebend.¹

The whole business of collection had to be accomplished promptly and briefly during harvest time, despite the uncertainty of the weather, and often in an atmosphere of ill-will. A prebendary's representative would arrive on the scene as an outsider if not altogether a stranger, to carry off portions of ~~hard~~-won crops on behalf of an unknown and remote recipient. If he arrived late, after the corn had left the field, the extent of his entitlement, if not entirely a matter of guesswork, at least lay open to question. Parishioners, unlike those of Holderness, were under no obligation to transport a prebendary's corn, and in any case the latter lacked the provost's advantage of having a grange not far distant to receive it.

In these circumstances it was natural that the canons should seek all manner of expedients to relieve them of such an impossible chore. One of the earliest prebendaries, Richard de Cornubia, who was also Chancellor of York, in 1225 threw the burden on to the chapter in return for 12 marks a year.² This solution, we may believe, was one not encouraged in later years, for it defeated the chief reason for the partition of thraves.

A more acceptable course, which became almost universal practice, was, as we have seen, resort to an agent or a buyer. The two were not necessarily the same, indeed the distinction became in some instances crucial. It was the office of the agent to collect a prebendary's thraves and then to dispose of them as instructed. A buyer on the other hand made a deal with the prebendary concerned long before harvest time and, having purchased the thraves, collected the corn himself. More often than not, however, they acted in concert.

It was a complaint of the Harthill rectors in 1329 that agent and buyer came together on the field, where a considerable amount of bargaining

1. For fuller consideration of the distribution of thrave sources see below, pp, 108 - 110.
2. Reg. Gray, p.2; See above, p.41.

took place. Together, it was alleged, they extorted the maximum number of sheaves from the growers, and then proceeded to sell them again to other purchasers.¹ Clearly something of this nature had taken place in the parish of Kirk Ella, to the consternation of its Italian rector, Ichorius de Concoreto, whose protest to the archbishop may well have sparked off the rebellion of his English brethren.²

The cause célèbre which ensued has received the lengthy and entertaining notice of Mr. Leach.³ It ended in victory for the chapter, but also in some modification, favourable to the rectors, of the manner of collection.

Confronted with the concerted opposition of the local deanery the chapter met in force. At their convocation of November, 1330,⁴ they presented a front as formidable as that shown in similar circumstances five years earlier.⁵ Led by Robert de Pickering, the distinguished dean of York, and including among their number Denis Avenel, archdeacon of the East Riding, and William de Abberwick, precentor of York and a former chancellor of the University of Oxford, they despatched to parliament the prebendary of St. James', Nicholas de Huggate,⁶ who was also provost of Beverley and a much favoured royal clerk. Though Huggate went armed with an array of charters and letters, it required a second mission on the part of this seasoned negotiator, in 1333,⁷ to produce

1. B.C.A., ii, pp.87 - 89

2. B.C.A., ii, pp.92 - 94, 100. Ichorius (whose name is elsewhere given as Ichorius, Itherius and Itier) took the matter to the court of York, where the chapter was represented by Nicholas de Huggate. He was no distant or ordinary provisor; for a full account of his activities as Papal Collector in England 1328 - c1334 see W.E. Lunt, Accounts Rendered by Papal Collectors in England 1317 - 1378, pp.xxiii - xxviii. In his years of office he acquired the rectory of Adderbury, Oxon, as well as that of Kirk Ella, prebends in Salisbury, Hereford, St. Paul's, London and Ledbury, and the archdeaconry of London.

3. B.C.A., i, pp.cii - cv.

4. ibid., ii, pp.91 - 94.

5. See below, pp.207 - 213.

6. B.C.A., ii, p.93

7. ibid., pp.105 - 106.

"A gracious letter of the Lord King for payment of thraves to the Church of Beverley without any impediment."¹

Meanwhile, however, a fifth canon, Wilfred de Gopo St. Peter, a long-term residentiary and doctor of civil law, had, at the behest of Archbishop Melton, met with a delegation of the rectors, and had achieved a measure of agreement. We are not told the nature of Melton's counsel (apparently he had offered two solutions for consideration) but, in so far as it found acceptance, it proposed parochial arrangements for a local purchaser or farmer of thraves, and may well have conceded to individual rectors and their parishioners some say in who such a person should be.²

If this meant (as we think it did) that in future each parish was to organise its own render it almost certainly implied some formal 'pegging' of amounts due, for no prebendary could possibly leave such reckoning in the hands of avowed opponents. This would certainly go far to explaining how parochial renders came to be assessed in grain measurements (i.e. quarters and bushels), and how local purchasers could be held answerable for fixed money payments.

Confirmation that arrangements along these lines were subsequently acted upon as a matter of policy is to be found, perhaps, in a spate of confessions of non-payment on the part of local personages - all save one in the deanery of Harthill - in the years 1338 - 1339.

In August, 1338, Marmaduke Constable appeared personally before the chapter's auditor and acknowledged a debt of $3\frac{1}{2}$ marks in respect of St. Martin's thraves in Holme-on-Spaldingmore.³ He was ordered to pay in future between Ascensiontide and the Feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist on pain of excommunication. In September William de Skelton of Driffild confessed to owing £6 for thraves in Driffild, and received a similar warning.⁴ In 1339 the auditor found the rector of Walkington and laymen from Cottingham, Elloughton, Thixendale and Holme (Marmaduke

1. ibid, pp.109 - 110

2. ibid, pp.106 - 108

3. ibid, p.126

4. ibid, pp.128-129

Constable again) all in arrears with their payments.¹

In all eight cases were recorded in these years, and were the Act Book more complete at this stage we would doubtless know of more. Several common features are evident: a local man - a lord of the manor in one instance, a rector in another - had purchased the thraves of a parish, and was answerable for a predetermined sum; he appears personally and the parish itself is no longer directly involved; his debt is undisputed.

This leasing of thraves was probably achieved piecemeal as opportunity and expediency dictated. There is no evidence to show that it ever became universal even in independent parishes: certainly it was not the case, as we have seen, in those appropriated to Watton Priory.² Nor was it ⁱⁿ any way novel in the fourteenth century. Some canons at Beverley, in common with others elsewhere, had long resorted to leasing their prebends in their entirety (apart, of course, from the corrody). Indeed such recourse had a few years earlier (in 1316) been the subject of an act in convocation

Item ordinatum est et statutum, quod Canonicus volens dimittere prae bendam suam ad primum, nulli eam dimittere, nisi alicui de con canonicis suis, si quis eam recipere voluerit, et tantum dare quantum aliquis alius, nec portiones prae bendae suae, videlicet travas vel decimas, corrodiis dumtaxat exceptis, nulli reddat, nisi uni de con canonicis suis, qui easdem travas et decimas eo pretio, quo alii,

1. *ibid*, pp. 131 - 132.

2. see above, p.91.

voluerit comparare.¹

The difference which appears after the compromise with the Harthill rectors lay in the formality now given to the leasing of thraves, promoted as it seems to have been, as a matter of chapter policy. Hitherto leasing of parochial renders had been the subject of private transactions between individual prebendaries and their contributing parishes, sometimes with unsatisfactory results.

What could happen when the vigilance of a prebendary was relaxed, even after leasing, is well illustrated by the plight of the elderly and blind Walter de Gloucester in 1309. Twenty years earlier, shortly after relinquishing the archdeaconry of York, he had leased his Cottingham thraves to the rector, who, by the year in question was an absentee, John Bigod.² In 1309/10 Bigod was four years in arrears with his payments, and the chapter had to invoke the secular authorities in order to recover the thraves in kind. This they did, the sheaves actually being delivered to the door of Gloucester's prebendal house in Beverley. At the same time Bigod made satisfaction for the pension due in respect of thraves from his other parish of Settrington, withheld by him for no less than nine years.³ Nor was he the only culprit, for his neighbour at Cottingham, the rector of Kirk Ella (a predecessor of Concoreto), had failed to make payment for

1. B.C.A., i, p.340. A typical example of this practise is that provided by Robert de Northburgh, kinsman of John de Nassington and his successor in St. Martin's prebend, who spent most of his time as a canon of Beverley studying at Orleans. Unable, as he wrote, to cultivate lands belonging to the prebend he sought permission to lease them. We may be sure that he reached a similar arrangement regarding his thraves. Others, such as the alien king's clerk Peter Aymerici (Emery), who equally viewed his prebend as a mere pecuniary advantage, placed their dues in the hands of an attorney ad colligendum, percipiendum et levandum fructus, redditus et proventus, vendendum et alias distrahendum, et ad firmam seu assensam tradendum, et aliter de eisdem, prout sibi videbitur, disponendum: ita tamen quod juste et licite fiat quod in praemissis fieri contigerit per eundem (B.C.A., i, pp. 212 - 213).

2. ibid, p.243 *see the references?*

3. ibid, p.267

his chapelries of Ulfreton and Willardby,¹ and the Prior of Watton was well in arrears with Gloucester's thraves in the parish of Birdsall.²

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By the time all these debts were made good we may be sure that the aged canon was past caring, for he died at the close of 1310 at his latter-day home at Sutton-on-Trent.³

Much depended upon the personalities of the people involved, and we are not to suppose that the fault invariably lay with the contributors. The temperamental Henry de Carlton, who occupied St. Stephen's prebend for much of the Act Book period, clearly tried the patience of such seasoned negotiators as Robert de Pickering and John de Nassington. In his prolonged quarrel with the Prior of Watton over arrears in payments the latter ended up in sympathy with the prior, notoriously reluctant payer though he was.⁴

Though we know little or nothing of the struggle for thraves in the thirteenth century or in the post-Act Book years we would probably be correct in seeing in the settlement of the Harthill rebellion the beginning of a movement towards those fixed money renders which feature, in order of prebends, in the Valor Ecclesiasticus.⁵

1. ibid, pp.260 - 261.

2. ibid, p.180 Birdsall rendered a pension.

3. ibid, p.268

4. ibid, pp.225 - 226, 339

5. See below, pp.351 - 355.

The Provosts' Thraves of Holderness

Passing reference has already been made to a composition of 1450 reached between Provost John Barningham and the executor of his predecessor, Robert Rolleston, regarding the transfer of the assets of the provostry to the incoming provost.¹ This agreement, which amended a similar one secured some 155 years earlier by that unsatisfactory provost, Aymo de Carto,² lists, among other things, all the grain due to the provostry as thraves from the parishes of Holderness.

The total render from the deanery in the mid-fifteenth century is found to have amounted to 1467 quarters 5 bushels of oats; 137 quarters 3 bushels of drag³; 21 quarters 4 bushels of barley and 4 quarters of wheat.

Over half of the oats (747 quarters 2 bushels) and more than two-thirds of the drag came from religious houses having land or churches (usually both) in the deanery:

Abbey of Meaux	117 quarters 4 bushels of oats; 6 quarters 4 bushels of drag.
Abbey of Kirkstall	241 quarters of oats; 31 quarters 4 bushels of drag.
Abbey of Thornton (Lincs.)	141 quarters 2 bushels of oats
Priory of Swine	122 quarters of oats; 61 quarters of drag
Priory of Bridlington	68 quarters of oats
Priory of North Ferriby	25 quarters of oats. ⁴
Priory of Nunkeeling	32 quarters 4 bushels of oats. ⁵

- ¹. The Provost's Book, ff 113b-116, see above, p. 83 n.1. Poulson (Beverlac, ii pp.596-600) gives a rather defective, and not wholly complete, translation of this document.
- ². B.C.A., i, pp.136-137, 143-144.
- ³. Mixed corn, usually barley and oats, but in this instance probably barley and wheat.
- ⁴. No church within the Deanery of Holderness was appropriated to North Ferriby, and the location of its interests is uncertain. Its render is not listed by Poulson (loc.cit.), but is included by him in a later reference (op.cit., p.640) as a payment of 33s 4d. Its alleged association here with 'ecclesiis in Holderness' is, however, demonstrably inaccurate.
- ⁵. Omitted by Poulson both as a priory and a parish. It is listed as rendering 32s 8d in the Valor (v, p.115).

Apart from the contribution of the Meaux grange of Wawne (Waghen) and the holding of North Ferriby all these amounts were accumulated from seventeen substantial appropriated parishes. They left the remainder of the Holderness render, i.e. 720 quarters 3 bushels of oats; 38 quarters 3 bushels of drag and all the wheat, to be paid by 26 individual parishes, some associated in a variety of ways with York and Beverley, but mostly independent rectories. Payments ranged from the 89 quarters and 77 quarters (both of oats) of Brandesburton¹ and Patrington respectively to the meagre 3 quarters expected of the church of Nuthill.

To reach the full total of the provost's receipts from thraves we need to add a few renders reserved to him from outside Holderness: Haisthorpe (3 quarters 6 bushels), Reighton (3 quarters) and the college of Lowthorpe (20 quarters) in the deanery of Dicker; Swanland (?), Skidby (22 quarters 4 bushels) and North Burton (22 quarters 4 bushels) in Harthill.² Ignoring the unknown, but certainly minute, quota of Swanland, these brought the overall total of oats due to the provostry from thraves to 1538 quarters 3 bushels.

Most of these figures relate to the fifteenth century, and it must be said that the Holderness levies were subject to greater variation than was the case elsewhere. This was especially true of those required of parishes in the southern end of the peninsula where, no doubt, even the

1. For some reason, not stated, the render of Brandesburton is omitted by Poulson, though it features in the Valor (v,119) as a pension of 118s 8d. For the possibility that, like the levy of the College of Sutton-in-Holderness (also omitted) it formed part of the stipend of the Sacrist (which features nowhere in the provost's accounts) see below p.104. Could this also explain the exclusion of the render of Nunkeeling from the provost's dues? The only parish exempt from thraves appears to have been Burstwick, for most of the middle ages the seat of the Seignory of Holderness. At the time of the Chapter Act Book it "had been the principal chamber manor of Edward II, and it was one of his favorite residences. It was a royal franchise, in effect, excluding the justices of assize and having its own justices, sheriff, coroner, escheator and collector of tenths and fifteenths." Warren O. Ault, 'Manors and Temporalities', in The English Government at Work, 1327-1336, iii, pp.33-34. Welwick, it should be added, was a demesne manor of the provostry.

2. Provost's Book, loc.cit.

provost of Beverley was obliged to acknowledge the devastating effects of sea and weather. Subsequent decades, however, saw renders here increased rather than diminished.¹

On the other hand the thraves of the religious houses remained constant over the centuries, the render of their constituent parishes varying not at all. At length the amounts expected of them in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were reflected (in terms of oats) in pre-Reformation money payments.²

By 1532, the only year for which comprehensive details of such amounts are available, much the greater proportion of the provost's thraves had been commuted to fixed sums. His statutory duty to make grain payments to the Minster clergy make it well nigh impossible to find a uniform basis of reckoning the amounts due, for the corn required was drawn from a variety of sources, and sometimes represented only a portion of the individual renders involved.³

1. i.e. Halsham rendered 20 quarters in 1450, 40s in the Valor; Winestead 20 quarters in 1450, 30s in the Valor; Patrington 77 quarters in 1450, £6. 8. 4 in the Valor. All were oat-yielding parishes.

2. i.e. The grain rendered in 1450 by the Abbey of Meaux in respect of its Holderness interests was apportioned thus:

The grange of Wawne	13 quarters of oats; 6½ quarters of drag.
Keyingham	17½ quarters of oats.
Easington	44 quarters of oats.
Skipsea	43 quarters of oats.

According to the Meaux Chronicle precisely the same contributions were being made in the time of Abbot Robert, who ruled the house from 1356 till 1367. Skipsea, at least, was rated at 43 quarters in the Taxatio Nicholai of 1291. (E.Y.C., i, p.95sn)

3. A further difficulty, as we shall see presently, is that whilst the valuation of oats was fixed, that of drag, a constituent of several renders, was clearly variable.

The difficulty is well illustrated by the sums of money due from the monastic houses 'pro threves' as summarised in the assessment of the provostry of 1532:

Abbey of Meaux	0. 11. 11
Abbey of Kirkstall	22. 0. 0
Abbey of Thornton	13. 0. 0
Priory of Swine	16. 0. 0
Priory of Bridlington	4. 0. 0
Priory of North Ferriby	1. 13. 4
Priory of Nunkeeling	2. 3. 4
Total	£59. 8. 7 ¹

At first sight only the last two of these payments bears a recognisable relationship to known renders previously made in kind. Close study of these sums, however, suggests a rough method in the provost's dealing with the major houses, somewhat different from the general agreement reached with the independent parishes.

First, we conclude that, for the sake of convenience, round figures, always favourable to the houses, were accepted in the instances of Kirkstall, Thornton and Swine. Secondly, that, as ever, oats were valued at 16d per quarter, and, thirdly, that the drag element in the renders of Kirkstall and Swine was, for commutation, expressed in oat terms - in the case of Kirkstall one quarter of drag equalling 3 of oats, and in that of Swine one of drag equalling 2 of oats. Drag, when still due in kind from other, lesser sources, was valued at roughly 8s per quarter.²

1. Poulson, op.cit., p.640
2. Such inconsistency lays one open to the charge of 'making the figures fit', but in this instance these equations explain so precisely otherwise inexplicable commutations as to raise the question of the content of the drag. Drag was, after all, mixed corn, and any valuation would naturally depend upon the contents of the mix. The contributions of Sigglesworth and Rise, valued at about 8s, (frumenti) were obviously of special quality (Poulson, op.cit., pp.640, 643), obviously hard corn, but nevertheless appear as drag in the parish lists.



The case of Meaux, where the money payment appears absurdly low, reminds us that the account which records these figures also indicates that the provost still exacted certain quantities in kind. This was to enable him to meet his obligations towards the Minster clergy, as laid down by Archbishop Arundel in 1391:¹

25 quarters 2 bushels of hard corn annually to the vicars.

587 quarters of oats, representing an annual payment of 52 quarters to each of the nine prebendaries, the chancellor and the precentor, the residue of 15 quarters being held in reserve.²

Regarding the first payment, we know that 17 quarters 2 bushels of hard corn (listed as drag in lists of parochial renders) were derived from the parishes of Sigglesborne and Rise, and we can be reasonably certain that $6\frac{1}{2}$ quarters of drag due from Meaux helped to make up the total. We believe, further, that the $1\frac{1}{2}$ quarters still required was, in fact, purchased from that abbey, and that the cost is represented by the 11s 11d (why not 12s?) due as a partial commutation of the oat render made for this very purpose.

The whole of the Meaux oats ($117\frac{1}{2}$ quarters), less the 9 quarters³ thus commuted, certainly went to meet the provost's payments to the prebendaries, etc. So did the contributions of 19 oat-paying independent Holderness parishes, not subject to commutation in the accounts of 1532,⁴ and rendering in all 452 quarters 5 bushels. Together these amounts left just short of 26 quarters to be paid, we think, from one of the Sacrist's renders.⁵

1. B.C.A., ii, p.273.

2. Poulson, op.cit., pp.643, 640

3. i.e. $9 \times 16d = 12s$.

4. See appended table.

5. This can be no more than a guess. If the sacrist received the thraves from sources omitted from the list of the provost's receipts i.e. the Priory of Nunkeeling and the parishes of Sutton and Brandesburton, plus those of Hornsea and Riston (attributed to him in the Valor, v, p.116) his total income would be £15. 2. 0, 35s 4d above his entitlement of 20 marks. 26 quarters of oats at 16d per quarter = 34s 8d.

The effect of this arrangement grouped the parishes rendering in kind within easy reach of the provostry's manors of Leven in the north, and of Welwick at the head of the peninsula. From what we know of the medieval road system of Holderness the question of transport was also given careful consideration, though, as we have seen, in the case of the southern contribution the proximity of Welwick to Patrington Haven solved this problem.

The total value of thraves to the provostry becomes clear only by reference to pre-Dissolution figures, and though by this time Tudor inflation had begun to make inroads into real worth, we can believe, with confidence, that the figures themselves had held good for many years.

In 1532 the religious houses, as we have seen, contributed a total of £59. 8. 7 in commuted renders, to which seven independent Holderness parishes, also subject to commutation, added £23. 7. 7, whilst the provost's thraves from outside the deanery yielded a further £4. 15. 8. The special render in drag from Sigglescliffe and Rise (distinguished from the rest because it was allocated to the vicars) was valued at £7. 8. 6, and the 587 quarters of oats for the prebendaries, chancellor and precentor, priced at 1s 4d per quarter, at £39. 2. 8. The overall value of the provost's thraves was therefore at least £134. 3. 0.¹

We say 'at least' because, if the prebendaries each received a sum of 69s 4d in lieu of their corrodies of 52 quarters of oats, as the Valor appears to suggest they did, the provostry conceivably made a handsome profit by itself effecting commutation.²

¹. Poulson, op. cit., p.640

². See above, p. 90.

Less speculative is the likelihood that the sacrist received far more than is shown, if not the whole of his income, in thraves. His stipend of £13. 6. 8, itself significantly left out of the Valor's lists,¹ corresponds so closely to the total value of thrave contributions omitted as to make this a reasonable assumption.² We know that at least some of his dues came from this source, but whatever the truth of the matter the corn otherwise unaccounted for would add between £13 and £15 to the provost's £134. 3. 0.

1. This omission did not pass unnoticed by the Commissioners for Yorkshire: in a letter to Thomas Cromwell they pointed out that "the Sacrist or Treasurer is left out" (B.C.A., i, pp.lvi - lvii). The sacrist's apparent independence of the provostry in the matter of his emoluments may well have arisen from his origin as custos ecclesiae - an office within the church which, if it brought him a special relationship with the chapter, may have made his payment by the provost inappropriate.
2. See above, p.99 n1.

PREBENDAL THRIVES

The basis upon which the thrives of the East Riding outside Holderness were apportioned amongst the seven ancient prebends is not obvious. Apart from a vague general principle that each should receive its share of those small commuted renders (pensioners) from the perimeter of the Riding, and a certain amount of grouping of prebendal interests to facilitate collection, no geographical plan is evident.

Nor does there appear to have been any attempt to divide thrives equally. Necessarily so, because, as we shall find reason to believe in a later chapter,¹ these corn renders seem to have been allocated in such a way as to achieve an overall parity, after the position regarding rents and tithes had become clear. These latter endowments may well have apportioned themselves, since they probably already fell to the individual canons from whose parochial area they arose. Certainly, and quite naturally, they came unequally to the first prebendaries. The partition of thrives therefore favoured those prebends with least income from other sources.

Precise equality probably proved elusive, even in the early years. The Valor records pensions² paid in certain instances by one prebendary to another, invariably by the better endowed. As we shall see in our consideration of the prebends these payments were of very early origin, and we believe they represent an adjustment of inequalities which soon came to light.

There was no remedy, however, for variations dictated by fortune in the long term. The prosperity of Beverley in the thirteenth century clearly favoured St. Martin's prebend: as the town expanded westwards over its parochial area so its rents and tithes increased out of all proportion.³ On the other hand the prebends of St. Mary's and St. Michael's

1. See below, pp. 162 - 163.

2. These payments are to be carefully distinguished from commuted corn renders. For fuller consideration of them see below, p. 162.

3. Much of the prebend's gains were severed from it, in 1269, with the formal endowment of the vicarage of the Chapel of St. Mary. (See below, p. 163).

Altars declined in value, probably, we think, through some early alienation of their tithes. Nevertheless the incomes of the other four prebends remained roughly equal, to bear out our belief in the original parity of all seven.

The assessments of the Taxatio of 1291¹ undoubtedly underestimate the full worth of Beverley's prebends, but they serve to illustrate their relative values a century after their inception:

St. Martin's	£45. 0. 0
St. Andrew's	27. 0. 0
St. James'	26. 0. 0
St. Stephen's	25. 0. 0
St. Michael's	17. 0. 0
St. Peter's	25. 0. 0
St. Mary's	16. 0. 0

Unfortunately we have no comprehensive knowledge at this stage of the value of prebendal thraves. For this we have to await the Valor of 1535, by which time circumstances and incomes were much altered.² On the eve of the Dissolution prebendal receipts from thraves alone are seen to be:

	Thraves	Pensions	Total
St. Martin's	£17. 0. 8	£2. 15. 0	£19. 15. 8
St. Andrew's	32. 13. 4	2. 11. 3	35. 4. 7
St. James'	27. 3. 8	- ³	27. 3. 8
St. Stephen's	29. 10. 0	2. 2. 10	31. 12. 10
St. Michael's ⁴	16. 0. 0	-	16. 0. 0
St. Peter's	17. 10. 0	-	17. 10. 0
St. Mary's	18. 6. 8	2. 3. 4	20. 10. 0
		Total	£167. 16. 9

1. Poulson, op.cit., ii, p.539.

2. Valor, v, pp.130-132.

3. No distinction is made between 'thraves' and 'pensions' in the cases of St. Peter's and St. James'.

4. Details of St. Michael's revenues are omitted from the Valor, but the total value of the prebend is given as £31. 8. 4 net (ibid, p.130). Since thraves on average constituted rather more than half the receipts of the other prebends £16 is probably a fair estimate of their worth in this instance.

The overall total of £167. 16. 9 represented just over half the sum value of all seven prebends taken together. This proportion had probably always held good, for though thraves were much diminished in value (especially in real purchasing terms) by the sixteenth century, other sources had undergone a similar decline.¹

The extent of the erosion of the render's value in the years following the Act Book period is hard to assess, since figures from these earlier years are lacking. We do know, however, that the value of St. Martin's thraves in 1308 was (including pensions) £30. 17. 0² as against £19. 15. 8 on the eve of the Reformation. This represents a decline of about 35.8% over rather more than two centuries. There is a possibility that this particular prebend suffered more heavily than the rest,³ but were the extent of its losses found to be general the overall value of prebendal thraves at the outset of the fourteenth century could well have exceeded £220.

The reasons for such decline have already been touched upon. The transference of commerce from Beverley to Hull cannot, in itself, have been detrimental to thraves gathered from the whole of the Riding. Indeed the rise of the new port should have stimulated agriculture in general. In fact the period following the close of the extant Act Book were years of especial tragedy for East Yorkshire. Recurring pestilence, common to the country at large, was here attended by flooding unprecedented in recorded times and by a marked deterioration of climatic conditions.

The Black Death, as it swept through the Riding, possibly reducing the population by a third, brought disaster to an area already suffering "an undoubted worsening of the climate reducing the attractiveness of some settlement sites, inducing disease, lowering the yields of crops and stock".⁴ At the same time the continuing rise in the relative sea-level brought its own impoverishment to the low-lying lands bordering on the Humber.

1. See above, p.73.

2. B.C.A., i, p.216

3. See below, p.164.

4. K. J. Allison, The East Riding of Yorkshire Landscape, pp.99 - 104.

It must have been a considerably modified pattern of renders which emerged from this melancholy period. Certainly the Black Death alone is sufficient to explain any change in the relative fortunes of individual prebends.

We are on less speculative ground when we come to consider the actual sources of prebendal thraves. The Chapter Act Book¹ and the Valor² enable us to name, from records or by inference, the parishes designated to each prebend. An haphazard apportionment is revealed. Those rendering pensions from early times bordered the northern and western extremities of the Ridings. Parishes allocated to St. Andrew's prebend lay, for the most part, in the north-east, inland from Filey and to the north of Gypsey Race, whilst those contributing to St. Martin's were ranged along the eastern bank of the Derwent as it flowed from Malton to Stamford Bridge. St. James' drew its pensions from parishes on the lower reaches of this river, but St. Stephen's had interests here too, as it had in the north-east, in the opposite corner of the Ridings. St. Mary's appears not to have possessed any distant pensions, and those of St. Michael's and St. Peter's are not distinguished in the Valor. By process of elimination, however, they must have been paid by those parishes between the Wolds and the Derwent which are otherwise unaccounted for - possibly North Grimston, Burythorpe, Kirkby Underdale, Westow and maybe the York prebends of Bugthorpe and Givendale.

All these payments have one thing in common: they are invariably multiples of 1s 4d (or occasionally a straight half of this sum) - Bridlington 33s 4d (16d x 25), Scrayingham 6s 8d (16d x 5), Wharram-le-Street 2s (16d x 1½);³ Kirkby Grindalythe 12s 4d (16d x 10), Foxholes 10s (16d x 7½), Folkton (16d x 6)⁴ etc. - indicating an oat or Danish ore basis of their commutation.

1. B.C.A., i & ii, passim.

2. Valor, v, pp.103-126, 130-132.

3. B.C.A., i, p.216.

4. Valor, v, p.131.

As to the allocation among the prebends of those more accessible parishes which for long made their contributions in kind (the 'thrave' parishes of the Valor), no geographical plan is apparent: there is no evidence of an attempt to apportion renders on a strict area basis. The thraves of St. Martin and St. Stephen were, indeed, for the most part closely grouped - those of the former in the west of Harthill, around Market Weighton, those of St. Stephen to the north of Beverley around Lockington.¹ St. James' prebend also received thraves from several parishes close to Beverley, namely Walkington, North Burton, Molescroft and South Dalton, but its greatest source was Pocklington, half way to York, which yielded no less than £16. 13. 4 in 1535. Much of the render due to St. Mary's came from the region west of Hull, notably from the Augustinian house of Haltemprice, but here again a sizeable contribution was made by the York prebend of Wetwang, away to the north in Wold country. St. Andrew's thraves were dispersed throughout the Riding, but were chiefly drawn from Driffield, Kirkburn and Cottingham, each of which paid £6.13.4 at the time of the Valor. St. Michael's sources must also have been widely separated, for we know from incidental references that a considerable portion of them was drawn from such widely scattered parishes as Bainton, not far from Driffield, and Elloughton on the banks of the Humber, where St. Martin's also had an interest. Of St. Peter's allotment we know nothing beyond its accumulated value,² but it almost certainly included the thraves of the four York prebends of North and South Newbald, Langtoft and Grindale, which are otherwise unaccounted for.³

St. Martin's prebend undoubtedly paid a high price for having its contributing parishes closely grouped in an area hard-hit by recurring pestilence. When the Black Death resulted in the contraction of many

1. See accompanying map of thrave distribution.
2. Valor, v, p.131.
3. This involvement with the York Chapter may explain why this prebend was frequently, though not invariably, assigned to a prebendary of the mother church, and why the only recorded utterance on the subject of thraves by Robert de Pickering, prebendary of St. Peter's, was an exhortation to his fellow canons of York to attend to their payment. (B.C.A., i, p.386).

villages and the complete desertion of others, followed by a general decrease in the demand for corn, the Market Weighton district was one of those regions especially vulnerable to 'sheep depopulation'. Land then returned to pasture has only in the last century been reclaimed by the plough.

Much the same was true of the inhospitable high Wolds to the north, now rich in deserted village and farmstead sites. Here, we believe, lay the main catchment areas of St. Peter's and St. Michael's prebends, also 'poor' in thraves in later years. Such regions have never recovered from the retraction of population experienced in the latter half of the fourteenth century.

More resilient and prosperous were those prebends with widespread sources, especially if these included such prosperous townships as Drifffield, Cottingham and Pocklington, or one of the more substantial religious houses like Watton, the renders of which remained the mainstay of the Valor's richer prebends of St. Andrew's, St. Stephen's and St. James'.

The ultimate total income of Beverley Minster from this Anglo-Saxon windfall was therefore very great. With the provostry receiving rather more than £134 from the thraves of Holderness, and the prebendaries about £168 from those in the remainder of the East Riding, making a total of £302, this section of the church's revenues alone almost equalled the entire income of the sister church of Ripon or of Chichester Cathedral. This was on the eve of the Dissolution, when the palmy days of both church and town were long past, and when inflation was already making inroads into real values. Without doubt the extant Chapter Act Book describes a time when the thraves of St. John produced an even greater sum.

3. THE OFFERINGS OF THE FAITHFUL

The great treasure of Beverley Minster throughout the middle ages was the mortal remains of its 'most holy Confessor, John by the presence of whose body the aforesaid church is glorified, exalted by his merits, made bright by his miracles, and fortified by his patronage'.¹

Though the Saint, as Poulson quaintly put it, 'did not possess that indubitable token of sanctity, an undecayed body',² and though his shrine never quite equalled as a resort of pilgrims that of St. Cuthbert, whose remains satisfied even this requirement, his presence represented a source of income many a great church might envy.

The sumptuous tomb to which the relics had been translated by Aelfric Puttoc in 1037³ had presumably been destroyed in the disastrous fire which swept through both town and church in 1188. Even the bones themselves were lost for eight years,⁴ and so far as we know no final resting place was provided for them until the early fourteenth century.

Plans for a silver-gilt shrine 5½ feet long and 1½ feet broad were approved in 1292; but though a notable craftsman, Roger de Farrington, was actually engaged,⁵ the work was delayed through lack of funds. It was completed, however, by 21st June 1308, when Archbishop Greenfield dedicated the High Altar behind which it was sited.⁶

Coffers for the pilgrims' offerings were placed at both the shrine and the Altar, and another before the celebrated banner of the Saint which stood close by.⁷ In these countless pious visitors, ranging from the

1. Archbishop Arundel in 1391 (Documents from the Record Office relating to Beverley, ed. William Brown, in Transactions of the East Riding Antiquarian Society, v, p.40).
2. Poulson, Beverlac, ii, p.592.
3. Above, p.14.
4. Below, p.16 n 1. X
5. For the terms of this interesting contract see B.C.A., ii, pp.299 - 301.
6. B.C.A., i, pp.218 - 219.
7. The banner itself was an object of veneration. From 1296 onwards it was requisitioned by all three Edwards to accompany the English army in its campaigns against the Scots (B.C.A., i, pp.lxxxviii - xc; and below ii pp.308,323) Henry IV also took it north in 1400.



A LABEL STOP IN THE NAVE
Possibly depicting Queen Isabella, a visitor to the Shrine.

highest in the land to the local peasantry, placed their gifts - normally a monetary oblation, but occasionally a jewel or an ornament, which, if fitting, was retained to adorn the shrine.

These last were usually the gifts of royalty, whose offerings alone are recorded in the Act Book. Edward I offered gold clasps worth 8 marks in May 1300,¹ and Edward II left a jewel on more than one occasion.² The latter and his consort, Isabella, both gave cloths of gold for the High Altar on separate visits.³

Such gifts were noted with obvious pride in the Act Book, but sometimes with a hint of disappointment. In 1312 Queen Margaret, the widow of Edward I, offered 'one round/^{gold} ornament of middling size', which was affixed to the shrine there and then.⁴ When Isabella paid one of her later visits, in 1323, it was recorded that she slept in the house of St. Andrew's prebend, and 'after mass offered about 7s at the shrine, and nothing else'.⁵

7s seems to have been a standard royal gift. On an earlier occasion, more profitable to the Minster, Isabella had donated this same amount on behalf of her husband. Together with other gifts made at various points in the church it was described as 'the oblation of the Lord King'.⁶ In the wardrobe account for 28 Edward I there occurs the following entry

<u>Vicessimo quarto die Novembris in oblacionibus regis ad</u>	
<u>tumbam ubi sanctus Johannes de Beverlaco primo</u>	
<u>sepeliabatur in ecclesia eiusdem loci</u>	 7s
<u>Et ad magnum altare in eadem ecclesia</u>	 7s
<u>Et vexillum eiusdem sanctis</u>	 7s
	<u>Summa 21s</u>

1. Poulson, Beverlac, ii, p.593.
2. B.C.A., i, pp. 294 - 295.
3. Loc. cit; ibid, i, p.364.
4. '.... et obtulit post missam unum monile aureum rotundum mediocris quantitatis, quod feretro B.Johannis protinus est affixum (B.C.A., i, p.294).
5. 'Et die sequente audivit missam in choro, et post missam obtulit feretro circiter vii s., et nichil aliud' (ibid, ii, p.37).
6. On St. Luke's Day, 1318. ibid, i, p.364.

The same sum was given to the shrine on behalf of the Queen, and six days later the king returned to offer a further 7s at the banner.¹

If such was the customary oblation of royalty, the gifts of lesser folk must have been many indeed, for towards the end of the fourteenth century when pilgrims were somewhat fewer, and St. Mary's, Beverley, rapidly becoming the 'town church', was effectively tapping the fruits of local piety, legislators still anticipated an annual income from offerings of around 100 marks.²

From its inception St. Katherine's, or, as it was sometimes termed, the 8th prebend, had derived the greater part of its income from the offerings at the High Altar.³ Its receipts were, apparently, reduced to half early in the fourteenth century. The other half, apart from the oblations made on certain festivals, by an ordinance of Archbishop Greenfield of 1307, went to the common fund to provide a daily distribution for the holders of the seven ancient prebends when resident.⁴

In 1378 a dispute arose between Nicholas de Louth, then prebendary of St. Katherine's, and the latter as to whether his half extended to oblations at the shrine. It is not altogether clear how Greenfield's arrangement had been interpreted in the intervening years, since only the proceeds from the High Altar were mentioned in his statute, but Alexander Neville, with the agreement of all concerned, ordained that

'Nicholas de Louth, and all and singular his successors, prebendaries of this prebend of the altar of St. Katherine, whether they be residentiaries in the church of Beverley or not, shall have in the name of their prebend 50 marks sterling out of the yearly oblations offered at the High Altar, and on the said

1. Poulson, Beverlac, ii, pp.592 - 593.

2. As late as the date of the Battle of Agincourt - the feast of the translation of the Blessed John, as well as of St. Crispin - however, the tomb was restored in fame, having exuded oil at the time of conflict. In consequence John was formally acclaimed a national saint by Archbishop Chichele.

3. B.C.A., i, pp.193 - 194, and see below, p.179.

4. ibid, loc cit.

shrine pertaining to the said altar, if the sums there offered amount to 100 marks sterling; and also, that these prebendaries shall have and receive the corrody of the bedern entirely, together with the other fruits and profits attaching to the said prebend; and also, every year in which they fulfil their residence in the church they shall have and receive its due share of the issues and profits accruing from these oblations on the said shrine¹ and altar, equal to the portions of the rest of the residentiary canons. But if these oblations, offered at the said places every succeeding year, do not amount to 100 marks, but a smaller sum, then in such a year the said prebendary and his successors shall receive one moiety only of those oblations offered on the said altar and shrine in the name of the corpus of his prebend.'²

Clearly the annual income from offerings was subject to considerable variation - not least on account of flooding and pestilence which might well deter the more distant pilgrim, and, on the other hand, because the proclamation of a new miracle was likely to produce a bumper year. Not so clear is the question as to whether the concord was designed to guarantee or to limit Louth's income. The establishment of his interest in the oblations at the shrine suggests the former, but the important fact is that in 1378 the possibility of the total offerings falling below 100 marks was at least envisaged.

£66. 13. 4, however, must be regarded as a minimum, at least during the early fourteenth century. It does not include payments made to sundry officials from offerings made on major festivals, amounting in all to about £5, nor does it take into account offerings at lesser shrines, chiefly that of St. Berthun,³ which may well have brought in a further £5 over a full year.⁴

1. Presumably offerings made at the banner of St. John were included in these.

2. Reg. Neville, i, fo 66.

3. See above, p. 4, and also B.C.A., i, p.173

4. In 1318 Queen Isabella donated no less than 13s at these 'small shrines' (parvis fereteris) (B.C.A., i, p.364).

A total figure exceeding £75 compared favourably with receipts at most cathedral churches. Norwich, for instance, reckoned on an annual income of some £60 or £70 from collections, whereas Ely, admittedly inaccessible, received a sum in excess of only £22.¹

Nor was this the sum of Christian giving at Beverley Minster. The accounts of the Receiver of the Fabrick Fund for 1445/6,² to which reference was earlier made, reveals that a considerable proportion of his receipts accrued from offerings not so far mentioned.

To his Fund came oblations made at the red chest at Our Lady's Altar, together with those cast at the Shrine on Rogation Days, at Ascensiontide, Whitsuntide, Michaelmas and sundry festivals of St. John the Evangelist. In spite of the inevitable bits of tin and lead which found their way into the coffers, these amounted to no less than £30. 16. 1.³ Since the payments made to officials mentioned above probably came out of this money, we should take it as adding about £25 to the offerings so far noted.

It was in this area, however, that the church's income suffered its most spectacular loss in subsequent years. By the time of the Dissolution the Fabric Fund's receipts from this source had dwindled into insignificance: in 1532 the Receiver appears to have collected only £2. 16. 4½ in oblations.⁴

How the offerings at the Shrine, the High Altar and the lesser shrines fared we do not know. The income of the prebendary of St. Katherine's Altar as set out in both the Valor and the Chantry Survey makes no reference to receipts from the Shrine, and we can but guess at the extent of the decline. It seems unlikely from the little we know that the giving at these places exceeded £10 in the sixteenth century.

1. Moorman, Church Life in England in the Thirteenth Century, p.299.

2. E.R.A.S., vi, pp.56 - 103

3. ibid, p.60.

4. Poulson, op cit, ii, pp.635 - 636. This sum, donated on various feast days, excludes obits.

a/ One kindred source of income, however, remained constant. This was the farm of collections for the fabric in more distant parts. In 1445/6 the rector of South Dalton paid £10 in respect of this,¹ as did John Wilkinson in 1532, when it was described as "the farm of indulgences and quests of the fabrick aforesaid in the provinces of York and Lincoln."²

Of course, in the days of the great building projects of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the amounts rendered by collectors, several of whom operated at the same time, were much greater. So lucrative was the business that it attracted fraudulent collectors equipped with false relics and forged documents. It was doubtless to defeat these that in November 1308 the chapter appointed Elias de Lumby sole collector for the new fabric in the dioceses of York, Durham, Carlisle and Lincoln.³ It was anticipated that he would gather in at least £20 - £5 to be rendered at Candlemas, Ascensiontide, St. Peter ad Vincula and Martinmas. Anything in excess of this amount was to be accounted for after paying for personal expenses, his horse, his servant and a robe with tabard, and provision was made for the event of his dying in the midst of his labours.⁴

In the Southern Province, apart apparently from the diocese of Lincoln, there was less goodwill. In September, 1309, the archbishop of Canterbury received a letter from the chapter requesting him to raise his prohibition of all unlicensed collectors in favour of Elias, and five years later the bishop of Norwich refused admission to the Beverly collectors. At the same time the good offices of William Melton, then provost, were sought to assist their colleagues in the Canterbury diocese.⁵

In conclusion we may say with a fair degree of safety that in the fourteenth century offerings from all sources, both within and without the Minster, exceeded £120, but that by the early sixteenth century they had sunk to less than £25.

1. E.R.A.S., vi, p.59

2. Poulson, op.cit., ii, p.636.

3. B.C.A., i, pp.229 - 230.

4. ibid, pp.230 - 231.

5. ibid, pp.252 - 253.

4. OTHER SOURCES OF INCOME

(a) Tithes. So far as we can gather no tithes were due to the provost. These were the right of the rectors of the several parishes within his jurisdiction. On the same basis the greater and lesser tithes of the huge parish of Beverley itself went to the occupants of the seven ancient prebends, who, from earliest times, had been charged with its pastoral care. All of them save the prebendary of St. Mary's Altar and, perhaps, the prebendary of St. Michael's (of whose interest in the matter we know nothing), received a reward from this source.¹

These tithes were apportioned on the basis of areas of spiritual concern into which the parish was divided. Thus the prebendaries of St. Andrew's, St. James' and St. Peter's Altars who through their vicars served chapelries at Hull Bridge, Molescroft and Thorne respectively received their individual dues from these localities. St. Martin's prebendary whose area covered much of Beverley to the north of the Minster had oversight of the Chapel of St. Mary, which from similar beginnings eventually achieved virtual autonomy as the 'town church' of Beverley, to the financial detriment of the prebend and the Collegiate Church as a whole.

Exceedingly little is recorded in the Chapter Act Book on the subject of tithes, and our only information as to their value is derived from the often slipshod entries of the Valor of 1535.² Here the dues of the

1. See below, pp.162 - 163.

2. Valor, v, pp.130 - 132.

individual prebendaries are given as follows:

St. Peter's	(Woodmansea, Thorne, Wele, Skidby & Calland)	£15. 14. 7
St. Martin's	(Lesser & Lent tithes in Chapel of B.V.M. & Chapel in Charnel)	7. 13. 2 ¹
St. Mary's	No tithes recorded	-
St. Stephen's	(Molescroft)	5. 17. 11
St. Andrew's	(Tickton & Hull Bridge)	5. 4. 1
St. James'	(Ake & Molescroft)	8. 11. 4
		£43. 1. 1

In the sixteenth century, and probably at any other time in the middle ages, the only other tithes due to the Minster body were those, valued at £2, paid to the Fabric Fund in respect of its interests at Etton and Farthingfleet.² These, therefore, brought total receipts from this source to £45. 1. 1.

(b) The Provost's pensions in the churches of the provostry. These were paid annually by the rectors and vicars within the liberty.³ Their origin and the basis on which they were rendered are not altogether clear, but they were doubtless those payments referred to in the Provost's Book as 'Subsidia omnium beneficiorum dicte ecclesie collegiate Beati Johannis Beverlaci personarum et vicariorum prepositure, causis rationalibus et ordinariis urgentibus.'⁴

The parishes made payment as follows:

Patrington	£1. 0. 0	Leven	1. 0. 0
Halsham	1. 6. 8	Middleton	2. 0. 0
Sigglesthorne	3. 0. 0	South Dalton	1. 0. 0
Brandsburton	2. 0. 0	Leckonfield	5. 0
North Burton	3. 0. 0	St. Nicholas	4. 0
		Total	£14. 15. 8

1. £7. 12. 2 in the Valor, where 106s 10d and 46s 4d are wrongly added.

2. Valor, v, pp. 130 - 132.

3. B.C.A., ii, p.308; Poulson, op cit, ii, pp.640 - 641.

4. B.C.A., ii, loc cit.

(c) Procurations. By the time of the Dissolution the hospitality provided by the clergy for the provost on his visitation of the provostry had long since been commuted to uniform money payments: the churches of Patrington, Welwick, Halsham, Brandsburton, Sigglesworth, Leven, Rise, Middleton, South Dalton, North Burton, Leckonfield, St. Nicholas', Beverley, and Scarborough each rendered 10s annually in respect of this, thereby adding £6. 10. 0 to the latter's receipts.¹

(d) Perquisites of courts. In 1532 the provost received £2. 13. 4 from the courts of Beverley, Dalton, Ruston, Leven and Welwick.² This was, it is almost certain, a variable sum, and in earlier years it may well have amounted to considerably more.

Conclusion.

We are now in a position to assess the overall income of Beverley Minster, that is to say, from all the main recorded sources. Our survey suggests that on the eve of the Dissolution it was made up as follows:

Lands	£521
Thraves	302
Offerings	25
Tithes	45
Pensions of the Provostry	15
Procurations	6
Perquisites of Courts	<u>3</u>
	£917

Though it has not been our purpose to seek an equation with the sum of revenues shown in the Chantry Survey, when full allowance is made for its acknowledged omissions and wholly different basis of calculation this source, which puts the total income at £724. 10. 0³ accords well with the above figure.

1. Poulson, loc cit.

2. ibid

3. Chantry Surveys, ii, p.540. This figure which, as will appear (see n.1 overleaf) does not purport to be the sum realised by the church in the pre-Dissolution years, when its revenues were unmolested, seems to have been accepted without query by M. D. Knowles and R.N. Hadcock (Medieval Religious Houses, England and Wales, p.326).

When necessary adjustments have been made our reckoning and that of the Survey concur in suggesting a total net income of approximately £825.¹

If, as we have thought likely, the value of thraves in earlier times reached £400, and offerings amounted to at least £120, we may well believe assertions that this total had once exceeded £1000.²

1. In reaching this amount the following considerations have been taken into account:

(a) The Survey's figure is a net one, all reprises having been deducted. Ours represents the gross income, apart, that is, from the revenues of the lands of the provost, which allow for outgoings in respect of management, etc.

The Survey adds together the gross incomes of all elements of the Collegiate Church, including the provost, and arrives at a total of £1151. 9. 4. From this it deducts the sum of the individual reprises, which amounting to £430. 6. 7, leaves £721. 2. 9 clear. (Not, it would seem, £724. 10. 0 as stated in the Survey). All but £103. 17. 4 of these reprises, however, relate to the provost's disbursements to personnel of the church, and have no relevance in our present reckoning. (The provost's other reprises i.e. of management, etc. have, as we say, already been deducted in our calculations). If therefore we deduct these further reprises (£104) from our figure (£917) we reach a net income of £813.

(b) The Survey gives the Sacrist's (there called 'the Sexton') income as £24. 9. 8. This is rather more than £11 above the statutory income of this dignitary, and almost certainly includes certain pensions appropriated to the Sacristy from East Riding rectories. These would bring our final figure to about £824.

(c) On the other hand, the Chantry Survey takes no account of offerings, thought to amount to £25 in the sixteenth century, and it omits altogether the revenues of St. Andrew's and St. Michael's prebends which, according to the Valor had net incomes of £48 and £31 respectively. If £104, the sum of these amounts, is added to the actual Survey figure of £721 a final net income of £825 is reached.

2. Chantry Surveys, ii, p.542.

III INSTITUTIONS

1. THE PROVOSTRY

The Provostry of Beverley was at once a liberty, or lay franchise, and an ecclesiastical peculiar. It comprised: in the deanery of Harthill, the parishes of Beverley,¹ Cherry Burton, South Dalton, Middleton-on-the-Wolds, Scarborough and Leconfield, and in Holderness, the parishes of Rise, Leven, Brandesburton, Sigglesworth (all in the Middle Hundred), Patrington, Halsham and Welwick² (all in the Southern Hundred, well to the south of the main area).

Within this considerable area, therefore, the provost exercised both a secular jurisdiction embracing all the rights, privileges and most of the exemptions common to seignorial administration, and a spiritual authority which gave the provostry the character of an ecclesiastical republic. It was exempt alike from the independent intrusion of both royal officers and the archdeacon.

(a) The Liberty of Beverley.

A detailed account of the provost's secular lordship lies beyond the scope of our consideration of the collegiate church.³ Here it is sufficient to notice briefly his jurisdiction as outlined by Simon Russell in 1417, when his master, Provost Robert Manfield, 'stood peaceable with the said church and all its ministers'.⁴

His were the cognizance and determination of all actions within the liberty between tenant and tenant, and tenant and lord, the award of

1. The archbishop, however, retained temporal and spiritual jurisdiction within his bailiwick of Beverley, having there his own bailiff and dean or warden of the christianity (Reg. Greenfield, i, pp.xxvi - xxvii). Since much of the remainder of Beverley fell within parochial areas of the prebendaries, the provost's writ was probably limited to the parish of St. Nicholas (B.C.A., ii, p.308).
2. See V.C.H., Yorkshire, iii, p.85.
3. For an account of temporal lordships see N. Denholm Young, Seignorial Administration in England, passim; Helen M. Cam, Shire Officials: Coroners, constables, and bailiffs, in The English Government at Work, 1327 - 1336, iii, pp.144 - 149.
4. B.C.A., ii, pp.307 - 311. (i.e. in January, 1416/17).

probate and the rights and functions of the coroner, whom he appointed. He had return of writs (in co-operation, of course, with the sheriff), assize of bread, ale, wine, weights and measures, wrecks on the Humber and royal fish, the disposal of forfeit chattels and stray animals. The homage of free tenants was due to him, and he exercised all a lord's rights in matters of their wardship, marriage and escheats.

The liberty was endowed with full rights of sake, soke, toll and team, infangenethef and utfangenethef.¹ In the provost's court were punished not only felons, robbers and offenders against the laws of the forest, but also trespassers and dishonest tradesmen.² Justices, who normally sat with two royal justices, were of his appointment, as were all constables and bailiffs of manors and woods,³ and, of course, his own official, who presided over general administration in his prolonged absences.

Though, like all secular jurisdiction, these powers of the provost were delegated to him by the Crown, subject at all times to royal confirmation, and though they were exercised within what, in modern terms, would be a very small administrative area, to the few thousand folk who lived in and around Beverley they must have seemed total.

1. B.C.A., ii, p.310.

2. ibid.

3. ibid.

(b) The Spiritualities of the Provostship.

The spiritual jurisdiction of the provost within the provostry was scarcely less comprehensive than his temporal powers. Allowing for the liberties of the archbishop and the chapter within Beverley itself - fruitful sources of contention - it was equally extensive.

Besides his rights of presentation and visitation of all the churches of the provostry (which included, as we have seen, the plum benefice of Patrington¹), the provost had substantial patronage within the Minster itself: he appointed all three 'officers' i.e. the precentor, the chancellor and the Sacrist, the seven clerks of the Berfell and the staff of the Bedern, chiefly the butler. All these received their stipends at his hands from the revenues of the provostry,² as did sundry lay officials such as the Minster goldsmith and mason and the steward of the provostry, whose posts were also in his gift.³

1. Patrington was taxed at £40; Sigglesworth at £26. 13. 4; Halsham at £10; Brandesburton at £13. 6. 8; St. Nicholas', Beverley, at £6. 13. 4; Leven at £13. 6. 8; Middleton-on-the-Wolds at £26. 13. 4; South Dalton at £16; Cherry (i.e. North) Burton at £20. (B.C.A., ii, pp.308 - 309). To complete the list - Welwick was officially worth £26. 13. 4; Leconfield £10; Scarborough £5. 6. 8; Rise £5. The stipends of the officials were: the precentor £6. 13. 4 (raised in 1391 to £10 by Archbishop Arundel - *ibid*, p.273), the chancellor £6. 13. 4, and the sacrist £12, each together with 52 quarters of oats annually. The clerks of the Berfell each received £6. 13. 4. Contrary to Professor Hamilton Thompson's belief (V.C.H. Yorkshire, iii, p.354) the chapter had no part in the appointment to the churches of the provostry. Nor was any of these parishes appropriated to the Minster, that is, until 1361, when the chapter entered upon the great tithe of Welwick.
2. B.C.A., ii, pp. 272 - 274.
3. When the provost himself was of local origin, as was the case of William Melton, Nicholas de Huggate and William de la Mare (themselves closely connected), his family frequently shared his good fortune. During Huggate's provostship Nicholas de Malton de Huggate (his clerk and probably his kinsman) received the sacristy (B.C.A., ii, p.2), John de Huggate a clerkship of the Berfell (*ibid*, p.41), William de Malton de Huggate the office of mason (*ibid*, p.114), Simon de Huggate the stewardship of the provostry (B.C.A., i, p.371), and Thomas de Huggate became a vicar - almost certainly of the provost's own prebend of St. James' (B.C.A., ii, p.115). The posts of goldsmith and mason were abolished early in the fifteenth century (*ibid*, p.309).

Throughout the middle ages the provost maintained his right of annual visitation of the parishes of the provostry,¹ though more often than not, especially in later years, he delegated the task to his official. His powers of spiritual correction were exercised through his chapter and court of the Bedern,² and it was there, or in his prebendal mansion (which he usually possessed) that he received the canonical obedience of the parochial clergy.³

Over the latter and their families in so far as they resided within the provostry, he held both temporal and spiritual jurisdiction, which ranged from powers of deprivation to rights of mortuary.⁴ He, not the archbishop, was the lawful recipient of their subsidies, procurations and synodals.⁵

1. B.C.A., ii, p.307. The fullest account of the process of visitation appears in the Notice of Visitation of Provost Thoresby of 1377. (Provost Book ff.72-73). Three to six men of each parish or village, according to its size, were to appear before the provost, on specified days as he moved through the provostry. Rectors and vicars were to produce their letters of title, and chaplains and other clerks their evidence of Orders. Enquiry was to be made of behaviour, of the welfare of churches and parishes, and details were to be submitted regarding pensions, tithes, etc. The provost's itinerary was to begin at Welwick on 20th September, moving north through Holderness, by way of Halsham, Rise and Sigglesworth, to Brandesburton on the 26th, and Leven on the day following. Then westwards to Beverley, and on to Leconfield, Cherry Burton, Middleton, North Dalton etc, ending, on 5th October, at the outlying chapelry of Ruston Parva, to which scattered tenants far to the north of the provostry were required to resort. In this performance, at least, the provost could not be charged with inactivity. For a brief account of Robert Manfield's visitation of St. Nicholas', Beverley, see B.C.A., ii, p.331.
2. Synods of the provostry, which all leading clergy of the parishes were expected to attend, were held in the Hall of the Bedern itself twice a year, at Easter and Michaelmas. The chapter, which constituted the court of the Bedern cum correctionibus cognitione et punitiione ordinaria omnimodarum causarum ad ea pertinentium, could, however, be convened elsewhere in the provostry (B.C.A., ii, pp.307, 338-339).
3. ibid, pp. 308, 338.
4. ibid, p.308
5. ibid

The archbishop, however, retained limited powers of visitation of the provostry. How limited, it is difficult to estimate, but notices of such occasions suggested that they were in practice, at least, restricted to once every five years. For most archbishops of the Act Book period inclusion of the provostry in their primary visitations seems to have sufficed, though Greenfield appears to have come a second time towards the end of his longer-than-average primacy, and Melton probably repeated the exercise several times.¹

The common feature of all episcopal visitations was a summons to all clergy from the provost downwards to meet their archbishop in Cherry Burton church, there to be examined by him.² A more assertive primate, such as Romeyn, might send his household clerks to search out the churches and chapels and their contents/^{at}first hand, but if such were normal practice there is but this one isolated record of it.³

(c) Administration of Estates.

When the chapter vested a new provost with the key to the Bedern it also admitted him into full corporal possession of six manors, eight if we include two other concentrations of land which sometimes passed for such.⁴

Four of these - those centred upon Middleton-on-the-Wolds, South Dalton, Cherry (North) Burton and Walkington - were ranged, north to south, to the west of Beverley, the last lying actually outside the south-west boundary of the provostry. A fifth, the manor of Leven, lay some six miles to the north-east, just inside the limits of Holderness,

1. Romeyn visited the provostry in February, 1286/7 (B.C.A., ii, pp.151 - 152); Corbridge in the spring of 1301 (ibid, p.178; Reg. Corbridge, ii, pp. 8, 60); Greenfield in 1308, and again in 1314 (Reg. Greenfield, i, pp.195 - 196, 265 - 267); Melton, initially, in 1319 (B.C.A., i, p.372).
2. loc. cit.
3. B.C.A., ii, pp. 151 - 152. All visitations of the provostry must always be carefully distinguished from visitations of chapter.
4. B.C.A., i, pp. 120 - 121, 346 - 348.

whilst that of Welwick was situated far to the south, adjacent to Patrington, across the approach to Spurn Head. Lockington, to the north of Beverley, and the ancient estate of Ridings on the eastern confines of the town itself, though probably never formally constituted as manors, were substantial enough to be so treated for administrative purposes.¹

Charged with general oversight of all the manors and many individual tenanted properties of the provostry was its steward.² Answerable himself to the provost, and working in close conjunction with the official, he had under him a bailiff³ of the provostry and a reeve in each manor.⁴ The latter were, in effect, small-time estate managers, responsible for the exploitation of demesne, woods and mills, the fruits of which they rendered, together with rents, to a receiver-general.

Unfortunately extant records deny us precise information of lands retained in demesne.⁵ Nor do we know of the stages by which the provostry followed the trend of later centuries (which it undoubtedly did) to put these out to farm. Several circumstances, however, dictated the approach to husbandry of the manors throughout much of the middle ages.

In the first place an establishment which reaped where it had not sown, to the extent that the Minster did by reason of its thraves, was relieved of the necessity of growing large corn crops for home consumption.⁶ True, the provost's corn revenues were confined to the fields of Holderness,⁷ but the apportionment of thraves elsewhere among the prebends meant that

1. Both Lockington and Ridings feature with the six manors in the inventory of goods of the provostry taken after the departure of Provost Aymo de Carto in 1304. (ibid, i, pp.28 - 31).
2. ibid, pp. 61, 371, 393; ii, p.338. His usual title in the Act Book is Senescallus Bedernae.
3. ibid, i, p.393; see also Poulson, op cit, ii, p.643.
4. ibid, ii, p.310; see also Poulson, op cit, ii, pp.616 - 618 when, in rendering the accounts of his manor, this official is given the title of prepositus.
5. See above, p.60, for the fruits of demesne lands.
6. See above, pp.98 - 102.
7. See above, p. 39.

his payment of sustenance to the canons was henceforward reduced to almost token proportions.¹ Moreover we have found good reason for believing that such oats as the latter did receive were supplied by the thraves of the abbey of Meaux, and that the hard corn for the Bedern came from one or two Holderness parishes.²

The likely consequence of this exceptional corn revenue was that those manors in the grain bearing fields of Harthill were farmed out at a relatively early date. This seems to be the conclusion to be drawn from an inventory of the provostry carried out in June, 1304. Though the arable manors of Middleton, South Dalton, North Burton and Walkington were virtually devoid of stock they were found to possess only eleven usable ploughs and less than fifty plough-oxen between them.³ Though, even in the month of June, all four still had a modest amount of corn remaining, only Middleton is shown to have possessed a granary.⁴

Secondly, with so much of its worldly possessions in the custody of an exalted and largely independent cleric not of its choosing, it was natural that the chapter should take steps to ensure that its assets were not squandered or misappropriated, and that livestock was maintained at a specified level. In so doing it placed a very definite constraint upon the character of management of the provostry.

1. For the canons' corrodiess, see below pp. 148 - 153.
2. See above p.102.
3. B.C.A., i, pp. 28 - 32. Ploughs could lie idle. The number of oxen at hand to draw them is therefore of greater relevance. Middleton had only 5 all-purpose beasts to 2 ploughs; South Dalton an assortment of 18 oxen and 7 draught horses to 4 ploughs; North Burton 13 oxen to 3 ploughs; Walkington 5 oxen (7 affri may also have joined them) to 2 ploughs. 8 oxen made a normal plough team, though not invariably. Bolton Priory kept 80 - 100 oxen to draw the 8 home farm ploughs, and over 30 for its 3 ploughs on the Kildwick demesne in Holderness (Ian Kershaw, Bolton Priory, The Economy of a Northern Monastery 1286 - 1325, p.94).
4. B.C.A., loc cit. This may be due to simple omission, for the lesser estate of Lockington also had a granary.

In the Provost's Book is recorded the stipulation that an incoming provost shall inherit stock consisting of

Oxen	92
Draught horses	42
Cows	80
Steers, stirks & calves	120 ¹
Fat lambs (<u>multonum</u>)	600
Ewes	460
Pigs	86 ²

When this arrangement was initially agreed is uncertain, but our first notice of it occurs in a composition between Provost Aymo de Carto and the executors of his predecessor, Peter de Castria (i.e. c.1295), when it was reiterated as the basis of a similar compact between John Barningham and Roger Rolleston, the executor of his kinsman Provost Robert Rolleston (c.1451)³. Since the same figures occur in the Chapter Act Book in 1306 under the heading Summa bonorum quae secundum computationem debent remanere in praepositura⁴ there can be no doubting their application in the intervening years.⁵

That such a list should have been produced at the outset of Aymo de Carto's provostship may have been fortuitous, but it was just as well, for he proved an unsatisfactory provost, and it was his deprivation by Archbishop Corbridge that occasioned the inventory of 1304 to which allusion has already been made.⁶ Similar account was taken of stock

1. i.e. three-year olds - 40, yearlings - 40, calves 40.
2. B.C.A., ii, p.334.
3. Provost's Book f.113b-116; Poulson, op.cit., ii, pp. 596-600.
4. B.C.A., i, pp.122-123.
5. See also ibid, pp.136-137, where John de Watkinfield, executor of Provost Robert de Abberwick, is granted administration of the goods of the provostry "according to the force, form and wording of the same dividend between the executors of Sir Peter de Castria sometime Provost of Beverley and Sir Aymo de Carto sometime Provost of Beverley", (4 June, 1306).
6. Above, p.98.

handed over to subsequent provosts.¹ Any deficiency or excess in each category was noted and valued at a fixed price per head, and the overall short-fall (which invariably was revealed) was charged against the estate of the late provost in favour of his successor.

The following table brings together the stock left by Aymo de Carto and that released to three of the four other provosts of the Act Book period (the figures in brackets being the agreed standard quota).

	Stock Left by Carto (1304) ²	Stock Released to Abberwick (1304)	Reynolds (1306)	Melton (1308)	Chapter's Valuation per head ³
Oxen (92).	81	91	83	86	6s 8d
Draught Horses (42)	29	42	40	37	10s
Cows (80)	24	51	50	69	8s
Steers, Stirks & Calves (120)	74	66	85	106	6s, 4s, 1s6d
Fat Lambs (600)	70	70	66	80	1s6d - 1s8d
Hoggets (-)	308	308	268	208	about 1s2d
Lambs (-)	-	-	324	443	about 8d
Ewes (460)	710	710	580	582	1s 3d
Total Sheep (1060)	1088	1088	1238	1233	
Pigs (86)	-	- 4	71	97	2s 6d
Value Deficiency		£51.4.6	£38.17.6	£28.16.8	

1. B.C.A., i, pp.122 - 125.

2. One of the charges laid against Aymo de Carto was that he had misappropriated the goods of the provostry, in the first instance to settle a debt (said to amount to £100) with William de Hamilton, dean of York (ibid, pp.15 - 16), and later to finance his journey to Geneva, having been appointed bishop of that see (ibid, pp.20 - 21). It may be that this accounts for the greatly reduced number of cattle. Part of the deficiency was made good, it would seem, prior to the advent of Abberwick.

3. These prices, officially charged by the chapter, are considerably in excess of those featuring in the latter's private inventory of 1304 - cows were then valued at 6s 8d, fat lambs and ewes alike at 1s (ibid, p.31).

4. Porci non numerabantur, quia furtive substracti licet Capitulum posuerat diligentiam, quam potuit (ibid, p.124).

These figures serve as a reminder that the fixed quota was, in practice, used mainly as a basis for assessing the extent of an outgoing provost's financial liability, and, so far as stock rearing was concerned, could stand as no more than a general guide as to what was expected and needful. It should be noted, for instance, that all four sets relate the stock-situation in the spring of the year - a time when fat lambs (i.e. recently matured grazing sheep) had for the most part been slaughtered or otherwise disposed of, and when their replacements were either hoggets (yearlings) or new-born lambs. Since the latter were naturally of less value it was clearly the misfortune of Carto, Abberwick (or, rather, his estate) and Reynolds to end their provostships in the early months of the year.¹

Almost the whole of the provostry's grazing stock was reared and pastured on the manors of Welwick and Leven in Holderness. The former was given over almost entirely to sheep farming, normally supporting a flock in excess of 1000 head.² This was made feasible, even convenient, by the fact that Patrington at this time possessed a haven with access to Humber, less than three miles away. Fronting on to the Humber Estuary the Welwick lands were in a measure protected from the full violence of the North Sea. Even so lack of adequate drainage and the ever present danger of flooding,³ not to mention storms of the magnitude recorded in 1275 and 1367,⁴ inhibited arable farming and explains the existence of only one old plough at Welwick in 1304.⁵

1. Unless they were overlooked or purposely omitted from reckoning there is no accounting for the absence of lambs in 1304, with the number of ewes so inflated. Since lambs do not feature in the quota, an alien provost, deprived and returned to his homeland, was not well placed to ensure their inclusion, as, no doubt, did the representatives of Abberwick and Reynolds. Lambing on the far reaches of Holderness must, in any event, have been an uncertain business.
2. B.C.A., i, p.31 - where the total flock numbered 1015, not 985 as shown.
3. For conditions and drainage on the lower reaches of the Estuary see June A. Sheppard, The Draining of the Marshlands of South Holderness and the Vale of York (E.Y.L.H. Series No.29), pp.5-9.
4. The first breached Spurn Head, the second finally washed away the port and town of Ravenserodd (ibid, p.6).
5. The thraves of South Holderness doubtless supplied the Manor's needs.

Leven, it seems, remained the most extensive and valuable of all the manors throughout the middle ages. Alone among the eight it was the scene of genuine mixed farming, supporting, as it did, the dairy herd (reduced to a mere 18 cows plus a heifer or two in 1304,¹ but restored to over 50 head a few years later), a modest acreage under corn and, almost certainly, a sizeable piggery.

All in all, however, the agricultural activity of the provostry was an insubstantial affair. Without need or incentive to grow corn in bulk it was undertaken, at least initially, with the modest aim of meeting the demands of the Bedern board, chiefly its considerable requirements of mutton, beef and pork. Nowhere do we gain the impression of commercial enterprise, but rather one of a half-hearted attempt to meet an unchanging minimum standard. The flock at Welwick, though we hear of wool being stolen from the grange there,² was undoubtedly kept for its meat, and at no time did it enter the league of the monastic flocks of the Wolds and in the Dales, with their sheep numbered in thousands.³

Already in the fourteenth century there is evidence of the provostry's frequent inability to stock the Bedern larders,⁴ and of the manciple and cooks resorting to Beverley market for supplies.⁵ In later years this latter practice in all probability became the norm, for the suggestion of pre-Reformation accounts of the provostry is that direct farming by the provost's staff had been abandoned altogether.

The receiver-general's accounts for c.1530 speak not at all of the fruits of husbandry, but only of rents and farms received.⁶ For the two

1. B.C.A., i, p.30.

2. ibid, p.39.

3. See H.E.Wroot, Yorkshire Abbeys and the Wool Trade, Thoresby Society, xxxiii (Miscellanea), pp.1-21; Bryan Waites, Moorland and Vale-land Farming in North-East Yorkshire, The Monastic Contribution in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries, Borthwick Papers No.32, pp.26-33, where the size of the flocks maintained by Rievaulx Abbey and Bridlington Priory towards the end of the thirteenth century are estimated at 12,000 and 10,000 sheep respectively.

4. B.C.A., i, pp. 13, 22, 129, 345; ii, p.295.

5. ibid, p.25.

6. Poulson, op.cit, ii, pp. 616-619.

manors most exploited in the Act Book period the entries for this year run

"Leven - And of £17. 2s 5d received by him [the receiver-general] of Richard Dalby, the reeve there, for the issues of his office this year, above 49s paid this year for the repair of the sea-wall there, as appears more fully in the account of the said reeve, this account having been examined and approved. And of £30 received by him of the aforesaid Richard Dalby, farmer of the manor with the demesne lands, for the issues this year of his farm. Total £47. 2s 5d.¹

"Welwick - And of £7. 1s 3d received by him of William Care, deputy of John Care and William Ryther, [successively?] reeves there, for the issues of his office this year, as appears in the account of the said reeve, this account having been examined. And of £35. 1s 1d received by him of Richard Care, son of Stephen Care, farmer of the manor with the demesne lands there at £37 per annum, for the issues of his farm this year, above 38s 11d allowed for repairs effected this year on the manor and on the sea wall, as appears more fully in the account of the said farmer, this account having been examined and approved. Total £42. 2s 4d.²"

In fact all the demesne lands are shown as being worked by farmers who, more often than not, turn out to be local officials of the provost. Such men paid a fixed sum annually for what seems to have amounted to a non-repairing lease - at Leven £30, at Welwick £37 - retaining whatever profit they might make. The rents of other tenements, for which the manorial reeves were responsible, completed the revenues due to the provost from individual manors.

It requires little imagination to recognise the circumstances which worked against vigorous personal exploitation of the Minster's farmlands, and to appreciate the advantages of this widely favoured trend.

1. Poulson, op. cit., ii, p.617.

2. ibid.

A semi-autonomous management, its endeavours on behalf of its trust sapped by assured affluence from other sources, having early gained a reputation for falling short of its obligations, must have become increasingly unsatisfactory as the vigilance of the chapter became relaxed with the onset of absenteeism.

Unlike the monastic houses, the rulers of the Minster lacked personal involvement, and neither they nor the provost commanded disciplined cheap labour. With their flock and herd in the hands of hirelings and their scattered estates open to easy theft and fraud, not to mention the notorious hazards of storms and flooding, the prospect of assured rents (to be spent in nearby markets) instead of perennial anxiety must eventually have become overwhelmingly attractive. When the provostry's farming activities came to an end we do not know, but it would be surprising to learn that they long survived the Black Death.

2. THE BEDERN

Outside the church itself the focal point of everyday clerical life at Beverley was that institution in the precincts known as the Bedern.¹ A common feature of all the great northern Minsters, this last vestige of communal life became, in the later middle ages, especially associated with the vicars whose official lodging place it was.

Whereas at York and Ripon a Bedern had been founded for this limited purpose,² at Beverley, where primitive forms persisted to a greater degree, there are clear indications that it had an earlier and wider significance. The earliest references show the Bedern Hall to have been the dining place not merely of the vicars, but of the canons, the officers and, when present, of the provost himself.³ In later years, long after they had forsaken the common board, the corpus of the income of these clerks was always described as their corrody in the Bedern.⁴

Nor was this all, for although the provost had his own imposing dwelling adjacent to the Bedern, it was the latter which served as the official centre of his activities. Wherever within the provostry his chapter or court might be convened it was still known as the chapter or court of the Bedern.⁵ Throughout the later centuries the Great Hall of the Bedern remained the venue for formal gatherings and the transaction of official business not appropriate to the chapter house.

1. For an account of the inconclusive speculation surrounding the meaning and origin of this title see Leach, B.C.A., i, pp. 1-li.
2. See F. Harrison, Life in a Medieval College, pp. 29-42, and the same author's The Sub-Chanter and the Vicars-Choral in York Minster Historical Tracts 627-1927; Barrie Dobson, The Later Middle Ages, 1215-1500, in A History of York Minster (ed. G.E. Aylmer and Reginald Cant), pp.90-93. For Ripon, see T.S. Gowland, Ripon Minster and its Precincts, Y.A.J., xxxv, pp.281-285. From 1275 onwards the term Bedern appears in York archives as denoting the quarters erected to house the vicars-choral through the bequest of William de Langham, canon of York (York Fasti, ii, pp. 9, 32) who died before 1249. Nothing is heard of a Bedern at Ripon prior to 1304, when it described the common residence then built as a common residence for the vicars.
3. See above, p.29 n 1.
4. See above, p.19.
5. See above, p.124 n 2.

All this points to the probable antiquity of the Bedern as the original all-purpose edifice in the minster yard. Though evidence is completely lacking here, there are strong circumstantial grounds for believing that, both materially and constitutionally, it stemmed, directly and without a break, from the dormitory and refectory begun by Archbishop Aelfric (1023-1051) and completed by Ealdred (1061-1069) on the eve of the Conquest.¹ We have already found reason to suppose that these works remained adequate for the Norman church,² when their purpose was to house the canons themselves in their communal living, and, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, we may reasonably assume that they continued to shelter the lesser clergy when their masters departed for their prebendal houses.

Though it is unlikely that the Anglo-Saxon structures survived indefinitely the medieval propensity for demolition and reconstruction, the fact that the community never outgrew them, as at York, conceivably meant that they bridged the changing order of things to provide a tangible link with the past.

Certainly the premises occupied by the vicars at the Dissolution were not on the site of the original Bedern, but on one adjacent to it. The precise time of the change is uncertain: we have only the testimony of Leland that

Locus, qui Bederna antiquitus dicebatur, nunc est domus prepositi, et nova Bederna adjuncta est eius domui, ubi nunc sunt vicarii prebendariorum, quibus Prepositus stipendia persolvit.³

We cannot be sure, therefore, whether it is the old or the new Bedern which, in the early fourteenth century, had for its communal quarters a greater and a lesser hall, a main and a subsidiary kitchen, a larder, a butlers' pantry, a brewhouse, a bakery and a granary.⁴ No doubt such

1. See above, p.15.

2. See above, p.31.

3. B.C.A., ii, p.352.

4. ibid., i, pp. 28 - 29.

offices were common to both, the true purpose of the new works being to provide individual accommodation for the residents. Since the old Bedern could be adapted for use by the provost it probably featured a common dormitory, lacking the separate apartments, arranged around a close, which had become customary at most collegiate churches by the mid-fourteenth century.¹

The change must certainly have taken place long before 1472 when Provost William Poteman, in an indenture, made reference to "our mansion beside the Bedern of Beverley."² Indeed a rental of the provostry for 1416/17 lists a rent of 6s 8d de personis ecclesie Beati Johannis pro tenementis suis infra clausum Bederne.³ On the other hand Alan de Humbleton, the senior vicar at the time of his death, could, as late as 1329/30, allude in his will to "the vicars' chamber", and leave half a mark to the two servants of the dormitory.⁴

Mr. Leach questioned the local assumption that the Bedern stood on the south side of the Minster, and suggested that it was probably a building, in part still remaining, in Lurk Lane close to the south-east corner of the choir.⁵ The evidence of the rental in the Provost's Book, however, places it in Keldgate, and therefore to the south-west of the church.⁶ Since, so far as we can gather, the prebendal houses of the canons were ranged to the north and west of the Minster Yard, this site alone would leave space for both the Bedern and its predecessor.

1. K. Edwards, The English Secular Cathedrals in the Middle Ages, pp. 282 - 283.

2. Y.D., ix, p.28.

3. B.C.A., ii, p.316. The new Bedern would therefore seem to have housed those seven clerks otherwise known as Berefellarii (see below, p.334), but as rentpayers their occupation was clearly not as of right.

4. Y.D. ix, pp. 13 - 14. Humbleton, a man of property, owned several houses in Beverley, and himself lived in one of them.

5. B.C.A., i, p.li.

6. The first Bedern at Ripon occupied a similar site in relation to the Minster i.e. on the left-hand side of Bedern Bank (Gowland, op.cit, pp.283 - 284).

Though the gatehouse of the latter impressed Leland, these two memorials to communal life by this time shared in the general decay he noted at every turn.¹ Together with the archbishop's manor house, also, it is believed, on the south side, they have disappeared without trace.

The Ordinance of the Refectory² of the late twelfth century nowhere explicitly uses the term 'Bedern'. Nevertheless since it amounts to a detailed account of communal eating in the common hall it clearly relates to the same establishment, whatever its name may then have been. Designed to avert future misunderstandings it specifies in detail the menu to be served at each meal. We are therefore entitled to expect it to be equally precise in the matter of the recipients.

The Ordinance in fact lists twenty clerks entitled to a full quota of food at the common board: the eight canons, the custos ecclesie (later the sacrist), the magister scholarum (whose office was soon to be merged in that of chancellor), nine vicars³ and the archbishop's steward.⁴ In addition provision was made for the entertainment of sundry lesser clerks and officials on certain feast days, and for the part-board of the clerk of the custos, the bellringer, the master of the works and the like.

These stipulations emanate from the period which saw the institution of prebends, when the canons and the two "officers" (shortly to be joined by a precentor) were soon to take up separate residence, if they had not already done so.⁵ Since no mention is made of the Berfellarii⁶ and clerks

1. B.C.A., ii, p.345 and below, p. 296.

2. B.C.A., ii, pp.249-252. See also above, pp 29 n 1, 46, and below, pp 148-149, 330-331. The document survives only in a fourteenth-century copy.

3. The archbishop's vicar made up this figure.

4. This seems to be the most likely identity of the Prepositus Archiepiscopi. The provost himself is unlikely to have been placed at the end of the list, and his rights in a refectory over which he presided are obviously assumed by the Ordinance.

5. See above, p. 32.

6. See below, p. 329.

of the choir, this presumably meant that the premises then became in practice exclusively the lodging place of the vicars. Even though the prebendaries retained formal rights in the place, represented by their corrodies, and though the Berfellarii came to have a portion there,¹ this remained the case throughout the later middle ages.

The existence of the vicars in the Bedern, however, was never solitary. Quite apart from the hospitality due to others, and the constant use of the premises for the provost's business, there were in addition a bevy of servants, varying greatly in status, and exceeding the vicars in number. A lively body of men of independent spirit, their presence must at times have made residence in the Bedern a doubtful privilege.

The official establishment among these were the "six servants of the fee", presided over by the butler (pincerna)², and accorded their separate table in the refectory.³ Besides the butler they were, so far as we can gather, the manciple (discularius)⁴, a porter⁵ and three cooks.⁶ The office of each was recognised as a lay fee with tenure until death.⁷ That of the butler, worth £8. 6. 8 in the fifteenth century, may well have been hereditary,⁸ and there is a hint of certain family interests in the others.⁹ Officially, however, each holder was nominated by the provost,

1. See below, p. 330 . Their corrodies were then in the gift of the provost. (B.C.A., i, pp.269, 307) The fact that they are later found to be tenants in the Bedern clearly indicates that their entitlement extended only to sustenance (See above, p. 136).
2. B.C.A., i, pp.74; ii, pp.336 - 338; Botellarius (ibid, p.271); see also E.R.A.S., v, pp.42 - 43.
3. B.C.A., ii, pp.336 - 338; E.R.A.S., v, loc.cit.
4. B.C.A., i, pp.50, 56, 74.
5. Janitor (ibid, ii, p.271).
6. ibid, i, p.25. A steward sometimes listed with these officials (see ibid, p.74) was not properly one of their number, but rather the steward of the archbishop or of the provostry, both of whom had corrodies in the Bedern.
7. ibid, ii, p.309.
8. E.R.A.S., v, pp.42 - 43.
9. This may arise from the fact that a holder could, in his lifetime bestow his fee on another (B.C.A., ii, p.118).

and admitted by the chapter which, with due solemnity, received his oath.¹

Whilst the butler had immediate oversight of the refectory, the manciple, sometimes referred to as the receiver (receptor)² and, perhaps, as the steward of the Bedern, was in effect the bursar. His was the task of receiving revenues due to the Bedern, with them purchasing the necessary food, and of ensuring that the stipulated diet reached the tables.³

The independent means of these men sometimes matched their status: John Thornton of Coppendale who was admitted ^{as} ~~as~~ ^{asc} ~~asc~~ ^{cook} in 1337 is described as a merchant,⁴ and certainly came of a well-known Beverley family, and John Humbleton, who relinquished the butlership only on his death in 1427,⁵ belonged to the modestly landed class, and his heir, probably a nephew, was a knight.

Clearly, since the absence these officials was a constant source of concern throughout the Act Book years,⁶ the smooth running of the Bedern must have demanded that each should have assistants under him. We hear nothing of scullions - unless it was they who caused wild scenes in the kitchens in the winter of 1304 - 1305⁷ - but we know of at least nine other employees working elsewhere in the establishment. What appear to be the surnames of five men sworn in as servants of the Bedern in 1337/8 almost certainly denote their employment: William Perchet, Henry Claviger, Simon Braciator, John Clote and Richard minister suus were in all probability fishmonger, cellarer (possibly porter), brewer, sewer-man

1. ibid.

2. ibid., ii, p.271.

3. ibid., i, p.25.

4. ibid., ii, p.118.

5. E.R.A.S., v, loc cit.

6. B.C.A., i, pp.50,

7. ibid., pp. 60 - 61. John le Porter, one of the cooks, however, had a garcio, almost as turbulent as his master (ibid., p.381).

and his mate respectively.¹ Shortly after their admission one Nigel, miller of the Bedern, was convicted of perjury.² Simon Russell lists a gaoler among the provost's appointments,³ and Alan de Humbleton, in his will left half a mark apiece to Nigel and Alan, "servants in the dormitory."⁴ When account is taken also of the numerous personal servants of the residents we may believe the Bedern to have been a very busy and noisy place.

Though the furnishings of the Great Hall were functional to a degree - apart from the personal chests of the vicars⁵ they consisted in 1304 of "one good table, two infirm; one old table cloth for the vicars; one bench for the servants, another for the boys"⁶ - it remained throughout the middle ages the common resort of all the lesser clergy. In the winter months it was probably for some the one place of warmth to which they had free access. Fires were lit in the Hall on the eve of All Saints and maintained until the Easter Vigil.⁷ Logs and turf were a charge laid upon the provost, as were rushes for the floor and clean linen for the tables.⁸

Normally the preserve of the vicars and their servants at meal times, concourse in the Bedern was greatly enlarged on the numerous Holy Days and Anniversaries which lightened the ecclesiastical year. On such days the number of dishes was increased from seven to ten, and the medieval clerk's alleged capacity for ale was well proved.⁹

1. ibid., ii, pp.118 - 119.

2. ibid., p.127.

3. ibid., p.309.

4. Y.D., ix, p.14. He also rewarded his "boy", and his washerwoman (lotera).

5. See, for instance Y.D., ix, loc cit.

6. B.C.A., i, p.28.

7. B.C.A., ii, p.273.

8. ibid.; Poulson, op.cit., ii, p.572

9. B.C.A., ii, pp.274 - 275. The normal weekly entitlement of ale of vicars and servants alike was 22 gallons (E.R.A.S., v, pp.42 - 43).

Hard times which frequently beset the East Riding affected the inmates of the Bedern less than most. Nevertheless, much depended upon the welfare of the provostry's farming activities. Instances of stock being sold to provide sustenance from the markets,¹ and even of meals being suspended in favour of money payments,² are not hard to find. Even so the evidence is that this remnant of communal life in the close continued lively to the last.

Finally, the Bedern, as we might expect, was the most fruitful source of dispute between the chapter and the provost, for it was the point at which the two administrations met. It lay within the sphere of influence of both: the servants were officials of the provostry whereas the residents were the concern of the chapter alone.

More often than not contention arose from the neglect and maladministration of the former group. Deprivation in such instances seems never to have been contemplated, the chapter resorting instead to excommunication.

Any such action on the part of the prebendaries, however, invariably met with the resentment of the official of the provostry, ever jealous of the rights of the court of the Bedern. The truculence of the servants stemmed partly from their security of tenure, but it must have been further encouraged by this age-old conflict of jurisdictions. Even when the official was induced to hear a case against them the process was by no means straightforward.

When, in January 1304/5, the chapter, at the behest of the vicars, prosecuted William Bowet, John le Porter and Walter Kelk, cooks of the Bedern, before the official, it was served with a royal writ of prohibition on the grounds that the office of cook was a lay fee.³ Besides neglecting their duties the cooks, it seems, had erected a partition-wall in the main

1, B.C.A., i, pp. 20, 22, 129.

2. ibid., ii, p.295.

3. B.C.A., i, p.25.

kitchen, creating a room which harboured "the king's enemies". The latter, all of them previously convicted in the lay courts, allegedly helped themselves to big meals and smoked out the vicars with large fires. Moreover, Alan de Cothum, the official, though he had no part in the erection of the wall, refused to order its removal.¹

The chapter had apparently proceeded to excommunicate the three cooks, but to little purpose, for the wall was still a subject for consideration at the Michaelmas convocation.² The end of the year indeed brought a writ of venire facias from the Crown ordering the guardian of the spiritualities to indict the canons responsible for having pursued the case in the court christian. Their goods and those of the vicars were sequestrated to the extent of one mark and half a mark respectively.³

The prebendaries' course was to request the official of York (John de Nassington, their co-canon) to issue a testimonial to the effect that the cooks' conviction was well founded.⁴ Whether this cautious man complied we do not know: certain it is that it was not until November, 1306, that this petty quarrel was resolved with absolution of Bewet and Porter by the chapter.⁵

All this time the routine of the refectory was maintained and the cooks suffered not at all. John le Porter, clearly the ringleader, survived unscathed a variety of misdemeanours to hand over his office some thirty years later to John Thornton of Coppendale.⁶ Clearly such litigation was something to be embarked upon in a spirit of detachment, quite apart from the everyday ordering of the Bedern. No doubt, too, the contestants preserved a sense of proportion not always evident in the records.

1. ibid., pp.60 - 61.

2. ibid., pp.73 - 74.

3. ibid., pp.104 - 105.

4. ibid., pp. 106 - 107.

5. ibid., p.168.

6. B.C.A., ii, p.118. Porter had assaulted a clerk in the churchyard in 1300, but had endured excommunication on this count for fourteen years. No doubt he found the payment of 40 pence to the Fabric Fund for fornication with no less than five women even less painful (ibid., i, p.314.)

3. THE PREBENDS.

Though the holders of the seven ancient canonries lived communally in what initially must have been a missionary situation they were, from the time of Athelstan at least, essentially parish priests in character. Charged with saying Mass daily in the Minster, they exercised a corporate pastoral ministry within a vast parish which extended far beyond the confines of Beverley.

Whether this oversight, as it developed, followed what we would now term a "team ministry" in which each canon attended to some special aspect of a common concern, or whether the parish was subdivided from the outset into more or less formal territorial areas, we do not know. Probably the latter was the case, for this was certainly the accepted arrangement at the time of the extant Chapter Act Book. True, by the beginning of the fourteenth century a prebendal system had been in existence (as we believe) for more than 110 years,¹ but there is no reason to suppose that its creation had involved a re-ordering of pastoral obligations and the manner of their fulfilment.

The prebends, as we have seen, were never geographically defined areas as at York,² and whilst each continued to involve individual canons in a cure of souls it remained confined to the ancient Minster parish. Thus the original ideal of perpetual residence persisted in theory, though the rule may well have been modified well before 1290, when Archbishop Romeyn fixed statutory residence at 24 weeks in the year,³ and the requirement that a canon should be in Holy Orders remained in force throughout the middle ages, even though it was frequently ignored in later years.

It is impossible to locate precisely all the areas of parochial concern as they fell to each individual prebendary, but we know that a

1. See above, pp. 35 - 43

2. See above, p.30

3. Though Romeyn's purpose was to "restore" residence his ordinance, among extant documents, represents the first formal recognition of less than perpetual attendance at Beverley. See below, p.166.

large part of Beverley itself, to the west of the Minster, was the responsibility of the occupant of St. Martin's prebend, and was in part served by the chapel of St. Mary (now a parish church) attached to it.¹ We shall have reason to note that the vill of Risby in the south-east portion of the parish was served by the prebendary of St. Peter's, and the Chantry Certificate informs us that the nearby chapel of Thearn was in "the Parisshe of St. Petir in Beverley".² The Certificate also associates the chantry at Hull Bridge and, therefore, the vill of Tickton close by, with St. Andrew's,³ whilst Molescroft on the north-west outskirts of Beverley was in part the charge of St. James' prebendary.⁴ St. Stephen's also drew tithes from Molescroft,⁵ and presumably shared responsibility for this populous area, just as St. James' had, by the same token, parishioners in the more distant locality of Ake on the northernmost boundary of the parish.⁶ St. Michael's prebend, on the other hand, derived its tithes from lands and pastures within the archbishop's park,⁷ which extended southwards from Beverley, probably as far as the boundary with Cottingham. Finally, if St. Mary's parishioners were more numerous than the occupants of eight tenements within Beverley⁸ town they are nowhere mentioned, but to complete the parochial coverage we should look for them in the north-west of the parish, in the direction of Leconfield and Scarborough.

In so far as tithes never represented more than a small proportion of a canon's income these parochial areas had little prebendal significance. They merit mention in this context, however, because there is a faint possibility that the Beverley prebends, at the outset of their existence,

1. B.C.A., i, pp. 194 - 196.

2. Chantry Surveys, ii, p. 537.

3. ibid, p. 536.

4. B.C.A., ii, pp. 341 - 342.

5. ibid, p. 341. St. Stephen's and St. James' in fact shared equally the tithes of molescroft.

6. ibid, p. 341.

7. ibid.

8. ibid, p. 341.

were identified by reference to them, rather than to the altars in the Minster with which they were later associated.

In 1235, when the prebendal system was still a comparatively recent innovation, Archbishop Gray, with the assent of the chapter, united to the prebend of "Risceby" the houses and curia in Beverley belonging to the prebend of St. Mary's, which Mr. Roger de Richmond held for his life. "The houses and curia which belonged to the prebend of Risceby, which Mr. R. Cornubiens, canon of Beverley, held for his life, we annex for ever to the prebend of St. Mary's." ¹

Why, in this earliest reference to individual prebends, should the one later known as the prebend of St. Peter and St. Paul, be called the prebend of Risby? The only obvious explanation would seem to be that, at this time of extensive rebuilding of the church, no such altar existed, whereas that of St. Mary's was already in being. This would suggest that it was Gray who, if he did not actually inaugurate parochial altars, at least re-named the prebends by reference to them, as and when building operations allowed their siting. ²

By the end of the thirteenth century, when the naming and emoluments of the prebends had long been stabilised, they were, strictly speaking, nine in number. One of these, however, was the archbishop's prebend. Associated with the Altar of St. Leonard in the Minster, ³ it never represented much more than an entitlement to a corrody in the Bedern, and though its status was the source of bitter contention between Alexander Neville and the chapter in practice it admitted the archbishop merely to

1. Reg. Gray, p.68; below, pp. A116, A153.

2. Restoration of Beverley Minster, devastated by the recent collapse of the tower (see above, p.16 n.1), was begun by Gray. For the progress of rebuilding in the Act Book years see Leach, B.C.A., i, pp. xciii - xcvi. The final siting of the prebendal altars, as distinct from their titles was resolved before April, 1324 (ibid., ii, pp. 45-46).

3. Chantry Surveys, ii, p.525.

a place in the choir, in which his appointed vicar also had a stall.¹

We have already had occasion to mention the unusual character of another prebend, St. Katherine's, sometimes termed the "eighth prebend".² Inferior to the rest, it, too, carried no seat in chapter, nor did it share in the apportionment of thraves. Instead its occupant became, as we have seen, the recipient of half the offerings at the Shrine of St. John - a sum necessarily defined more precisely in subsequent years.³

This, then, left the seven ancient prebends, equal in status in every respect, the holders of which formed the chapter as the true successors of the seven Anglo-Saxon canons. They were

The prebend of the Altar of St. Martin

"	"	"	"	"	"	St. Andrew
"	"	"	"	"	"	St. James
"	"	"	"	"	"	St. Stephen
"	"	"	"	"	"	St. Michael
"	"	"	"	"	"	St. Peter and St. Paul
"	"	"	"	"	"	St. Mary

1. B.C.A., ii, pp. 208-213. That is, until 1390, when Thomas Arundel, resolving the disputes of his predecessor, gained formal acceptance of the archbishop's right, in virtue of his prebend, to preside at chapter when present. (ibid, p.267; Margaret Aston, Thomas Arundel, A Study of Church Life in the Reign of Richard II, p. 293. No subsequent instance of a primate exercising this right is known to us.

2. Above, p.113 ; B.C.A., i, pp. xlvii - xlix.

3. Above, pp. 113-114.

(a) The Income of Prebends

We have already considered at some length most of the sources of prebendal revenues.¹ When we bring these together in order to assess the relative values of the prebends we have to await the sixteenth century for reliable reckoning, for nearly all earlier assessments are based upon the dubious figures of the Taxatio Nicholai of 1291.² Clearly wide of the mark in numerous instances elsewhere, at Beverley the Taxatio almost certainly erred considerably on the low side in its round-figures valuations. Whatever the true incomes of the prebends were in 1291 they were undoubtedly subject to fluctuation in the centuries preceding the dissolution years which produced the Valor and the Chantry Survey.

	Taxatio Nicholai (1291)	Valor Ecclesiasticus (1535) Net	Chantry Certificate (1545) ₃ Gross ³
St. Martin's	£45. 0. 0	£39. 12. 1	£40. 4. 11
St. Andrew's	27. 0. 0	48. 16. 6	omitted
St. James'	26. 0. 0	47. 1. 4	40. 5. 4
St. Stephen's	25. 0. 0	43. 11. 10	48. 5. 1
St. Michael's	17. 0. 0	omitted	omitted
St. Peter's	25. 0. 0	46. 6. 11	49. 19. 4
St. Mary's	16. 0. 0	37. 17. 0	37. 14. 4

Though the revenues of St. Martin's prebend were greatly in excess of those of the rest, whilst those of St. Michael's and St. Mary's lagged

1. Above, pp. 63-66, 105-110, 117-118.

2. Taxatio Ecclesiastica Angliae et Walliae auctoritate P. Nicholai IV, circa AD 1291. The complete entry for Beverley Minster is printed in Poulson, Beverlac, ii, pp. 539-542. For critical consideration of the Taxatio's assessments in general see J.R.H. Moorman, Church Life in England in the Thirteenth Century, pp. 135-137.

3. The Chantry Certificate makes substantial deductions, relating to unspecified 'reprises', clearly over and above those recorded in the Valor. They are: for St. Martin's £11.19.1, St. James' £10.14.0, St. Stephen's £9.1.4, St. Peter's £12.6.7, St. Mary's £3.18.11. Almost certainly arising from the process of dissolution, and therefore of recent origin, they are ignored for present purposes (Yorkshire Chantry Surveys, ii, pp. 525-527). For the more detailed figures of the Valor see below pp. 158-161.

well behind, one is struck by the parity of income of the remaining four as recorded in the Taxatio. Since the rise in fortune of St. Martin's is, as we shall see, readily explained, there is, at least, a prima facie suggestion that equality was the original intention of the prebendal scheme, and that two prebends experienced an early decline in fortune.

Over all the years which followed the prebends, with the exception of St. Martin's, increased their receipts over the Taxatio amounts with remarkable uniformity: in 1535 revenues set out in the Valor for St. Andrew's, St. James', St. Peter's and St. Mary's all exceed their totals of 1291 by about £21, whilst the growth of St. Stephen's approached £19.¹

When we examine the Valor's figures for individual prebends in detail, on the other hand, it is hard not to conclude that, if parity were not wholly fortuitous, it was the result of an extremely fine balancing and adjustment of the various sources as they were apportioned among the seven. Of the four major elements of income, i.e. the corrody, thraves, tithes and rents, only the first made an identical contribution to each prebend.

The corrody in the Bedern was, as we know, originally the daily entitlement of food served to each canon (and other lesser clergy) at the common board in the refectory. The accepted diet of a twelfth-century canon was, to say the least, substantial, and such as to make a modern dietician wince. Ever wary of fraud on the part of the provost's catering staff the dishes and their quality at the two daily meals were carefully specified, and are recorded for us in the Ordinance for the Service of the Refectory.²

On Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, they not being feast days, lunch (prandium) was to consist of four courses: (1) Pork or beef with beans;

¹, Valor Ecclesiasticus ed. J. Caley (Record Commission) v, pp. 130-132. The figures for St. Michael's are omitted from the Valor, possibly because the prebend was at this time held by the suffragen bishop, William Hogeson.

². B.C.A., ii, pp. 249-251.

peas or cabbage, depending on the season. (2) Fresh mutton or fresh pork. (3) Chicken, goose or game. (4) Some kind of soft food - meat paste, brawn or rissoles. Supper on these days was to begin with boiled meat, to be followed by a roast, but cheese and eggs, and even fish, could be served in the absence of meat.

On Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays a meal was to be supplied after Terce (9 a.m.) consisting of a dish of vegetables followed by another of three kinds of fish or some appropriate substitute. Supper was normally two courses completely of fish or an accepted alternative, but on Rogation Days, etc., the number of dishes was to be increased to five. Every meal was to be accompanied by an ample supply of good bread and ale.

Surveying such a menu we may sympathise with Provost Fulk Basset when, in 1236/37, he complained to Pope Gregory IX "that the style of living which he had to afford the canons, chaplains, clerks and officers of Beverley in the refectory of the Bedern, commonly called corrodies", having been agreed "when the necessities of the life of man were at less price", now made the office of provost unprofitable.¹

With costs rising, and certain "sons of iniquity" attacking the rights of the provostry, the old ordinance perpetuated the absurdity, as Basset alleged, that whilst "as much is given in flesh and fish to a single one as would serve him and many more, the goods of the provostry are almost entirely spent in superfluity of food and unlicensed beverage", so that the provost, though head of the foundation, is reduced to dire straits.

The provost apparently won his point, for against the name of Fulk Basset it is noted in the Provost's Book, eius itaque temporibus in Bedderma fuerunt corrodia moderata.²

Basset took this opportunity of pursuing a further complaint he had earlier raised. The chaplains and other clerks, he had said, were in the habit of taking their entitlement away from the refectory, so neglecting

1. Reg Gray, p.175; B.C.A., ii, pp. xxiii - xxiv.

2. B.C.A., ii, p.335.

the poor who should have benefited from what was beyond their needs.¹ Now he went further, accusing the canons and others of actually selling the surplus.² No doubt Archbishop Gray corrected the lesser clergy in this, but there was little to be done with regard to the prebendaries, who were permitted by the provisions of the Ordinance to receive their corrodiess when absent from the common hall, wherever they might be.³

These last words are significant: a canon's entitlement was to be rendered not merely when he chose to eat alone in his prebendal house (which, as we have seen, was already customary), but also when he was absent from the precincts altogether. In later years, when reasons for absence became manifold, the corrodiess of absentees normally went to the residentiaries, and were one of the chief rewards of attendance.⁴ The one exception to this was the case of prebendaries away in the service of the archbishop and the diocese. In these early days, and throughout Gray's primacy, this, so far as we can tell, was invariably the sole reason for absence, numerous canons being employed in the episcopal household or required on isolated commissions. Such limited grounds for quitting Beverley were doubtless assumed when the concession of the Ordinance was made.⁵

In any event a corrody was of little value to the absentee, or indeed to the residentiaries to whom it fell, unless it was turned into cash. In these circumstances, and with canons residentiary eating in their

1. C.P.L., i, p.100; B.C.A., ii, p. xxiii.

2. Reg. Gray, loc cit.

3. B.C.A., ii, p. 251. Quod si canonicus in refectorio non fuerit, ubicumque sit, plenarie corrodium habebit.

4. That is, until 1307, when Archbishop Greenfield 'united' the corrody to the prebend, so allowing it to all prebendaries, regardless of residence. See below, p.153.

5. An act of convocation of February, 1304/5, however, extended the rule to include those absent in defence of the church: Ordinatum est, quod laborantes pro jure ecclesiae conservando, seu defensione eiusdem, habeant expensas de ecclesia et interim pro Residentibus habeantur (B.C.A., i, p. 50).

houses, acceptance of some general commutation of the food corrody can only have been a matter of time.

In spite of appearances to the contrary it seems unlikely that the prebendaries had to wait until 1272, or after, for this to take place. In that year the Bedern had run into debt, and in order to make good the deficit Provost John de Cheshull reached agreement with the canons that they, the vicars, clerks and other ministers of the church, should, for one year, receive a sum of money and a quantity of wheat in lieu of their food allowance. He undertook to restore the former order of things at Michaelmas of the following year, unless some mutually agreed alternative had been found.¹

It is indeed possible that we have here the sort of situation which, so far as the prebendaries were concerned, finally brought formality to what had long been accepted practice. We do not need to assume from the terms of this temporary expedient that they had all the while been receiving distributions in kind, still less daily rations: the canons would of necessity be included among the recipients in such an arrangement, if only to complete the list of those having a statutory claim on the "service of the Bedern".²

Unfortunately, we are not informed of the value then placed upon their food corrody. If, however, "the commons of the church of Beverley which consists in victuals", listed after the assessment of the eight prebends (i.e. including St. Katherine's) in the Taxatio Nicholai of 1291,³ relates (as it almost certainly does) to the canons' corrodies, then, since

1. B.C.A., ii, p.295. Nisi interim de consensu et voluntate omnium quorum interest aliter fuerit ordinatum.
2. They were listed in precisely the same manner a century later, in 1372, as being among those deprived of food through the alleged fraud of Provost Adam de Lymbergh, "whereby it happens that some beneficed canons, vicars and clerks and other ministers of the same church, leading a life of poverty, are rendered too weak to celebrate divine service there...." (Beverley Documents from the Record Office, in E.R. Record Society Transactions, v, p.37). In fact the canons of this time, all well-placed pluralists, were for the most part absentees!
3. Printed in Poulson, Beverlac, ii, pp. 539 - 542.

the total value of these is given as £66. 13. 4, each received £8. 6. 8.

At first sight this is at variance with what we know of the corrody received by William Greenfield (the archbishop's prebend being on a par with the rest). From 1307 onwards his bailiff received annually on his behalf 19 marks (£12. 13. 4), payable in two equal instalments at Michaelmas and Easter.¹ This same sum can be said to have been received by the prebendary of St. Martin's in 1308, his corrodium Bedernae, cum perquisitis being reckoned as £13 in a statement of the prebend's revenues.²

We believe, however, that the difference between the 1291 and 1307-8 amounts (£4. 6. 8) is explained by the corn allowance which remained an element of the corrody up to the Dissolution. This was always rendered in oats, the unchanging notional price of which, for purposes of commutation, was 1s 4d per quarter (i.e. 10 quarters to the mark).³ £4. 6. 8 thus represented 65 quarters, or 520 bushels, of oats, that is, a weekly allocation of 10 bushels. By the sixteenth century this element of the entitlement was, according to the Valor⁴, slightly less at 52 quarters per annum, or one quarter per week. Then the value of oats for reckoning was still taken as being 1s 4d per quarter, for the commuted sum received was £3. 9. 4.⁵

If we can assume, as seems reasonable, that the Taxatio took account only of definite cash receipts, and ignored what could fairly be regarded as a corn render, the total figure of £12. 13. 4 could well be the original commutation sum of much earlier times.

1. Reg. Greenfield, v, p.37 (for 1313-1314) et passim. Sometimes the sum was paid net of deductions (iv, p.329).
2. B.C.A., i, p.217. Perquisites probably included small fees, mortuaries, etc.
3. See above, p.81
4. See below, pp.158-161.
5. Below, loc cit.

The fact that Greenfield, as an absentee, was able to receive his corrody at all in May, 1307, (the first occasion when an archbishop is recorded as doing so) was, it seems, the consequence of his own very recent enactment regarding residence at Beverley.¹ Earlier in this same month his Ordinance of Residence of Canons,² following on his primary visitation of the Minster, had not only reduced statutory residence from 24 to 12 weeks, but had united the corrody with the wider emoluments of the prebends, so that it was henceforward received by all the prebendaries even though they were absent - "lest we appear to infringe the statutes of the Council of Tours which prohibits the dismemberment of prebends".³

Thus by a subtle and somewhat dubious approach to the nature of the corrody it was now made available to absentees on much the same grounds as it had hitherto been reserved for residentiaries. Until this time, because of its origin as a daily distribution of sustenance, this corpus prebendae, as it was termed, had naturally been regarded as the due solely of those on the spot to receive it; now, precisely because it was the "body" of the prebend, conciliar legislation was invoked to justify its award also to absentees.⁴

In order that the prebendaries who 'made chapter' should not now go unrewarded, the residentiaries were handsomely reimbursed with a share in half the offerings at the High Altar (which included the Shrine of St. John)

1. Below, p. 166.

2. B.C.A., i, pp. 192 - 194.

3. ibid, p.193.

4. Ceterum portionem illam singularum prebendarum, quae corrodiu de Bederna percipiendum communiter appellatur, cum a primaeva fundatione Beverlacensis ecclesiae de corporibus extiterit praebendarum (quin potius in ipso corrodio corpus praebendae fundatum esse principaliter videatur, prout ex praebenda Archiepiscopali in praedicta ecclesia, cuius corpus in eo solo consistit corrodio satis liquet), singulis septem praebendis antedictis ex nunc omnino reintegrari volumus et adjungi, forma residentiae per nostrum praedecessorem ordinata in praemissis nullatenus obsistente; ita ut singuli canonici dictarum praebendarum de cetero singula corrodia ad praebendas suas spectantia tam absentes integraliter percipiant quam praesentes; ne statutum concilii Turonensis videamur offendere, quod simpliciter praebendarum inhibet sectionem. (B.C.A., ii, p.193).

together with the whole of the offerings and emoluments accruing elsewhere in the Minster.¹ In 1378, when the flow of pilgrims to Beverley was probably past its peak, a total of 100 marks per annum from donations at the High Altar alone was still envisaged,² so that residentiaries could doubtless anticipate something in the region of 60 marks per annum available for daily distribution.³

It is important to understand that income from this source replaced the corrody only as a reward for residence, and in no way took on the character of sustenance. In this way it was kept quite distinct from normal prebendal income, never featuring in summaries of either the church's receipts or those of individual canons. It never even went through a common fund, since no such fund was held to exist at Beverley,⁴ and one wonders, indeed, whether it was ever the subject of formal accounting. In documents it is as though a veil of secrecy hung over the whole matter of offerings of the faithful: we are even denied satisfactory information regarding the receipts of St. Katherine's prebendary, who received the other half of the yield from the High Altar.⁵

The visitation articles of Archbishop Melton (1325) show that he was ignorant of the true emoluments of a residentiary, being under the misapprehension that the corrody was still derived from daily distributions. In reply to his query as to why absentees should receive it, the canons quoted the relevant part of his predecessor's ordinance almost verbatim, but made no reference to the award of offerings.⁶

1. B.C.A., i, p.193.

2. See above, p.114.

3. According to Greenfield his predecessor, John le Romeyn, had induced the canons to agree to residence of 24 weeks partly by the promise of the appropriation to the Minster of a parish to the value of 60 marks, but had been prevented by death from fulfilling his promise. (B.C.A., i, p. 192)

4. ibid, p.255. Ad haec quia intelleximus quod non est custos communae, nec communia in ecclesia praedicta..... This was in 1309, but the clear implication is that a common fund had existed up to the recent Ordinance, to receive the corrodiaries of absent canons. An inquisition of 1425 refers to a common fund, taxed at 100 marks, once consisting of victuals, but now of money paid by the provost (B.C.A., ii, p.342).

5. See above, p.113.

6. B.C.A., ii, pp. 56 - 58.

Since Greenfield, by his own Ordinance, stood to gain unfettered use of his own quite substantial corrody, it is necessary, in fairness, to correct any impression that he acted solely out of self-interest in this matter. In fact his enactment astutely resolved a number of anomalies regarding receipt of the corrody, and clarified the position once and for all.

In 1304, during the vacancy of the see, Peter Aymerici, an influential royal clerk, had gained the support of the king in claiming his corrody though perpetually absent from Beverley. His request was stoutly resisted by the chapter on the grounds that, if granted, it would make residence unprofitable.¹ On the other hand, a convocation of the canons held a few months later ruled in favour of those absent in defence of the Minster's privileges being accounted resident,² and one of Greenfield's earliest formal communications with the chapter was to seek the corrody for John de Nassington, his official principal at York, prae ceteris clericis nostris, tanquam is qui pro nobis pondus et aestus habet jugiter supportare.³

Clearly in a chapter of eight canons such discrimination was a cause of ill-feeling, and Greenfield, as a life-long royal servant, and a former Chancellor of England, must have been sensitive to the exclusion of his former colleagues from favoured treatment.⁴ Certainly by 1307 clarification of the whole problem was long overdue, and the arrangements then made persisted in principle until the Reformation.

The amount of the corrody, however, was subject to variation. Whether Archbishop Arundel, when he came to Beverley in 1391 to resolve the confusion created by his predecessor, himself adjusted the corrody to round figures

1. B.C.A., i, p.37.

2. ibid, p.50.

3. ibid, pp. 135 - 136.

4. In addition there appears to have been some debate regarding the rightful recipient of the archbishop's corrody sede vacante. Thomas, the archbishop's personal valet, to whom Corbridge had awarded it, having died, convocation decided it should be paid to his estate for a year. Apparently, however, it was withheld by the provost's official, from whom the chapter were still trying to wrest it many months later. In future, of course, it was claimed by the incoming archbishop (ibid, pp. 51, 116, 356).

is uncertain, but his Ordinances stipulated that each prebendary was to receive £10 annually at the hands of the provost, together with 52 quarters of oats (reduced, as we believe, from 65 quarters), that is, one quarter per week.¹ Since accounts continued to accept the notional price of oats as 1s 4d per quarter this brought the total value of the corrody to £13. 9. 4, a rise of 16s over the earlier figure. The canons, however, had lost 13 quarters of oats, and it would seem that, as indeed we might expect, in their dealings vis-a-vis the provost such loss was adjusted, not at notional but at real prices. If, then, they were reimbursed at the current rate of about 2s 8d per quarter their receipts overall remained virtually unchanged.²

Though the price of 1s 4d persisted as a book value for purposes of assessment of income up to the time of the Dissolution,³ as the price of corn rose in later years it must have become less and less realistic, and therefore untenable for working purposes. At some point in time, though no evidence of the change exists, actual values clearly became the basis of the provost's payments to the canons.

In the accounts of the provostry for 1530⁴ the corrody of the archbishop, whose entitlement of corn had always been subject to commutation at source, still remained virtually unchanged at £13. 6. 8. Those of the eight canons, however, had ostensibly fallen to £4. 4. 8 (the figure also of the Valor⁵). Their entitlement of oats continued

1. Archbishop Arundel's Statutes, printed in B.C.A., ii, pp. 265 - 279 (see especially pp. 272 - 273). Money was to be paid in equal quarterly amounts on the vigils of St. Michael, Christmas, Easter and the Nativity of St. John the Baptist, corn in its entirety on the Feast of the Translation of St. John the Archbishop (sic).
2. Lord Beveridge (The Yield and Price of Corn in the Middle Ages, in Essays in Economic History, i, p.20) put the average price of a quarter of oats in the period 1350 - 1399 at 2.72 shillings.
3. Thraves, for the most part, were also assessed at the notional price (see above, pp.81 - 82), to the considerable benefit of those who farmed the render - often, we think the local rectors. Further research into the disparity between notional and real values in general might well lead to a radical revision of clerical incomes in the later middle ages.
4. Poulson, Beverlac, ii, p.619.
5. Below, pp.158 - 161.

undiminished at 52 quarters which, since their corrody was by statute on a parity with that of the archbishop, presumably means that oats were then valued at 3s 6d - a fair estimation in the earlier stages of the sixteenth-century price revolution.¹

We can be fairly certain, therefore, that, though all sixteenth-century references to the corrody value it at £7. 14. 0 (£4. 4. 8 in cash plus 52 quarters of oats at 1s 4d per quarter), its worth in reality to individual canons was in excess of £13 - that is, rather less than a third of an average prebendal income.

1. For general consideration of inflation in these years see R.B. Outhwaite, Inflation in Tudor and Early Stuart England, passim. The price of oats increased between seven and eight-fold between the first decade of the sixteenth century and the decade preceding the Civil War. (J.V. Neff, Prices and Industrial Capitalism in France and England, 1540-1640, in Essays in Economic History, i, p.109).

The other elements of prebendal revenues have already received detailed examination in an earlier chapter.¹ Their contributions as they stood on the eve of the Dissolution are, with the exception of those of St. Michael's prebend, set out in the comprehensive statement of the Valor Ecclesiasticus of 1535:

ST. MARTIN'S PREBEND

Corrody	Cash	£4. 4. 8	
	Corn	3. 9. 4	£7. 14. 0
Thraves	Render	17. 0. 8	
	Pensions	2. 15. 0	19. 15. 8
Tithes	Re. Chapel of St. Mary	5. 6. 10	
	Re. Chapel above Charnel	2. 6. 4	7. 13. 2 ²
Rents	Beverley Town	3. 5. 0	
	Molescroft	7. 6. 3	
	Etton	1. 18. 0	12. 9. 3
		Gross value £47. 12. 1	
Less outgoings: Pension to St. Mary's prebend		£2. 13. 4 ³)	
To vicar of Chapel of St. Mary		3. 6. 8)	8. 0. 0
Fee to Robert (Vicar of St. Martin's?)		2. 0. 0)	
		Value Clear £39. 12. 1 ⁴	

1. See above: Thraves, pp. 105-110 ; Tithes, pp. 117-118; Rents, pp. 63-66.
2. The sum of tithes in the Valor is 1s. short.
3. The pension due to the prebendary of St. Mary's Altar, as implied in the total outgoings, was £2. 13. 4, not 8s. as stated (See under St. Mary's, below).
4. The corresponding figures for St. Martin's c.1308 (B.C.A., i, pp. 215-217) were: Corrody, £13; Thraves - Render £28. 7. 0, Pensions £2. 10. 0; Tithes £25; Rents £10. 17. 11. Gross value £79. 14. 11. Outgoings are not stated, but much of tithes were the due of the vicar of the Chapel of St. Mary.

ST. ANDREW'S PREBEND

Corrody	Cash	£4. 4. 8	
	Corn	3. 9. 4	£7. 14. 0
Thraves	Render	32. 13. 4	
	Pensions	2. 11. 3	35. 4. 7
Tithes	Tickton)	4. 6. 8	
	Hull Bridge)	& 17. 5	5. 4. 1
Rents	North Burton	2. 0. 0	
	Tickton	1. 7. 2	3. 7. 2
			Gross value £51. 9. 10 ¹
Less outgoings: Pension to St. Michael's prebend			2. 13. 4
VALUE CLEAR			£48. 16. 6

ST. JAMES' PREBEND

Corrody	Cash	£4. 4. 8	
	Corn	3. 9. 4	£7. 14. 0
Thraves	Render	27. 3. 8	
	Pensions	Nil	27. 3. 8
Tithes	Aike	18. 0	
	Molescroft	7. 13. 4	8. 11. 4
Rents	North Burton)	19. 0	19. 0
	Beverley Town)		
Pension from St. Stephen's prebend			2. 13. 4
Outgoings nil, therefore VALUE CLEAR			£47. 1. 4

¹. Not £51. 9. 5, as stated in the Valor.

ST. STEPHEN'S PREBEND

Corrody	Cash	£4. 4. 8	
	Corn	3. 9. 4	£7. 14. 0
Thraves	Render	29. 9. 8 ¹	
	Pensions	2. 2. 10 ²	31. 12. 6
Tithes	Molescroft	5. 17. 11	5. 17. 11
Rents	Cherry Burton	13. 4	
	Beverley Town	6. 5	19. 9
		Gross value	£46. 4. 2
Less outgoings: Pension to St. James' prebend			2. 13. 4
		VALUE CLEAR	£43. 10. 10 ³

ST. PETER'S PREBEND

Corrody	Cash	£4. 4. 8	
	Corn	3. 9. 4	£7. 14. 0
Thraves	Render)	17. 10. 0	17. 10. 0
	Pensions)		
Tithes	Woodmansea)		
	Thearn)		
	Wawne)	15. 14. 7	15. 14. 7
	Skidby)		
	Beverley Park)		
Rents	Risby)	7. 8. 4	7. 8. 4
	Etton)		
	Beverley Town)		
		Gross value	£48. 6. 11
		Less outgoings	2. 0. 0
		VALUE CLEAR	£46. 6. 11

1. Not £29. 10. 0 as in the Valor.

2. Not £2. 2. 8.

3. The Valor has £44. 0. 0.

ST. MARY'S PREBEND

Corrody	Cash	£4. 4. 8	
	Corn	3. 9. 4	£7. 14. 0
Thraves	Render	18. 6. 8	
	Pensions	2. 3. 4	20. 10. 0
Tithes		Nil	- - -
Rents	Beverley Town	4. 13. 4	
	North Burton	2. 6. 4	6. 19. 8
Pension from St. Martin's prebend			2. 13. 4
Outgoings nil, therefore VALUE CLEAR			£37. 17. 0

ST. MICHAEL'S PREBEND - omitted from the Valor.

ST. KATHERINE'S PREBEND

Corrody	Cash	£4. 4. 8	
	Corn	3. 9. 4	£7. 14. 0
Thraves		Nil	- - -
Tithes		Nil	- - -
Rents	Beverley Town	1. 5. 4	
	Garton	2. 12. 4	3. 17. 8
		Gross Value ¹	£11. 11. 8
		Less outgoings	13. 4
		VALUE CLEAR	£10. 18. 4

¹. Half the offerings at the High Altar, to a maximum of £33. 8. 8 (above p.114) not included in Valor.

It will be seen from these figures that the income of the richest prebend (St. Andrew's) came ultimately to exceed that of the poorest (St. Mary's) by almost £11, even though equality had almost certainly been the original design. That such disparity should have arisen during the passage of three centuries is understandable enough, but the reasons for it are not obvious.

Perhaps the clue to the problem lies in part in the origins of the 'pensions' exacted of some prebends in favour of others.¹ These we believe to be of very early origin, judging them to be an early adjustment of thrave income.² If we accept this the position, even on the basis of the Valor's evidence, becomes clearer:

	Thraves.	Adjusted for Pensions.	Tithes.	Rents	Tithes and Rents.
St. Martin's ³	£19.15. 8	17. 2. 4	7.13. 2	12. 9. 3	20. 2. 5
St. Andrew's	35. 4. 7	32.11. 3	5. 4. 1	3. 7. 2	8.11. 3
St. James'	27. 3. 8	29.17. 0	8.11. 4	19. 0	9.10. 4
St. Stephen's	31.12. 6	28.19. 2	5.17.11	19. 9	6.17. 8
St. Peter's	17.10. 0	17.10. 0	15.14. 7	7. 8. 4	23. 2.11
St. Mary's	20.10. 0	23. 3. 4	NIL	6.19. 8	6.19. 8

After the corrody, tithes and rents would almost certainly form the most primitive and basic elements of prebendal income, arising naturally, as they did, from the ancient parochial areas, and therefore associated with particular canonries. Even though they may initially have gone into some common fund, when it came to the establishment of prebends they would, in the nature of things, be credited to the individual prebendaries who tended the areas concerned. If the amounts from these sources were taken into

1. These should be carefully distinguished from thrave 'pensions' rendered by parishes.
2. St. Martin's, for instance, was already paying the pension specified in the Valor (i.e. £2.13.4 or 4 marks) as being due to St. Mary's in 1305 (B.C.A., i, p.99).
3. St. Michael's income and its sources are omitted from the Valor.

account when apportioning thraves one would expect St. Martin's and St. Peter's to have received less.

That this was in fact the case is borne out in our table. Certainly it was true of St. Peter's prebend, which from the earliest times drew its substantial tithes from that area of the Minster parish which, lying to the south of Beverley, reflected the rising prosperity of Kingston-upon-Hull, and thus escaped the hardships which depressed much of the Riding in later years.

The truth about St. Martin's prebend, however, is rather more complicated. In the Chapter Act Book years it had been far and away the richest prebend, its total worth approaching £80 - at least on paper.¹ It owed this prosperity largely to its tithes from Beverley Town, which alone brought in £25 in c.1308.² Moreover its share of thraves was then worth £30. 17. 0³ - a fact which at once accounts for its yielding a pension to St. Mary's prebend and bears out the antiquity of the payment (on the Valor's reckoning it would have been manifestly unjust).

If we ask why, in view of its wealth in tithes and rents, St. Martin's should have received such a liberal apportionment of thraves, the answer lies in the fact that the prebend supported from its tithes the vicar of the Chapel of St. Mary which, originally serving the prebendal area, developed into the town church of Beverley.⁴ The vicar, who was additional to the ordinary prebendal vicar in the Minster, probably drew his stipend from the prebend from the outset, but in 1269, under an ordinance of Archbishop Giffard, he was formally awarded Lenten tithes, annuals and trigintals of 20 marks, offerings of 5 marks, together with an annual stipend from the prebendary of 10 marks.⁵

1. B.C.A., i, p.217.

2. ibid

3. ibid, p.216.

4. see above, p.144.

5. B.C.A., i, pp.194 - 196.

St. Martin's, often cited as an example of prebendal affluence, was therefore, no longer what it seemed, but, given its original thraves less the pension to be paid, it was easily equal to other prebends in value. The evidence of the Valor, however, is that parity was not maintained, due largely to a wholesale decline in the prebend's thraves, resulting from, we believe, the misfortune of contributing parishes in the low-lying south-western area of the Riding. St. Martin's, as we see, ended up one of the poorer prebends.

Poorest of all the seven ancient prebends was that of St. Mary's. Why this should have been we do not know. It may be significant that alone among the prebends it lacked income from tithes. Had these at one time existed, and had they been equal to the average tithes of the other prebends, their subsequent alienation would suffice to explain its poor showing. We have no evidence that anything of the sort took place. Certainly St. Mary's weakness is recorded in the Taxatio of 1291, when it was assessed at only £16.¹ Nevertheless it is worth noting that this prebend was the subject of a radical adjustment by Archbishop Gray in 1235,² and that St. Peter's prebend with which some of its possessions were then interchanged ended up with tithes double the average value.

1. Poulson, op.cit. ii, p.539.

2. See above, p.147 ; below, p.A116.



THE HABIT, WITHIN THE CHURCH, OF A MEDIEVAL CANON.

Even when a cope is depicted the almuce of white wool or fur remains revealed as the distinctive vestment of a prebendary. Together with closely fitting gloves it was also a concession to the cold in unheated choirs.

(b) Residence - Its Privileges and Obligations.

To the modern mind, and possibly, in moments of candid reflection, even to the mind of a medieval prebendary, the besetting problems of Beverley Minster in the middle ages were its affluence and its surfeit of clergy.

Any attempt to equate values and revenues of those days with those of the late twentieth century must at best be vague.¹ All things considered, however, it is hard to see how the overall income of the collegiate church could have been any less than £100,000 per annum in present terms. The purchasing power of its canons' incomes would, of course, depend very much upon what they needed to buy, but the declared value of the seven ancient prebends was likely to place all of them in the £5,000 - £6,500 bracket, with the rewards of residence bringing in a further £1500 for those who fulfilled its obligations.

In return for this assured income the requirements of a medieval residentiary were, on any reckoning, light. With his pastoral duties performed by a parochial vicar, a clerk representing him in the choir, and much of his business affairs in the hands of the chapter auditor and his diligent staff, his activities must have been largely of his own making. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries he could usually count on at least one other canon joining with him to 'make chapter' to share its routine business. Weightier matters had to await convocation, when men of greater competence, very often from York, took over temporary leadership of the church.

1. A fat lamb, pasturing on the estates of the provostry in 1304 was valued at 10d (B.C.A., i, p.30). On 1st July, 1978, its better bred successors realised an average of £22.50 per head in Beverley market. A good cow, then worth 6s, now fetches £355. On the other hand, the price of oats, allowing for a variation in measurements, has risen barely ten-fold. A breviary, equally relevant to a canon, one would hope, can now be acquired at a mere fraction of its medieval cost, as can copes, altar candles etc. The difficulty in reaching any meaningful equation of values is well illustrated by the fact that the splendid choir cope presented to the Minster by John de Nassington on relinquishing his prebend equalled in value a dairy herd of 97 cows in milk! (It was said to be worth £29. 6. 8. B.C.A., i, p.392).

It was no accident that the latter should be absent from the precincts for long periods, some of them permanently. Indeed, on a realistic view, it might be thought reprehensible were this not the case, for the talents of gifted and active clerks with much to offer the wider church and national administration were unlikely to find fulfilment in a single church which boasted a minimum complement of 77 clerks.

As we have seen, Archbishop le Romeyn revived what had presumably been the customary residence of twenty-four weeks.¹ In the absence of evidence to the contrary we believe that this had long been the statutory period at Beverley, and that the purpose of the ordinance of 1290 was to combat acknowledged laxity in its observance. Since residence was enjoined upon all, there being no formal distinction between the canons in this matter, such an ideal, we must believe, was doomed from the outset. Even in a small chapter a roll-call of the canons at any time in the years following reveals one or two for whom exceptions must have been made, and Greenfield's reduction of the required period to twelve weeks in 1306 was no more than a concession to reality.²

We must doubt whether either ordinance brought fresh faces to Beverley: men were marked out for residence by their careers, interests or lack of other preferment, or they were not. Such clerks as William de Haxby and Henry de Carlton became assiduous residents, not through coercion, but because Romeyn clearly chose them with this in mind. The archbishop's strictures may indeed have helped Walter de Gloucester to make up his mind to relinquish his diocesan work and his archdeaconry of York in favour of a settled life at Beverley, but no amount of episcopal coaxing was likely to induce his successor in St. Andrew's, John Sandal, to grace the Minster with his presence. Still less was residence to be expected of an alien royal clerk such as Raymond de Ferrara.

1. Above, p.154n.3; B.C.A., i, pp.190 - 192.

2. ibid, pp.192 - 194.

Permanent residentiaries throughout the later middle ages, in so far as they existed, therefore tended to be men of small significance, glad to be awarded a prebend, their number augmented from time to time by retired notables returning to their homeland. The practical value of the residential term was as a standing declaration of the qualification for rewards for time spent in the precincts, rather than as an obligation pressed upon all who received a stall.

Perhaps it was because a prebend in Beverley never ceased to imply a cure of souls¹ - a fact which perpetuated at least the notion of continuous residence - that there was never any formality given to a probationary 'major' residence as at York and Lincoln.² Though the term fixed by Greenfield was recognised as equalling 'minor' residence at York, it was never so termed at the daughter church. If the ancient ideal at Beverley inhibited such rules and customs it served to relax rather than tighten the discipline of residence.

The absence of formality allowed any canon to come into residence at will, and then for indeterminate periods. He was not obliged to complete his twelve weeks in a single term, but was permitted to allow time spent in numerous short visits, for convocations and the like, to accrue. Provided these amounted within a year to the statutory period he was accounted a residentiary.

Such an easy-going system, though doubtless subject to careful 'Ve' and 'Re' (comings and goings) recording, as was the case at Lincoln, worked in favour of the residentiaries of York in the Beverley chapter, and perhaps it was they who ensured that it was so.

Only a fragment of what seems to have been a Beverley Re and Ve roll survives, but it contains under the date 13th May, hic ve [nit] Mr. W. Poteman, and two days later, 'this day Mr. Poteman finished his residence'.

1. Above, p.143.

2. K. Edwards, op.cit., pp. 50 - 56.

On the 18th May appear the words hic re [cessit] Mr. T. Worsley.¹

Here in this brief document we have a glimpse of two distinguished clerics,² both with much business elsewhere, earning what, on a cursory view of their careers, would seem the unlikely title of residentiary. Here, too, we have the clue as to how Robert de Pickering, that eminent dean of York of 150 years earlier, for all the brevity of his recorded visits in the Act Book, was able to claim a resident's emoluments.

Whereas the status of residentiary at York was strictly limited to the few prepared and able to embark upon an arduous and prohibitively expensive major residence, at Beverley, as we have seen, the position was sufficiently flexible as to allow clerks in the service of the archbishop to be accounted resident. Romeyn himself successfully pressed the claim to a residentiary's corrody for his clerk, William de Lincoln,³ and Greenfield won a similar concession for his official, John de Nassington.⁴

Though a canon was doubtless required to protest his intention to reside, as did William de Eastdean, following his admission to a prebend in 1310,⁵ we shall therefore look in vain in the Chapter Act Book for evidence of prebendaries keeping pre-determined periods of residence. Those who fulfilled the statutory term in a single stretch were normally permanently domiciled in the close; others who, though living away, kept

1. Cited by Leach, B.C.A., i, pp. lii - liii. See B.L.Lansdowne MSS 378, 381.
2. Below, pp. A 167 - 168; A 128. That Poteman, vicar general to both George Neville and Rotherham, was a residentiary may be deduced from his will. Worsley, the one of the Booth 'clan', is so described on his memorial brass in Wimpole Church, Cambridgeshire.
3. B.C.A., ii, p. 164.
4. See above, p. 155.
5. B.C.A., i, p. 265. Eastdean's intention was to reside that year for half the statutory period. It was not unknown (cf. B.C.A., i, p. 363) for commissaries, even vicars, to deputise for residentiaries in this matter, but such occasions were rare. The actual act of admission was the kiss of peace from the presiding canon. (B.C.A., i, p. 265). On this occasion - the admission of William de Eastdean - informality stopped short at the new canon appearing in lay dress! (See also B.C.A., ii, pp. 43 - 44).



THE CHOIR

From the Screen which held the Shrine of St. John of Beverley.

in close touch with the affairs of the church, built up their twelve weeks at intervals as they were able, whilst a third group, having been admitted initially by proxy, remained total strangers to Beverley.

There was nothing in the constitution, however, to prevent any canon taking up residence at will in the ample mansion which awaited him in the close as a silent witness to an ignored ideal. With the rules of residence so open, and with the corrody itself available even to absentees after 1307, it is small wonder that every place in such a chapter was hotly disputed by a host of anxious contestants as it fell vacant.

The Obligations of Residence.

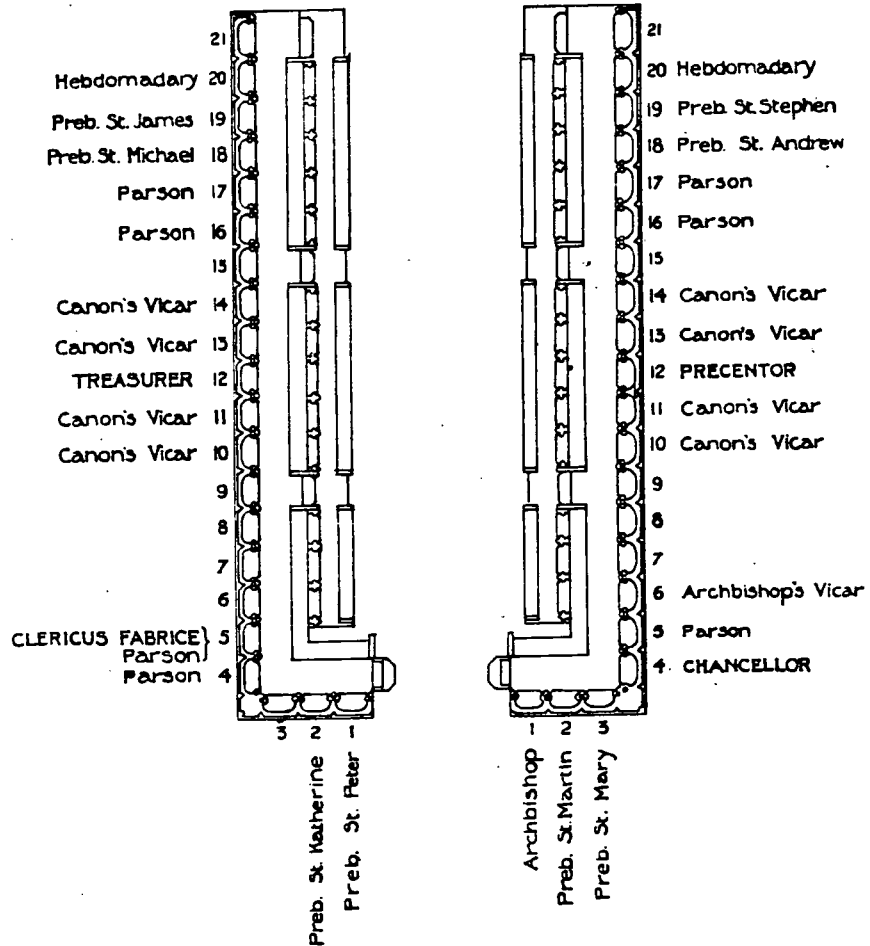
The admission of a prebendary to his prebend followed an unchanging formula. It was conducted with relatively little ceremony, ever mindful of the value of speed in defeating rival claimants. Any canon who happened to be at hand presided over the proceedings. Speaking through the chapter's auditor or assessor, he invested the candidate with the spiritualities by a book, and the temporalities by a loaf.¹ The new canon then took the oath, and was immediately assigned his stall in the choir and a place in the chapter, finally receiving induction into corporal possession by admission into his prebendal house (in manerium pertinens praebendae). Assuming his intention to reside, his duties and privileges may conveniently be considered in relation to these three scenes of his activities viz. the choir, the chapter house and his house or manor.²

(a) In the Choir. Only the last generation of canons sat in the present choir stalls, for they are said to date from 1520.³ In their arrangement,

1. Nos Capitulum, A.B., ad praedictos Canonicatum et Praebendam, ad mandatum venerabilis patris nostri et domini supradicti, admittimus, cum omnibus juribus et pertinentiis suis, et ipsum A.B., per hunc librum in spiritualibus et per hunc panem in temporalibus investimus (see, for instance, B.C.A., i, p.311).

2. ibid.

3. This is the year on the misericord of the treasurer's stall (John Bilson, Beverley Minster: Some Stray Notes in Y.A.J., xxiv, pp.221-235).



THE SEATING ARRANGEMENTS IN THE CHOIR

As confirmed by Archbishop Arundel in 1391.

however, they almost certainly differed little from the ones they replaced. We can be fairly sure of this from the order of seating set out in the statutes drawn up in 1391 by Archbishop Arundel¹ - ordinances which, in this respect, probably re-iterated what had long been customary.

In the three return stalls to the right of the main choir entrance (i.e. on the south side) sat the archbishop, and the prebendaries of St. Martin's and St. Mary's. The corresponding stalls on the left were assigned to the prebendaries of St. Peter's and St. Katherine's (the third remaining vacant). The prebendaries of St. Stephen's and St. Andrew's had adjacent stalls at the east end of the choir on the south side, next to the hebdomadary; those of St. James' and St. Michael's occupied the same positions on the north side.

This arrangement alone, not precedence, dictated the order of prebendaries in procession.² Not that this was likely to be a frequent source of contention, for, apart from such occasions when a convocation coincided with a major feast, rarely more than two were likely to be present at the main choir offices.

Judging by the repeated injunction that no service was to begin until an expected canon had entered the choir we may believe that residentiaries were given to arriving too late for processions.³ In contrast, the choir clerks and the parochial vicars, upon whom the main burden of the Opus Dei fell, were fined for absence or unpunctuality.⁴

The fact that a residentiary was expected to intimate his intention to attend a service is a reminder that his presence on all but special days was not obligatory, certainly not assumed. Only on major festivals - Christmas, Easter, Ascension Day (and the three days preceding), Pentecost,

1. B.C.A., ii, pp. 267 - 268.

2. B.C.A., i, p.242.

3. B.C.A., i, pp.220, 241. A convocation of 1308 ordained that, as at York, the fifth peal (probably meaning the 'five-minute' bell) at matins and vespers was not to cease ringing until all the canons wishing to attend had arrived. No one was to enter the choir after the first Gloria at matins and the Gloria of the first psalm at vespers (ibid, p.220).

4. ibid, p.241.

the Nativity of St. John the Baptist and other 'doubles' and feasts of nine lections - was his participation enjoined by statute.¹

On such occasions this meant his attendance at first evensong (i.e. vespers on the eve of the festival) normally at 3.0 p.m.; at matins very early next morning, on certain occasions; at prime, held about 9.0 a.m.; at High Mass at 10.0 a.m. and at final vespers.² At High Mass he or one of his fellow canons would almost certainly be celebrant, and all members of the chapter in residence would be expected to join in the procession which preceded it.

On the matter of a residentiary's duties on feriae the Chapter Act Book is virtually silent. The two services he was most likely to attend were obviously matins and vespers,³ that is, in addition to his canonical obligation as a priest to say mass. This he would probably do at his prebendal altar,⁴ unless, as hebdomadary or canon of the week, it was his duty to celebrate at the High Altar.⁵

Obviously much would depend upon the health, spirituality and the personal dedication which an individual canon brought to the worship of his church. Such has always been the case, but with so many competent clerks at hand, specially appointed to maintain the round of services, the temptation to laziness and indifference, over the long years, must have been very great.

1. ibid, p.340.

2. ibid, p.241.

3. ibid, p.220.

4. Celebrations at these altars, which were parochial altars to which parishioners of the prebendal areas resorted, were the special concern of the vicars. In addition most of them did service as chantries, which, if the chantry priest were not the vicar concerned, meant an extra mass.

5. For the duties of hebdomadary, see K. Edwards, op cit, pp. 58 - 59.

(b) In the Chapter. If the canons' duties in the choir were less than onerous, the burden of chapter business fell, no less, on others. The title of our prime source of information here, the Chapter Act Book, is misleading if it suggests a minute book of the prebendaries' deliberations.

Though its most revealing documents are the records of seventeen convocations, the bulk of the Book's contents amounts in reality to the file of one devoted servant of the chapter, John de Risingdon.¹ Appointed auditor causarum in July 1304,² and chamberlain in 1305,³ Risingdon continued to combine both offices with his duties as prebendal vicar of St. Andrew's for twenty-seven years, that is, for almost the whole of the period covered. In a real sense it is his book, certainly a memorial to his labours.

Throughout this time Risingdon was to Beverley Minster what the secretary and registrar are together to a modern diocese. Obviously a born administrator, operating within his limited world, with the affairs of his church at his finger-tips, this man clearly enjoyed the complete confidence and high regard of his superiors. They were glad to leave all routine matters of the chapter in his capable hands. Astute, tactful and ever vigilant of the Minster's rights and dignity, Risingdon comes over to us as a man of even temperament, patient and respectful towards his masters, yet a relentless prosecutor of infringers of the Liberty of St. John. Turning the pages of the Act Book, packed with his correspondence and memoranda regarding appointments, ordinations, correction of tenants, delapidations, revenues etc, one might reasonably conclude that it was he, in conjunction with the official of the provostry, who really ran the collegiate church.

1. See below, p.A261

2. B.C.A., i, p.32.

3. ibid, p.27.

In fact the Act Book contains few explicit references to routine chapter meetings as such, that is, to regular formal assemblies of the residentiaries, presumably held at the usual time between the hours of prime and High Mass. It may be that such canons as were to hand met frequently to take cognisance of, and to authorise letters and directives issued by Risingdon, but our impression is that on not a few occasions the latter acted on his own initiative.

A convocation of July, 1308, made plain for future reference what business could be transacted at such meetings, and what matters should be reserved for a wider representation of the chapter. One or two canons were recognised as sufficient to make chapter for purposes of correction of a fellow canon¹ or one of the lesser clergy, or irregularities in the choir. Three or four, however, were needed to authorise collations to chantries and the alienation of property of church and provostry, still more, in effect a convocation, were necessary to consider matters which might be prejudicial to the chapter.²

Within months of his appointment Risingdon had been placed in a delicate situation on two points relative to these rules. In 1304 the already eminent Robert de Pickering had written to Beverley of his wish to grant land of his prebend in Etton to one Adam de Skipton, and had to be informed, with some tact, that approval of this must await convocation.³ No doubt it was to protect the writer of this reply, as much as to clarify the position, that the next convocation ordained that no real estate could be so granted at a lesser meeting.⁴

1. Henry de Carlton alone presided at the purgation of his fellow canon, William de Lincoln (B.C.A., i, pp. 95 - 96). Both men made chapter in resolving the dispute between Canon Peter Aymerici and the residentiaries in 1305 (*ibid*, p.101).

2. B.C.A., i, p. 222.

3. *ibid*, p. 41.

4. *ibid*, p. 49.

The same convocation severely reprimanded the residentiary canons and the auditor for acceding, without its authority, to a request from the earl of Lincoln for the use of the Minster mason, Oliver de Stainfield.¹ Apparently both the latter and the goldsmith engaged upon the creation of the new shrine of St. John, and also the manciple of the Bedern, had been granted leave of absence. Within a month Risingdon is found writing to all three, urgently requiring their return to Beverley on pain of forfeiting their corrodies.²

The residentiaries in their routine meetings therefore constituted what amounted to a standing committee to deal with minor matters of administration and jurisdiction in which their way was plain, or to pursue in wider issues the established policy of convocation. Since all tenants of the chapter (as distinct from those of the provostry) and every clerk wearing the habit of the Minster were subject to the chapter's jurisdiction,³ and since these rights were perpetually encroached upon by the officials of the provostry and of York, this small body, and especially its assessor, were rarely lacking an agenda.

Chief among the greater matters was, of course, the endless battle for thraves. It was a subject which fully indulged the medieval chapter's taste for litigation, and one which never failed to stir it into vigorous action. Though the problem necessitated, as we have seen, more than one special convocation within the period of the Act Book, the residentiaries and the ever-vigilant Risingdon proved competent to meet all but concerted attacks upon their entitlement.

We shall presently observe how the fourteenth-century chapter could muster, when occasion demanded, a formidable array of legal talent.⁴ Then, in times of real crisis, the church relied heavily on its more forceful canons from beyond the precincts - men who entered the fray with

1. ibid, pp. 50, 54 - 55.

2. ibid, pp. 54 - 57.

3. ibid, pp. 62, 305.

4. below, pp. 207 - 213.

a determination and an expedition which stands in marked contrast to the easy-going prebendal life of the residentiary in normal times.

Many more than the seventeen (possibly sixteen) convocations recorded in the Act Book must have been called during its thirty-five year span. Possibly a complete chronicle would reveal as many as seventy, for in some of the Book's most detailed years (from 1304 to 1309) there is evidence of seven such gatherings.¹ As a rule these were held twice yearly, one in the early spring, the second in June/July. Only four in thirty-five years (two recorded in the closing pages of the Book) are known to have been held in the latter part of the year.² The reason for this is not obvious, unless it is suggested by the circumstances which led to the probable cancellation of one of the earlier autumn convocations. The correspondence surrounding the incident affords an insight into the human element in the running of the chapter.

Early in October, 1304, Risingdon, new to his office, sent out summonses to a convocation on the Wednesday following (14th October).³ His letter to Robert de Pickering found this most notable member of the chapter in his native district of Yedingham.⁴ Unimpressed by the urgency of the letter, and clearly somewhat incensed by the lack of notice - he received it, as he wrote, only on the Saturday evening, the 10th - Pickering replied that he was in any case unable to come to Beverley on account of a summons to attend the king's council at York on the Tuesday.⁵

1. B.C.A., i, pp. 36, 48, 73, 113, 188, 219, 240. There must be some doubt, however, as to whether the first of these actually took place.
2. The months of the seventeen convocations were: February - 1; March - 2; April - 2; May - 2; June - 4; July - 2; September - 1; October - 2; November - 1.
3. ibid., p.36.
4. Robert was a member of the Brus family, being the son of Adam de Brus of Pickering and his wife, Maud Ughtred. He therefore shared a common ancestry with the Scottish dynasty of Brus, and kinship with the Percies.
5. loc cit.

Without Pickering it would seem that a convocation was deemed pointless. Certainly we hear nothing more of it. Instead the local chapter had to make do with his written advice as to how to proceed in the matter of an absent canon's disputed corrody.¹ The next convocation appears to have been held, in fact, on 5th February following, when the question of due notice of meetings came first on the agenda, even though Pickering himself was again unable to attend.² It was resolved that in future letters of citation should be despatched three weeks before the, proposed convocation, and that they should include a special clause, the wording of which was carefully drafted, relating to the appointment of proctors by absentees.³

Risingdon obviously learnt from this early mistake. Not only did he follow this injunction scrupulously in all the years that followed, but, prior to the summer convocation of 1305, he made a special point of consulting Pickering regarding its date.⁴

The latter's tenure of St. Peter's prebend also spanned nearly the whole of the period of the Act Book,⁵ and throughout he remained the dominating figure in the chapter. Held in the highest esteem at York, it is easy to appreciate the deference accorded him by the lesser chapter, and to understand how it came that no major decision at Beverley could be taken without his counsel.⁶ As advancing years added consideration to deference we may well suppose that it was Pickering, more than anyone else, who determined that no convocation should be held in the months of harsh weather.

1. ibid, p.37.

2. ibid, p.49.

3. loc cit., and below, p. 178.

4. B.C.A., i, pp. 74 - 75..... Quia credo quod nulla negotia super quibus in eadem convocatione tractabitur poterunt expediri utiliter, ut deceret, nisi personaliter intersitis.

5. He was in fact a prebendary of Beverley for 44 years, from 1288 till his death in 1332.

6. ibid, pp. 37, 62, 233, 313.

Exceptional circumstances apart, convocation meant as a general rule that the residentiaries were joined by a contingent from York - members of the cathedral chapter, an archdeacon and perhaps a clerk of the archbishop's household - who made the full day's ride through difficult and often exposed countryside.¹ Only on one occasion do we learn of convocation running into a second day,² and in any event, clerks such as John de Nassington rarely lingered long in Beverley, returning if possible the following day, certainly within the week. Most, like him, had exacting work to attend to elsewhere, and the fact that they were accounted residentiaries in virtue of their episcopal service removed any financial inducement to remain longer.³

In the Act Book years at least these men were of different calibre from the canons who awaited their arrival. There is no doubting the impact of their presence, or the ease with which they took charge of the proceedings. They found, after all, at the Minster a somewhat ineffectual representation of their fellows: Walter de Gloucester,⁴ once their equal in eminence and vigour, but now old, blind and infirm, yet still their president, as senior canon, until 1310; the elderly and truculent Henry de Carlton⁵ and that other introduction of Archbishop Romeyn, William de Lincoln,⁶ whose repeated moral lapses must have forfeited him the respect of equals and subordinates alike. All had long since sought a quiet life, and no doubt they were content to leave initiative in the hands of their high-powered colleagues.

1. Initially these were Pickering, Nassington and William de Soothill, a household clerk of Newark and Corbridge and frequently employed by Greenfield. Later they were joined for varying periods by William de Eastdean, Greenfield's steward beyond the Trent, Denis Avenel, official of York after Nassington and later archdeacon of the East Riding, and John de Dinnington, an active Yorkshire-born clerk.
2. ibid., ii, p.101.
3. ibid., i, pp. 135 - 136.
4. Below, pp. A 42 - 43.
5. Below, pp. A 174 - 175.
6. Below, pp. A 136 - 137.

Whereas in many chapters of great collegiate churches a distinction came to be made between residentiary and non-residentiary canons¹ at Beverley this was never the case. Save in their entitlement to commons and a share in the offerings at the Shrine the former were in no way privileged above absentees, and in chapter the two groups differed not at all in their rights and status.

Though the Chapter Act Book holds no evidence of friction between them it is possible that the very firm and clear instructions regarding the appointment of proctors by absentees arose from a consciousness of the fine balance which frequently existed between the two contingents. We may reasonably surmise that it was the 'York' canons who ensured that absentees were reminded in precise terms in each summons of the need and right to appoint a proctor. Were one of their number, being otherwise engaged, to default in this the whole group would be placed in a minority when it came to voting on such matters as residence.² On the other hand, in the situation which frequently arose in the Act Book period, where three York clerks balanced three residentiaries, proxy voting worked in favour of the former, since the seventh canon, who was usually a royal clerk and a permanent absentee, invariably chose one of their number as his proctor.³

1. K. Edwards, op cit, pp. 56 - 96; A. Hamilton Thompson, The Cathedral Churches of England, pp. 22 - 25.
2. The clause to be inserted at the end of each summons was to read:
quod si dictis die et loco una nobiscum, canonice praepediti non possitis personaliter interesse, aliquem de Capitulo nostro, quem duxeritis eligendum, qui velit personaliter interesse, vestrum constituatis procuratorem, dantes eidem plenam potestatem nomine vestro nobiscum tractandi et consentiendi omnibus et singulis super quibus tunc fuerimus tractaturi (B.C.A., i. p.49).
 It was most frequently John de Nassington who represented his absent York colleagues (ibid, pp. 48 - 49, 188, 240).
3. In later years it usually fell to Nassington and Pickering to represent such distant notables as Melton, Sandal and Huggate.

Then there was the question of the status in chapter of the "eighth" canon, the prebendary of St. Katherine's Altar. We have no knowledge of the occasion for the creation of this additional prebend, but it may well have come into being at the same time as the other seven,¹ from the outset receiving a moiety of the offerings at the Shrine of St. John.² Unlike the others, however, its holder had no forerunner in the primitive constitution, and for this reason was always reckoned inferior to the successors of seven canons of old time.

The position of the eighth canon in convocation was made abundantly clear at its meeting of 6th November, 1330, when Richard de Ottringham, a newcomer to the chapter, was for some reason moved to read a formal declaration regarding the attendance of the current holder of the prebend, William de Abberwick. It was to the effect that the latter's summons and presence at the previous convocation was not^{as} of right, but only de gratia speciali dicti Capituli.³

Ten years earlier Abberwick's predecessor, the less significant William de Soothill, was pointedly neither summoned nor present at the spring convocation of 1320. The reason is made plain in the next sentence of the minutes:

In primis, habito tractatu super quibusdam secretis praeendas ipsorum septem contingentibus, subsequenter ordinaverunt et statuerunt ⁴

Soothill had received summonses and had attended most of the convocations throughout his long tenure of the prebend. On one occasion he had stood proxy for Nassington,⁵ and on another had himself been represented by Pickering.⁶ It was indeed he who was chosen to put the

1. We may discount Simon Russell's belief that Ealdred was its founder (B.C.A., ii, p.351, and see above, p.146)

2. See above, p.113.

3. B.C.A., ii, p.94.

4. ibid, i, p.379.

5. ibid, p.73.

6. ibid, p.219.

chapter's case before the King's Council in the great thraves battle of 1324-25.¹ Nevertheless he could be excluded at will when matters privy only to the holders of the seven ancient canonries were on the agenda. In 1330 it was perhaps felt necessary to establish early in the mind of the learned Abberwick² the true nature of his place in the counsels of the church. Whatever the reason for it, it is difficult to see how he can have viewed such a formal and forthright declaration in his presence as anything but an unfriendly gesture.

We can find no other suggestion that the eighth canon's membership ever became a live issue. Just as William de Calverley (the first prebendary of St. Katherine's of whom we have notice) attended chapter meetings in the latter half of the thirteenth century,³ so his distant successor, Roger Weston, is found doing so at the beginning of the fifteenth century.⁴ At the same time their perpetual inferiority is, as a rule, implied by their being placed last among the canons witnessing documents, and Archbishop Arundel, in his statutes of 1391, ends his reference to the "nine canons and prebendaries" with the words canonico eciam et prebendario prebende que dicitur octava, quoad hoc infra numerum comprehenso ⁵

These same statutes settled once and for all, as we have seen, the position of the archbishop vis à vis the chapter. The episcopal corrody in the church was held to constitute the ninth prebend, listed first in

1. ibid., ii, pp. 63, 67-69, 71-72.

2. A former fellow of Merton, he became Chancellor of Oxford in 1325, and succeeded Robert de Ripplingham as chancellor of York in 1332.

3. Y.D., ix, p.12.

4. ibid., p.20.

5. B.C.A., ii, p.267. One occupant of the prebend in the fifteenth century, Robert Rolleston, was also provost from 1427 until 1451. A local man, for much of his tenure he was both a residentiary and an active provost, and one would like to know whether he was ever excluded from convocation (below, pp. A25, 214). He had, of course, no place in chapter in right of his provostship. Though perpetual residence was enjoined upon the eighth prebendary, many of his predecessors, being royal clerks, were permanently absent from Beverley (see below, p. 274).

the Chantry Certificate as the Prebend of St. Leonard.¹ Alexander Neville's contention that this entitled him to reside as a canon and share in the emoluments and daily distributions had been bitterly opposed by the chapter.² Now Arundel, a more temperate man, apparently without protest from the latter, finally concluded the matter by asserting that the archbishop is a "true canon and prebendary to be distinguished by presiding when present."³ No primate, so far as we know, ever availed himself of this hardly-won recognition.

Nothing now remains of the chapter house in which these canons of the Act Book met so frequently. It was demolished within the lifetime of some of them to make way for its octagonal successor in the decorated style. Perhaps 8th October, 1331, marks the commencement of the work, for on that day it was noted that chapter was held in the vestry.⁴

The new chapter house itself endured for barely two centuries, being pulled down for less good reason in 1550. Now only the exquisite double stairway in the north choir aisle remains⁵ to inform us of where it once stood, and to move us, as we mount its steps, with thoughts of those who passed that way long ago.

1. Chantry Surveys, ii, p.525. According to Simon Russell Archbishop Thurstan first received a corrody (B.C.A., ii, p.334).
2. See below, pp.261 - 270.
3. B.C.A., loc cit.
4. ibid, p.98.
5. See plate 5 , below facing p.207.

(c) In the Prebendal House

A medieval traveller making the thirty-four miles journey from York would normally enter Beverley by the North Bar. Were his ultimate objective the Minster he would follow ~~the~~ thence the long curving main street, known locally at various stages of its progress as North Bar Within, Toll Govel, Butcher Row and Highgate.

Passing early on the left the impressive Chapel of St. Mary (now a parish church) it would lead him through the heart of a crowded town with its shops and merchants' and weavers' houses pressing on more than one market place, giving them an enclosed character, and for the present obscuring from view the great Minster, which for many an earlier mile had been a guiding landmark, and which still, in fact, dwarfed all else.

The visitor's immediate approach to the great church would confront him first with an imposing array of substantial clerical residences. Built for the most part of stone, each within a sizeable garden, they together formed an open close - not so vast as that of Salisbury, but with an air of spaciousness that contrasted sharply with the compact atmosphere of the town centre.

Thirteen of the senior Minster clergy are known to have possessed official dwellings within close proximity of the church, and a number of lesser clerks had private ownership of less distinctive houses.

Unseen to our traveller was the archbishop's manor house, situated as it was on the south side, and the scarcely less imposing Provosts' Mansion with its gatehouse which endured to impress the sixteenth-century Leland. The houses which bordered the northern perimeter were almost certainly the eight mansions of the canons - eight because each of their owners had once been resident, even after they had given up communal living, and were all still expected to occupy them for at least twelve weeks in the year.

The prebendal mansion of St. Martin's is specifically stated to have been situated to the north of the Minster,¹ and since those of St. Peter's

¹. E.R.A.S., v, p.38.

St. Mary's and St. Katherine's were in close proximity to shops it is a fair assumption that they too lay on the 'town side' of the close.¹ Of the site of St. Andrew's and St. Michael's we know nothing, but the house of the prebendary of St. Stephen's was in Lortegate in the same vicinity as the rest.²

In the Act Book each of these houses is usually referred to as a manor house (manerium), and so they all were, for each, in the absence of a distant territorial prebend, represented the centre of a prebendal manor, to which tenants resorted, and in which, on occasions, justice was done.

As it happens we are given a comprehensive account of what such a dwelling comprised. In the Act Book it is recorded under the year 1313-1314 that when John de Nassington succeeded Aymo de Carto in the prebend of St. Martin's Altar he found its house both small and dilapidated. In the intervening years he had embarked upon what amounted to a virtual reconstruction of a much enlarged dwelling.³ In addition to a new hall it included a linked double apartment with two fireplaces, a private chapel, a room between the hall and the front door, which was probably, in fact, a gatehouse, for it had a chamber above it. The domestic offices included a kitchen, a brewhouse and a bakery, whilst outside there was, of course, a stable.

On the west side of the house there was land attached, 49 yards long, but only nineteen feet in breadth. This Richard de Ravenser, one of Nassington's successors later in the same century, exchanged with custodians of the Fabric Fund for a similar parcel on the east side for use as a pleasure garden.⁴

The general impression is of a single story, rather rambling building, prodigal of space when one remembers that Nassington spent

1. B.C.A., i, p.206.

2. B.C.A., i, p.369.

3. ibid, p.324.

4. E.R.A.S., v, pp. 37 - 38.

most of his time at York.¹ In retrospect we might well think the whole building to be surplus to requirements, knowing that his predecessor, an alien absentee, was also possessed of the provost's mansion; and that even Ravenser, a local man by birth, was an active master in chancery for most of his tenure of the prebend, and in any case had a house in Lincoln capable of providing a home for Beverley's rebellious vicars.²

What induced Nassington, a singularly able diocesan administrator, to embark upon a project which cost him over £100 must be left to conjecture. Perhaps he used his prebendal house as a retreat from his labours at York more than we realise, and it may be that it was this investment which prompted him to ensure the prebend's succession within the family before his death in 1322.³

Be that as it may, the house must have stood unoccupied by its canon for long periods in the two centuries that followed. Even so our knowledge of the succession of prebendaries suggests that it was not subjected in the ensuing decades to the same perpetual neglect as was suffered by neighbouring dwellings which fell to permanent absentees. Many of the latter never crossed the threshold of their mansions, and since each prebendary was held responsible for keeping his house in good repair it is not surprising that dilapidations were a constant source of concern to the home chapter.⁴

The problem is well illustrated by the fortunes of St. Andrew's prebendal house as revealed in the Act Book. When the prebend first fell vacant in 1310 it had been in almost continuous use by a residentiary, Walter de Gloucester, for over thirty years.⁵ Gloucester, in his time, had been a notable benefactor, as well as an active president of the chapter. Latterly, however, he had been so blind and infirm as to be

1. B.C.A., i, p. 135.

2. ibid., ii, p. lxxxix; A.H. Thompson, The Registers of the Archdeaconry of Richmond, Y.A.J., xxv, p. 252.

3. B.C.A., i, pp. 393-394; ii, p.1.; see below, p. A 93.

4. B.C.A., i, pp. 92, 282, 353, 355 et passim.

5. ibid., pp. 268-270.

unable to see his fellow canons to the door when they called upon him,¹ and doubtless the condition of his house had suffered in consequence. Nevertheless, in recognition of his services to the church and the time of his occupation, dilapidations were assessed at only 10 marks.²

Normally this sum would have been paid direct to his successor, John de Sandal, but in this instance, as a special concession, the Minster workmen saw the work done within the assessment, and themselves took the money.³

It was no doubt this precedent which prompted an act in the next convocation to the effect that a canon must leave his prebendal house in the same condition as he found it, but, provided it had been fit for his own habitation whilst alive, his estate was not to be held liable to dilapidations after his death.⁴

On no count did Sandal fall into this category. At the time of his succession he was Treasurer of England, and a prebendary of York, Lincoln, Lichfield, London, Dublin and Howden. All these preferments, together with St. Andrew's prebend, he vacated on consecration in 1316. Admitted by proxy, to the best of our knowledge he never set foot in the Minster precincts. In his six years of absence his mansion at Beverley had suffered considerably, to the extent that the chapter was left with delicate task of wresting £20 from this new bishop of Winchester.

Evidently it proved an impossible one, for when his successor in the prebend, Roger de Northburgh, was himself elevated to the bishoprick of Coventry and Lichfield in 1322, it was noted that only 2½ marks had been handed over to the latter's proctor.⁵

1. ibid, p. 241.

2. ibid, pp. 282 - 283.

3. ibid.

4. B.C.A., i, p.288.

5. ibid, ii, p.17.

Though Northburgh, equally an absentee, spent this pittance and 17½ marks more on repairs which included the erection of a new surrounding wall, the condition of the house itself had gone from bad to worse.¹ The inspectors now, after only four years, doubled their estimate, and one of the vicars, John de Swine, was despatched on the unenviable errand of explaining to Northburgh how he came to owe £40 for work on a house he had scarcely ever visited.² Whether the two ever met on this occasion is doubtful, for a year later Swine is found making a further attempt to obtain at least part of the sum or to discover the bishop's intentions in the matter.³

A memorandum appended to the chapter's earlier letter informs us that Bendict de Paston, the new canon, in the event received £5 from Northburgh, and had himself spent £8. 16. 2 of his own money on repairs.⁴ He must have used this relatively modest sum to good purpose, for within months the house was fit for a queen. In July 1323, Isabella of France, then at the beginning of her open estrangement with her consort, lodged in the house of St. Andrew's prebend.⁵

In the matter of repairs, at least, a prebendal mansion was regarded as part of a canon's freehold, or so it would seem, judging by the detachment with which the chapter viewed the decay of those standing empty. The general impression is that the houses of perpetual absentees were left wholly deserted for years on end, uninspected and uninhabited by any permanent domestic staff.⁶ Only when a prebend fell vacant was full

1. ibid, loc cit.

2. ibid, p. 25.

3. ibid, p. 31.

4. ibid, p. 25.

5. ibid, p. 37. She spent the night of 3rd July there, attending mass in the choir on the following morning.

6. The hall, however, doubtless remained in use as the administrative centre of the prebend (see below) and the prebendal vicar (for whom lodging was provided elsewhere i.e. officially in the Bedern) or the appointed proctor of the canon exercised some oversight there. (ibid, pp. 289, 320).

investigation of the fabric made. Then assessment for dilapidations normally appears to have been pitched on the high side, perhaps in the expectation of a fraction of the amount being forthcoming from the living, or in the hope of securing a liberal share in the estate of the dead.

This meant, of course, the better use of the houses of residentiaries, for on them was laid the obligation of hospitality. It was enjoined that each should keep fires burning in his halls from the vigil of All Saints to Good Friday on pain of a fine of a cask of wine.¹ Canons were expected to entertain one another, and to do so with due civility, conducting their visitors to the door when they left.² Junior clergy were to eat at their table, incense bearers being given specific mention,³ and persons in flight from enemies and the law were in sanctuary whilst under their roof.⁴

The prebendal hall was clearly regarded as the appropriate venue for meetings of tenants and for transacting the business of the prebend, in so far as it lay outside the jurisdiction of the chapter. Here, as occasion demanded, the prebendary or his proctor sat as a court judging his tenants charged with misdemeanours,⁵ and St. Peter's prebend, at least, had its own prison on the premises.⁶

How a residentiary occupied his time would depend very much upon his personal devotion and sense of obligation. Much of his morning, were he constant at worship, would be taken up by attendance at the daily round of services and at chapter. In the afternoons, apart from evensong, the fixed routine left him free to follow personal pursuits. A pastorally-minded man would certainly have time to exercise his cure of souls, though this was, of course, the prime function at Beverley of his vicar. Unfortunately we never read in the Act Book of a canon so engaged.

1. ibid., p. 241.

2. ibid

3. ibid., p. 289.

4. ibid., ii, p. 23.

5. ibid., i, p. 320; ii, pp. 10, 12.

6. ibid., ii, pp. 10, 12. The legality of the detention of prisoners on the part of prebendary was apparently open to doubt.

There was also the oversight of his prebend to be attended to. At Beverley this was largely a matter of the collection of dues, which, in the case of absentees, necessitated the appointment of a proctor, often a kinsman or the parochial vicar. Though commercial agents were normally brought in to collect thraves from the parishes up and down the Riding, and though the legal machinery of the chapter was at hand to enforce payment, ultimately the realisation of prebendal revenues was the responsibility of the prebendary himself. On one occasion at least, when the dealings of agents were a source of contention with the parishes, he was required to collect his thraves personally.¹ Litigation in pursuit of dues, one feels, was not an altogether uncongenial pastime for such a man as Henry de Carlton, the prebendary of St. Stephen's of the Act Book, but in fairness it must be added that when a canon relaxed vigilance, his prebend's revenues fell hopelessly into arrears.²

Some residentiaries engaged in farming on their own account, or so we conclude from their wills. As early as the late twelfth century Canon Simon is found holding land apart from his prebend,³ and Walter de Gloucester left his best horse and bull to the church of Sutton-upon-Trent.⁴ The bequests of Nicholas de Huggate, a wealthy man, who was also provost, included a total of four horses, fourteen cows, one hundred and fifty sheep and twenty sows.⁵

Medieval wills in general speak more of kitchen and table utensils, items of bedding and clothing than of furniture and books.⁶ Those of the

1. B.C.A., ii, p. 98.

2. See above, pp. 96 - 97.

3. See above, pp. 34 - 35.

4. B.C.A., i, p. 271.

5. ibid., ii, p. 124.

6. The goods of Walter de Gloucester deemed worthy of separate mention consisted of items of plate and jewelry, bedclothes and sundry brass pots including the one in qua consuevit fieri potagium meum. The only book worthy of bequest was his "best breviary". (B.C.A., i, pp. 271 - 272). Alan de Humbleton, the senior vicar, whose considerable wealth consisted mainly in real estate, left among his moveables a book of the Gospels and another in addition to his breviary. (Y.D., ix, p.14).

canons of Beverley were no exception. The furnishings of their prebendal residences were as in most houses of the period, severely functional,¹ and nowhere do we learn of a residentiary engaged in serious study. Though the Minster's Grammar School must have nurtured many eminent clerics throughout the middle ages, at no time was Beverley favoured as a resort for mature academics.

Apart from being his personal lodging place, and something of a status symbol, a canon's house in the close at Beverley was primarily a place of entertainment. The importance attached to the kitchen, the bakehouse and the brewhouse suggest that the vast meals earlier ordained in the common refectory were perpetuated there for the benefit of colleagues of all degrees,² illustrious visitors to the shrine as well as the poor and others whose presence gave cause for concern.

Canons living long years at Beverley in enforced celibacy were as prone as their subordinates to moral lapses. Cecilia de Beckingham's frequenting of the house of William de Lincoln, prebendary of St. Michael's, was the source of scandal in the town on more than one occasion,³ and Henry de Carlton, that other assiduous resident of the Act Book, was over familiar with Avice, his former maid.⁴

Two isolated instances, recorded for all time in legal documents, should not be taken as representative of the behaviour of the residentiaries in general, but when it is remembered that the only other resident canon at this time was blind and infirm, and that such private misdemeanours were made matters of corporate and public concern, the moral laxity of many of the lesser clergy at Beverley is scarcely to be wondered at.⁵

1. Only chests, never chairs, tables, bedsteads, etc., feature in Beverley wills (ibid).
2. In addition to entertaining one another residentiaries were especially charged with giving meals to the two incense bearers (B.C.A., i, p. 289).
3. ibid, pp. 94, 95, 110.
4. ibid, p. 208.
5. ibid, i, pp. 313-316; ii, pp. 128-129.

A book composed mainly of the business and legal records of a chapter is more likely to disclose the failings of its members rather than their virtues. We are not to expect upon its pages testimony to the compassion, sensitivity and personal devotion of individuals. Any generation of clergy, not least our own, would hope to be spared a judgement based upon the archives of its diocesan registries.

Yet even when we have acknowledged our ignorance of the true characters of Beverley's prebendaries, and the fallibility of conclusions reached in our wholly changed world, it is all too evident that in their corporate dealings these men were rarely at pains to evoke the love of the community in which their lot was cast.

A body so vigilant in the defence of its rights, undeterred by resentment in its pursuit of widespread and extraordinary revenues, is unlikely to have been held in affectionate regard in the Riding at large. Though contemporaries no doubt accepted this venerable church, with its ready resort to litigation and spiritual penalties, as part of the order of things, to the humble layman it must have presented an image of luxury and ease. In those who smarted under its exactions it produced a cynicism which moved at least one fourteenth-century critic to harsh and ribald verse:¹

Qui vodra a moi entendre
Oyr purra a apprendre
L'estoyre d'un ordre novel
Que mout est delitous e bel.

* * * * *

L'ordre est si founde a droit
Qe de tous ordres un point estroit
Ni ad ordre en cest mound
Dont si n'i ad ascun point.

* * * * *

Cest l'ordre de Bel Eyse.

¹. Political songs, John to Edward II. Edited by T.Wright. Camden Soc. 1839, p.137. (B.C.A., ii, pp. 304 - 305).

1.61. De Beverleye ont un point treit
Qe serra tenu bien e dreit,
Pur beyvre bien a mangier
E pus apres desqu'a souper
E apres al collacioun,
Deit chascun aver un copoun
De chandelle long desqu'al coute
Et tant come remaindra goute
De la chandaille a arder,
Deivent les frers a beyvre ser;

4. THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

The medieval grammar school of Beverley Minster was beyond doubt one of the most prestigious in the North. Throughout the years covered by the Act Book it fed the second form in the choir, the ordination lists and, we may believe, the universities, with a constant flow of youths and young men drawn from every part of the East Riding. There is every reason to suppose that it continued to do so in its more sparsely documented centuries which followed.

For how long it had functioned prior to the fourteenth century is less certain. The first intimation of a school at Beverley comes from the early twelfth century with William Ketell's account of the admirable young scholasticus whose infatuation for a local girl was cured at the shrine of St. John.¹ Reference to his official activities is, of course, incidental to the story, but both the manner of his reception by the canons and his multifarious duties give his crowded school a somewhat informal character. We are told that he was attracted thither because the place was full of clerks, that he was warmly greeted by "the prelates of the church", and that, in addition to teaching, he performed numerous tasks in the choir.

A hundred years later his successor, under the more permanent title of magister scholarum, had a definite place in the refectory. The fact that in the Ordinance of the Refectory he was listed among the corrody holders with the custos ecclesie (later the sacrist) suggests that he was the forerunner not only of the schoolmaster but also of the chancellor.²

The latter, when at length he appears, has but a formal connection with the school. In the Act Book he is found nominating the schoolmaster, whom he presents to the chapter for approval.³ Here his duties appear to have ended. Lacking as he did personal prestige and official status sufficient to regulate and protect an important school, these concerns devolved upon the chapter. Not only did the chapter, through its auditor,

1. See above, p.45.

2. See above, p.46.

3. B.C.A., i, pp. 157, 382; ii, p.113.

effectively suppress 'adulterine' schools within the provostry,¹ but even in internal disputes, of consequence only within the collegiate community, it dealt directly with the schoolmaster, who then represented his own interests.²

That the chapter's acceptance of the chancellor's candidate was by no means a foregone conclusion is revealed in an interesting account of the whole process recorded in the Act Book under the year 1306.³ Mr. Roger de Bolton is first presented by the chancellor to the auditor, acting alone on behalf of the chapter, with the request that his appointment be confirmed. A fulsome testimonial from the vice-chancellor of the University of Cambridge (in the absence of the chancellor) and the full assembly of regent masters is then produced, together with a copy of the collation. Dated three months earlier it is to the effect that Bolton had both studied and taught faithfully in the liberal arts at Cambridge, and that he had behaved himself well. This having been read and approved the auditor declares him fit to 'rule' the school. Only then is he admitted, oddly enough by the master of works, having first taken the customary oath of obedience to the chapter and its officers, swearing to teach the school faithfully, et per fideles et idoneos ministros regi faciam, and to do all that the custom of the church and school required.

That such a procedure should be followed, no doubt after careful preliminary selection, and that so high a standard should be required of the successful candidate, is some testimony to the importance of the school. The reference in the oath to "faithful and suitable clerks" as assistants almost certainly implies that the magister scholarum was in fact a headmaster, a supposition borne out by Archbishop Arundel's inclusion of an undermaster (sub-magister scholarum) among those expected to process in the Minster.⁴

1. B.C.A., i, pp. 42, 48, 102 - 103, 114.

2. ibid, p.292.

3. ibid, pp. 157 - 159.

4. ibid, ii, p.268.

Four schoolmasters, in addition to Bolton, are named in the Act Book.¹ All, like him, were university graduates. Thomas de Brompton, his predecessor, features chiefly as a complainant against unlicensed schools. Roger de Sutton, who was schoolmaster by 1312, probably continued in the post for a further eight years, for it came to the notice of the archbishop in 1314 that the chancellor had presented to the school, not for the statutory three years, but in perpetuity.² Though his successor, Geoffrey de Whitby, is recorded in 1320 as being appointed ad scholas grammaticales ad triennium regendas,³ two years later the same irregularity was held to have occurred and he was admitted anew.⁴ In the event Whitby remained schoolmaster until his death in 1335, when William de Breden was nominated in his place.⁵

The magister scholarum as such receives no mention in the statutes of Archbishop Arundel (1391) and appears to have had no definite place in the choir. Indeed there is a possibility that his position was never formally assimilated into the constitution of the church. The official of the provost was clearly unimpressed by the chapter auditor's assertion that he was clericum chori nostri habitum portantem, ad legendum et cantandum in tabula suo tempore honorandum and refused to dismiss a private suit against him from his court.⁶ Even John de Nassington, a prebendary of Beverley, counselled caution when, the same case having been brought before the court of York, the auditor sought its withdrawal to Beverley.⁷ This was in 1305-1306, at the precise time when the chapter had been severely rebuffed for trying the case against the cooks

1. Their dates of appointment and departure, so far as they are known were: Thomas de Brompton (by 1304-1306); Roger de Bolton (1306-1312); Roger de Sutton (1312-1320); Geoffrey de Whitby (1320-1335); William de Breden (1335-?). None of these men is known to have held a benefice at any stage in his career.
2. B.C.A., i, p.314.
3. ibid, p.382.
4. ibid, ii, p.5.
5. ibid, p.113.
6. ibid, i, pp. 59-60.
7. ibid, pp. 62-63.

of the Bedern, who were held to be outside its jurisdiction.¹ It may be that the schoolmaster, on account of the nature of his temporary contract, was not wholly exempt from outside authority, that is, in his case, from that of the chancellor of York. Certainly it was to the latter, in the person of Robert de Ripplingham, that a new schoolmaster had recourse a year later.²

It must be remembered that the relationship between the magister scholarum and the chapter was in more than one respect unique. As a professional man, invariably chosen from outside the collegiate community to follow a specialized calling, he differed from the clerks of the establishment in the nature of his engagement in much the same way as a present day organist and choirmaster differs from an assistant curate. His detachment, however, was greater than this. In so far as his remuneration was derived not from the authorities, but from the fees of his pupils,³ he was not an employee, strictly speaking, of either the chapter or the provost.

The 'ruling' of Beverley's grammar school was, therefore, largely a personal enterprise. The admission of all but a few of the pupils and the collection of their fees were the concerns of the master alone, and he himself was held responsible for the repair of the school premises.⁴ We need look no further than this detachment for justification of a fixed-term engagement as a precaution against an unfortunate appointment,⁵

1. See above, pp. 141 - 142.

2. B.C.A., i, p. 196. Any bond between the two was likely to be professional. It is most unlikely that the chancellor's legal powers were of any force in a church such as Beverley.

3. ibid, pp. 292 - 293.

4. ibid, p. 222. In the event of the school having to be rebuilt, however, responsibility rested with the master of works. Mention of this possibility in 1308 may imply that a re-siting of the school building was envisaged in order to make way for the new nave of the Minster. Such a move had proved necessary at York in 1289. (Records of the Northern Convocation, SS.cxiii, p. 152 & n; Reg. Romeyn, i, pp. 381 - 382).

5. There were other factors: the University of Oxford forbade its regent masters to keep grammar schools for more than three years. (Statuta Antiqua Universitatis Oxoniensis, ed. Strickland Gibson, pp. 21 - 23.)

or for an explanation of the schoolmaster's personal interest in the suppression of unauthorised competition.

Only in one respect did the church authorities take a hand in the admission of pupils. In 1312 the newly appointed Roger de Sutton sought to restrict to seven the number of free places reserved for choristers; any above this figure should, he claimed, pay fees (salarium). The succentor disagreed, and the matter was brought before the chapter. It was there decided that no limit should be recognised, but that the succentor must not abuse such a ruling by admitting to the habit of the choir more boys than was necessary, to the defraud¹ of the schoolmaster. ^{ing}

The choristers were probably among the junior pupils, and must have represented but a small part of the annual intake. 9 or 10 was the usual age of admission, and boys who stayed the full course probably left at 18,² when, as bacalaria de novo creandis in scolis grammaticalibus, they were required to present pairs of gloves to at least eight Minster officials.³ At this point some, probably 7 or 8, were admitted to the second form in the choir where they remained for three years.⁴ Others undoubtedly returned to their home parishes, appearing again for ordination in due course, whilst a few departed to continue their studies at a university.

We can do no more than guess at overall numbers. If the 7 clerks who annually found a place in the choir accounted for as much as half the scholars of their year then, assuming an eight year course, the total number of pupils in the grammar school at any one time was likely to be about 112. It has been suggested that a schoolmaster with a class of 70 or 80 pupils could gross about £10 a year.⁵ Since, however, he

1. B.C.A., i, pp. 292 - 293.

2. See Nicholas I. Orme, English Schools in the Middle Ages, pp. 117, 133 - 134.

3. B.C.A., ii, p.127.

4. See below, p. 320.

5. Orme, op.cit., p.156. Fees paid by individual pupils must have varied, but the normal rate was probably 4d per term, as at Merton College Grammar School (see A.F. Leach, Schools of Medieval England, pp. 171 - 174). 8d a week was allowed for their keep - the same amount as that paid by Archbishop Giffard for the maintenance of each of three boys attending Beverley grammar school in 1275/6 (Reg. Giffard, p.272.).

had to meet out of this any rent for his premises, and the cost of keeping them in repair, it is unlikely that a graduate could be engaged for less. A figure in excess of 100, therefore, seems almost certain. Probably it was much greater.

Less speculative is the likely demand for places in such a school. The wealth of clerks which attracted the early scholasticus to Beverley continued, we may be sure, throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, when, so far as we can tell, Hedon's grammar school¹ alone offered an alternative to Beverley south of the Wolds. Among this assured flow from the villages of the East Riding must have come numerous clerks who have found a place in history. Where one may ask did such notables as William Melton, Walter Skirlaw, William de Ferriby, Nicholas de Huggate and Richard de Ravenser receive their grounding in grammar?

No hint of the Minster school's influence is to be found in records, but, were the truth known, it may well be found that here lay Beverley's best contribution to both Church and State.

1. The earliest reference to a school at Hedon occurs in 1271 (N. Denholm-Young, *The Yorkshire Estates of Isabella de Fortibus*, in Y.A.J., xxi, p.392). The instances of schools in the populous East Riding of which certain record remains scarcely justify Dean Rashdall's confidence "that at least in the later Middle Age the smallest towns and even the larger villages possessed schools" (Hastings Rashdall, The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages (ed. F.M. Powicke and A.B. Emden), iii, p.350). Not until the end of the fourteenth century is there evidence of schools at such places as Howden, Hemingbrough and Hull.

NOTE ON THE SUPPOSED SONG SCHOOL

The Act Book tells of seven boy choristers,¹ later increased to eight,² but never more. The fact that these all had free places in the grammar school can have left little scope for a precentor's school at Beverley teaching anything more than singing. Incidental reference in the extant Fabric Roll for 1423-1424 to an oak felled at Bentley pro Scolis Cantoris³ probably refers, therefore, to the boys' lodging, or at best to the room in which the succentor conducted his choir practices. In the absence of the precentor his deputy had, it is true, the task of correcting and examining the clerks of the second form in song,⁴ but in no sense did this imply that he presided over a school. It is just possible that, on the eve of the Reformation, no less a person than John Merebecke received his early training at Beverley.⁵

1. B.C.A., i, p.293.

2. ibid, p.380; ii, p.267.

3. A. F. Leach, A Fifteenth Century Fabric Roll of Beverley Minster, in E.R.A.S., vi, p.66.

4. B.C.A., i, p.53.

5. Poulson, op. cit., ii, p. 639 An account roll shows a person of this name receiving payment for "songs" composed for the choir. It would seem that his family was domiciled in Beverley (ibid, pp. 633, 637).

IV THE CLERGY

1. THE PROVOSTS

The aloofness of so many provosts of Beverley from the daily life of the collegiate church sprang, in the first instance, from a constitutional detachment which allowed him no place in its ordering, apart, that is, from his statutory obligations towards the Bedern. Even in his own sphere of administration he headed a structure of management so organised as to make his presence and personal involvement inessential.¹

This much is implicit in the identity of the first provost, for it is unlikely that Archbishop Thomas, who created his office, anticipated a high standard of residence on the part of his nephew, Thomas II, who eventually succeeded him in the see of York.² Since nearly all subsequent provosts were of like status and connection, only in a limited degree is consideration of them pertinent to a study of the Minster.³

Of the forty-two⁴ distinguished clerks appointed to the provostship in its four-and-a-half centuries of existence no less than twenty-three were highly placed royal servants of one sort or another. They included among them five chancellors of England, a treasurer, two keepers of the privy seal and two keepers of the wardrobe.⁵ Thirteen provosts were destined for the episcopate,⁶ and five of these became archbishops. Only eight of the total can be said with certainty to have been first and

1. See above, pp.27 - 29

2. See above, p.27 ; below, p.A9

3. For this reason, and bearing in mind that Leach's lengthy and entertaining account of the provosts forms the introduction of the second volume of the Act Book, this present chapter is intended to be no more than a brief general consideration of their relationship with the church.

4. Owing to doubts surrounding the early succession this figure should be taken as tentative.

5. Chancellors: Robert de Gant (Ghent), Thomas Becket, John Chishull, Walter Reynolds and Laurence Booth (the two last after resigning the provostship). Treasurer: William Kynwolmarssh. Keepers of the Privy Seal: John Mansel and William Melton; of the Wardrobe: Nicholas de Huggate and Robert Rolleston.

6. Thomas II,* Roger de Pont L'Eveque,* Thomas Becket,* Simon de Wells, Fulk Bassett, William of York, John Chishull, Aymo de Carto, Walter Reynolds, William Melton,* Robert Neville, Laurence Booth,* John Booth. (archbishops *)

foremost diocesan officials or active dignitaries of the Northern Church.¹ On the other hand only two were aliens,² and these were probably domiciled in England for much of their periods in office.

Engrossed as they often were in national government references to such men in the context of the provostry are always spasmodic. Some of them feature only as names in lists. Especially is this true of the earlier succession. Even when a provost was ostensibly engaged in local business, or took the initiative in meeting special problems, one can never be certain whether he was acting personally, or merely making a remote response to the representations of his official.

In many instances, therefore, it is impossible to reach firm conclusions regarding the concern and energy an individual provost brought to his charge. Some almost certainly never visited Beverley, even for their installation. Others were no doubt content to conduct a primary visitation of the provostry, and no more. On the evidence available only nine can be judged to have resided in the provostry for any length of time.

None of these occurs before the early fourteenth century, when William Melton became the first clerk of local origin to enter upon the provostship. Though he himself has all the appearances of a perpetual absentee, ending his tenure still in ignorance of some of the basic rights of the provostry,³ he opened the way for others of that great Humberside clerical connection of which he was the forerunner.⁴ The succession of Nicholas de Huggate (1317 - 1338), William de la Mare (1338 - 1360), Richard de Ravenser (1360 - 1369) and John de Thoresby⁵ (1373 - 1380) together, with one short break, span the greater part of the century.

Huggate, a lifelong associate, if not actually a relative, of Melton, was away in the royal service throughout his earlier years as provost, but

1. Thurstan, Robert, Peter de Sherburn, Robert de Abberwick, William de la Mare, John de Barningham, William Poteman, Hugh Trotter.
2. Aymo de Carto, Peter Tastar.
3. See, for instance, his visitation articles of 1325, and the chapter's response (B.C.A., ii, pp. 56 - 60).
4. See below, pp. A.94 - 96.
5. See below, pp. A.20 - 23.

his retirement left him several years to spend in the interest of the Minster. His burial there must have been long remembered.¹ The effigy and canopy now in the wall of Welwick church may once have surmounted the tomb of his successor, William de la Mare, who was certainly a kinsman of the archbishop, and who, as the official of Archbishop Thoresby and essentially a northern clerk, can scarcely have been a stranger to Beverley.

It was de la Mare who ensured the succession to the provostship of Richard de Ravenser, another relative, by exchanging it with him, shortly before his death, for the rectory of Waltham. For the latter's successful stewardship we have the glowing testimony of Edward III. Charging him with the task of making good his own successor's² depredations, the king's commission runs

"We, noticing that the possessions, goods and rents of the provostship of the same church were in no small degree increased by the industry of you, Richard, who for long ruled over the said provostship profitably and laudably, and which now are so abundant that they are more than sufficient for supporting the charges of old charged upon the same church commit you our office, and command that you summon the said provost to your presence"³

If the evidence of a single visitation of the provostry can be taken as indicating a conscientious provost, Ravenser's standards were fully met by John de Thoresby, a nephew, like him, of Archbishop Thoresby. Planned for Michaelmas, 1377,⁴ its careful preparation and exacting timetable, taking the provost and his clerks the length and breadth of the peculiar, suggest a man well able to combine personal oversight with the duties of chancellor to Bishop Hatfield of Durham.

1. B.C.A., ii, pp. 122 - 125; and see below, p.370.
2. Adam de Lymbergh (see below, pp. A.22 - 23).
3. E.R.A.S., v, pp. 36 - 37.
4. B.C.A., ii, pp. 328 - 329; Poulson, op cit., ii, pp. 555 - 556.

To this succession of caring provosts one more remains to be added. On the face of it Robert de Manfield¹ seems an unpromising candidate to continue his predecessors' involvement. A master in chancery and widely beneficed elsewhere he followed Thoresby in the provostship in 1381 at the height of the chapter's conflict with Alexander Neville. Though his possession was long disputed, his quarrel was with Rome rather than with the archbishop, and he survived the latter's fall secure in both this preferment and his prebend of St. Michael. As a prebendary he was present in person in 1391 to consent to the statutes of Archbishop Arundel,² and in the years following witnessed, in the same capacity, numerous charters relating to the chapter.³ Whether he was able to sustain this attendance during his term as keeper of writs and rolls of the Common Bench (1397 - 1410) we do not know for certain, but in 1417 his official, Simon Russell, could describe him in the Provost's Book as a residentiary of Beverley.⁴ By then he was president of the chapter, occupying the more substantial prebend of St. James' Altar, and, as provost, "stood peacable with the said church and all its ministers, with all corrodies, charges ordinary and extraordinary fully paid."⁵

Manfield died in the spring of 1419. His provostship, the longest in the history of the dignity, was probably, were the truth known, also the most distinguished. His will made in Beverley, conveys the impression that he spent much of his later life there, and leaves no doubt as to his affection, above all others, for its church.⁶

Of his fifteenth and sixteenth century successors it is difficult to say much relative to Beverley. Robert Rolleston (1427 - 1451),⁷ keeper of the wardrobe for many years, but the son of a notable local family, and John de Barningham,⁸ (1451 - 1457) one of Archbishop Kemp's faithful

1. See below, pp. A.24, 73-74, 143-144.

2. B.C.A., ii, p.266.

3. See for instance E.R.A.S., v, p.41.; Y.D., ix, pp. 19, 20.

4. B.C.A., ii, p.306.

5. B.C.A., ii, p.307.

6. North Country Wills, pp. 20-25.

7. See below, pp. A.25, 214.

8. See below, p.A. 25, 54.

clerks and treasurer of York, were probably provosts in much more than name. The same cannot be said with assurance of William Kynwoldmerssh (1419-1422),¹ treasurer of England, Robert Neville (1422-1427),² the future bishop of Durham, or, for that matter, of any of the last nine provosts, with the probable exception of William Poteman³ (1467-1493), who could certainly be described as a residentiary canon, and Hugh Trotter⁴ (1493-1503). Both the latter were key members of a small and able group of clerks who virtually ran the diocese in the absence of Archbishop Rotherham, and, like many essentially "York men" before them, doubtless found time to keep a benevolent eye on Beverley.

Two observations remain to be noted. Though the nine active provosts we have identified were outnumbered almost four to one by the others, together their tenures totalled 167 years out of 456. Thus their average occupation of the office was eighteen years, more than double that of the likely absentees. It is arguable that this was because none of them was made a bishop, and so was left free to devote his latter years to the service of the Minster. On the other hand, most of those who left the provostship on consecration were certainly not men likely to alter their habit of life in favour of Beverley, and others who died in office, full of years, did so without having visited the provostry. All that we know of the fourteenth century provosts leads to the belief that they at least were clerks with real affection for their church and that they found fulfilment in its service.⁵

Secondly, the feature which most obviously distinguishes these men and their successors from those who had gone before is their possession of a prebend in the Minster. Discounting the doubtful instance of Thomas Becket (1154-1162),⁶ the first provost to enter the chapter was the

1. See below, p. A.24.

2. See below, pp. A. 24-25, 75.

3. See below, p. A. 26, 167-168.

4. See below, pp. A. 27, 148.

5. With the exception, of course, of those two negligent provosts, Aymo de Carto and Adam de Lymbergh.

6. See above, pp. 37-38.

alien, Aymo de Carto (1295 - 1304).¹ Thereafter all but six out of the twenty-two provosts who followed sooner or later gained a prebend. Never was special provision made for them in this, for whilst for one or two a prebend actually came first, others had to wait many years for collation. Nor, as a rule, did any aspire to leadership of the chapter, indeed those who held the eighth or inferior prebend of St. Katherine had no place in chapter as of right.

Whether the presence of the provost in chapter proved advantageous to either party must have depended largely upon the personalities concerned. In a real sense it defeated the purpose of Archbishop Thomas, who had established the provostry precisely to relieve the canons of temporal concerns. On the other hand, in changed circumstances, given provosts such as Huggate, Ravenser and Manfield, it doubtless produced a community of interest between the two administrations, often sadly lacking in earlier times.

1. See below, p.A.19.

NOTE.

We have considered the twelfth-century canons of Beverley, in so far as they are known to us, in an earlier context. The following survey of their successors covers, therefore, the 333 years from the translation of Walter Gray to the see of York (1215) up to the dissolution of the collegiate church (1548).

In order to make manageable a review of an unbroken succession over so lengthy a period our treatment of the prebendaries is made in stages:

- (a) The Act Book Chapter (1325).
- (b) The Chapter under Walter de Gray (1215 - 1255).
- (c) From Bovill to Greenfield (1256 - 1315).
 - (i) Patronage in Four Churches.
 - (ii) The Beverley Chapter.
- (d) From Melton to Arundel (1317 - 1396).
 - (i) The Erosion of Standards.
 - (ii) The Chapter under Alexander Neville (1381).
- (e) The Fifteenth-Century Chapter (1396 - 1500).
- (f) The Pre-Reformation Chapter (1500 - 1548).

The intrusion, out of sequence, of two detailed accounts of the chapter at specific moments of crisis (a, d(ii)) takes advantage of records which afford unique insight into its character and composition. In describing, in the first instance, a body deeply engrossed in the affairs of the church, and in the second a state in which concern and involvement were sadly lacking, they serve to illustrate the main change in outlook which overtook the chapter in all these years.

When, in 1325, all save one of the prebendaries assembled in the Minster in defence of its rights they were broadly representative of the chapter as it existed at any time prior to the Black Death. Pestilence combined with numerous other factors to produce in later decades a marked decline in concern on the part of prebendaries - a general climate in which a sense of personal obligation to the church appears as the

exception rather than the rule, and one which was clearly revealed at Alexander Neville's sensational visitation of 1381. In their background, current employment and reluctance to reside the prebendaries who then received the episcopal summons declared a pattern which persisted until the Reformation, varied only by the onset of fifteenth-century nepotism, the eclipse of papal influence and a new regard for academic associations.

In part our survey is a study of the archbishops' exercise of patronage. In this context it is important to see Beverley as but one of three great daughter churches of York. When the diocese became a hunting ground for papal and Crown nominees, as it did in the latter half of the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, it is unrealistic to view one area of the field in isolation. Preoccupation with the state of affairs at York on the part of numerous writers has, we believe, created a misleading and unduly pessimistic impression of the archbishop's powers of collation in these years. In this particular period, therefore, we have attempted (c.i) to set Beverley's contribution in the context of overall prebendal patronage.

Finally, all divisions made in our survey must be recognised as arbitrary. It may be, for instance, that contemporaries saw in the death of Walter Gray the end of an era, but chapter life continued unchanged. The only validity we can claim for our chosen periods lies in the response of the chapter within each to prevailing attitudes in the Church at large. They reveal a gradual evolution, evident only in retrospect, uninterrupted by major constitutional upheavals, yet real enough to remove the last prebendaries far from their early predecessors in both spirit and activity.

N.B. In order to avoid repetition footnotes on the following pages for the most part direct the reader to pages of the Appendix, where the relevant biographical notices offer more detailed references.



THE STAIRCASE TO THE CHAPTER HOUSE ENTRANCE

2. THE PREBENDARIES

(a) The Act Book Chapter

April 29th, 1325, was an exceptional day in the life of Beverley Minster. It witnessed the gathering in convocation of all but one of the eight prebendaries¹ - an unprecedented occurrence in that century, and one unlikely to be repeated for many decades to come. From all we know of the composition of the chapter in the succeeding centuries such a response to a summons to convocation can have been rare indeed.

Attendance, however, no more than matched the import and urgency of the call. Thraves, that most lucrative source of the Minster's revenues, were being questioned as never before. The corn renders of the East Riding had, of course, irked local religious houses and parish clergy alike from time out of mind, but local censure and penalties, backed by the sanctions of a protective archbishop, had always been sufficient to bring reluctant payers to heel. Now they were being challenged by a far more formidable opponent in the person of Pilefort, Cardinal Priest of St. Anastasia, who had succeeded William Melton in the desirable rectory of Hornsea in Holderness,² and who was one of those curialists to whom the archbishop was indebted for his admission to the primacy some eight years previous. X

Though himself a former provost and prebendary of Beverley, Melton, it would seem, was not uninfluenced by the cardinal's representations when he personally questioned the validity of thraves following upon his visitation of the Minster earlier in 1325.³ No doubt it was this changed attitude and role of their patron, coupled with foreboding of the attack

1. B.C.A., ii, p.62. The absent canon, abroad at the time, was represented by his proxy.
2. B.C.A., ii, p.30. Leach's marginal summary erroneously translates trabas avenarum as 'garbs of hay'. For the reply/the provost and chapter see B.C.A., ii, p.36. Virtually the whole of Melton's vast preferment was distributed among members of the curia (below p.A140 n.2).
3. B.C.A., ii, pp. 56 - 58, and see pp.58 - 60 for the chapter's response. Suspicions as to the archbishop's lack of objectivity in his visitation stricture are increased by the knowledge that the chapter had recently been obliged, after much hesitation, to dismiss his kinsman and namesake for his prolonged absence from his post as a vicar of the church - one to which Melton had personally appointed him (B.C.A., ii, pp.50 - 53, see also p.47).

being carried to parliament (which it was), that so perturbed the canons.

Yet fears for the chapter and its immemorial rights in such a situation would be misplaced: forearmed with a chestful of impeccable charters and confirmations, the experience, resource and tenacity of its leading figures more than compensated for its smallness.

The dominant figure in this briefly-reported gathering, as he had been on numerous other occasions, was the senior canon, Robert de Pickering,¹ dean of York for the past thirteen years, and a prebendary of Beverley for over thirty-seven. An old man now - an erroneous report of his death had reached the chapter's auditor two years earlier - few indeed can have recalled his first appearance in the Minster. Coming of one of those modestly landed families of the sort which still presides easily and unobtrusively over the Yorkshire countryside, he had served the see of York with distinction for nigh on half a century, under no less than six archbishops. Already a doctor of civil law, it had been as one of William Wickwane's trusted clerks that he first found a place in diocesan records, since when he had filled in turn most of the chief administrative posts before being elected dean of York in the place of his no less esteemed brother, William.

Now in his latter years, apparently unimpeded by a serious eye affliction of his middle years, he devoted his gifts and experience mainly to the two great churches over which he presided. Acquainted with matters of state and diplomacy, the Chapter Act Book leaves no doubt of our Minster's dependence upon his counsel and judgement: matters of moment were naturally referred to him, and, if need be, awaited his decision. The presence of such a man must have been a source of assurance to any chapter at a time of crisis.

Next in seniority was Henry de Carlton,² prebendary of St. Stephen's Altar since 1290, when Archbishop le Romeyn had granted him collation in the place of the ill-fated Robert de Scarborough, who resigned the deanery of York at the same time, and whose bitter dispute with his primate had

1. See below, pp. A.154 - A.157.

2. See below, pp. A.174 - A.175.

disturbed the York diocese for the better part of three years. If it was Romeyn's purpose to install a reliable resident in Carlton he had chosen wisely. A local man, unbeneficed, it seems, elsewhere, Carlton had had an unremarkable career as an almost permanent resident at Beverley ever since. Apart from an excursion to London in 1293 and frequent visits to his home village between Goole and Selby his prebendal house was in every sense his home. Stability of habit, however, went with a certain volatility of temperament. A university graduate who grew old in the precincts, he was capable of exhibiting that cantankerous quality which sometimes marks the underemployed. Whatever his qualities Carlton can have contributed little to the convocation of 1325, for, already a sick man, this was to be the last of many: a month later he appointed a proctor to act in all matters pertaining to his prebend, and by October he was dead.

Of different calibre was Denis Avenel,¹ the archdeacon of the East Riding, who held St. Mary's prebend. Like Pickering he was a doctor of civil law, and had earlier been Official of the Court of York, as well as Melton's Vicar-General early in 1321. Unlike the Dean he was almost certainly a southerner, apparently joining Greenfield's household in 1314. An Oxford man, he had probably been in the service of Archbishop Winchelsea, in whose diocese his only other known preferment had lain. Perhaps he came north after the latter's death in 1311 to serve another primate whose trust he had gained in earlier days. Apart from his archdeaconry Avenel's Beverley prebend appears to have been his only preferment in the York diocese, and he was able to combine regular residence with his wider obligations in the Riding. He belonged, therefore, to that class of clerks of high attainment and proved ability who were content to devote their energies to the service of the benefices which supported them, and whose quiet labours are often obscured by the attention paid to others who saw ability as a means to ambitious pluralism.

Benedict de Paston,² prebendary of St. Andrew's Altar by papal provision since 1322, was paying what was probably his one and only visit to Beverley in eight years as a canon. Essentially a southern clerk, he

1. See below, p. A.121.

2. See below, pp. A.44 - A.45.

~~For although he held the richest prebend, that of St. Martin's altar, which~~
 had become virtually the family possession of the Nassington/Northburgh connection, his interest in Beverley seems to have been solely pecuniary. Having 'inherited' his prebend, by means of a provision, from John de

1. See below, p. A.141

2. See below, p.A.98.

had moved round a good deal in the past twenty-five years, but never north of the Trent. His first recorded benefice, the rectory of Ringfield in Suffolk, which came to him in 1302, naturally associates him with the family famed for its correspondence. He, too, was a lawyer, obtaining his doctorate at Oxford sometime before 1317 - probably a long time before, for he had been appointed Reynold's official-principal in the diocese of Worcester in 1309, acting as his vicar general in the same year. That Reynolds should have wasted little time in bringing him to Canterbury, after his translation, as auditor, is a sure tribute to his ability and loyalty. Of late he had been abroad, possibly at the curia, for in the year after this present meeting he was described as a papal chaplain. For such a man, hitherto represented in the north by his kinsman, Mr. Thomas de Paston, to make the journey to Beverley at this juncture is at once a testimony to his obvious usefulness at such a moment and an indication of the gravity of the occasion.

Something of a mystery figure at Beverley was the next canon, Wilfrid de Gropo St. Peter,¹ another doctor of civil law, who owed his collation to St. Michael's prebend to Luke, cardinal deacon of St. Maria in Via Lata, whose auditor and chaplain he had been. Remaining in England after the cardinal's return to Avignon in 1318, he probably continued to represent his master in the Northern Province, for though the association was maintained he gives all the appearance of being a residentiary at Beverley in the years which followed. Even his nationality is in doubt, as is the identity of his only other English preferment ('Geytington' in the diocese of Lincoln), but with his knowledge of the curia he, too, must have been a welcome member of this present convocation.

Robert de Northburgh's² presence was probably of more doubtful value, for although he held the richest prebend, that of St. Martin's Altar, which had become virtually the family possession of the Nassington/Northburgh connection, his interest in Beverley seems to have been solely pecuniary. Having 'inherited' his prebend, by means of a provision, from John de

1. See below, p. A.141

2. See below, p.A.98.

Nassington, the late official of York, he had spent most of the time since 1321 studying at Orleans. Early he had leased his prebend, and within months of this, his solitary visit to Beverley, he exchanged it with another of the clan, Roger de Nassington, for the rectory of Houghton, Bedfordshire. Whether his distinguished connections were of any help in the present matter is extremely doubtful, for another kinsman, now bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, had shown similar detachment from Beverley throughout his tenure of St. Andrew's prebend.

Finally, there was in attendance, William de Soothill,¹ prebendary of St. Katharine's Altar - in attendance only, because, as occupant of the eighth, inferior canonry, he was present simply by invitation, having no place in chapter in right of his prebend. He had kept much more than the statutory residence at Beverley in all the twenty-four years which had passed since Archbishop Corbridge had appointed him, and though there were occasions when he had been excluded from such gatherings there were others, of routine significance, when he alone had 'made chapter'. Although the only non-graduate present Soothill was a clerk of experience and ability, and also of some substance. He had seen service in the households of Archbishops Newark and Corbridge, and had since acquired the choice rectories of Mirfield, Sedbergh and Patrington. At this high point in the Minster's material prosperity his prebendal income, based upon half the offerings of pilgrims to the Shrine of St. John, probably outstripped those of all the ancient prebends, and though his only interest in thraves was through his corrody in the Bedern it was he whom this convocation appointed to represent the chapter in parliament.^a He was in London within five weeks, financed by the levy of a tenth on all prebends, and his letters home make interesting reading. They come to an abrupt end in July, however, for the frustrations of his exacting role evidently proved too much for him, and he died, one imagines of a heart attack, shortly after despatching a receipt for charters and a plea for more cash.

Had the one absent canon been present and available it is likely that Soothill would have been spared his ordeal, for Nicholas de Huggate,²

1. See below, pp. A.202 - A.203.

2. See below, pp. A.66 - A.68; A.279 - A.305.

prebendary of St. James' Altar and provost of Beverley, was of a kind in his element in such negotiations. It was he who represented the chapter before parliament some six years later when the rectors of Harthill Deanery rebelled against the levy of thraves. Characteristically his expenses were far heavier than those of Soothill, but he achieved results - not least a personal and favourable letter from the king - far beyond the latter's capabilities.

In the spring of 1325, however, Huggate was in France acting as the king's Receiver for Aquitaine and Gascony, and was represented in convocation by his proctor, Mr. Alan de Coatham, the chancellor of the church. Indeed he was perpetually absent from Beverley, always in the royal service, prior to 1330, when he retired to his native East Riding to take up permanent residence at Beverley. We have recounted his career in detail elsewhere; suffice it to say that he had trod the corridors of power for many years. Personally acquainted with the king since the latter's boyhood, and with Melton whose confidence he had long enjoyed, the current crisis ~~might~~ never have reached its present pitch had he been at hand to treat with the archbishop.

Such were the men who presided over Beverley Minster in the later years of the extant Act Book. We are not to suppose that the chapter could always summon together four doctors of civil law, yet, on the other hand, count only one representative from the mother church of York among its membership. Nor must we assume that there persisted throughout the later middle ages the same community of interest, still less the happy situation in which five out of eight canons kept at least the statutory residence (their successors barely fifty years later made a poor showing in this respect when Alexander Neville descended on the church in 1381).¹

Moreover there are windows we cannot open. We cannot know the spirituality or pastoral concern (they all held a cure of souls) of these men, their ideals and aspirations. Nor have we the right to generalise if we detect a slow, imperceptible erosion of standards, and a compromising

¹. See below, pp. 261 - 270.

with pervading attitudes of the world, as the years pass. Such decline is only apparent in a general way and in retrospect. Long before it becomes obvious a single residentiary with an inadequate view of his calling could debase high standards in a close community, just as an instance of sanctity could restore them once again. All these things make it futile to deduce any enduring picture of the chapter from a single gathering at an arbitrary point in time.

Nevertheless, in general terms, the canons who assembled in 1325, were fairly representative, both individually and collectively, of the type of clerk and chapter which governed the Minster from the time of Roger de Pont l'Évêque up to the Dissolution.

(b) The Chapter under Walter de Gray (1215 - 1255).

Our reasons for taking the latter part of the twelfth century as a point of departure appear in an earlier chapter. It was Archbishop Roger, we believe, who established a true prebendal system at Beverley, thereby giving the canons that independence necessary for a wider usefulness.¹ Certainly it is during his primacy that we first detect a change in the character of the chapter by which locally domiciled canons, accustomed to at least an element of communal life, were joined and gradually replaced by clerks in diocesan service. In Osbert Arundel, Peter de Carcasonna and Miles (de Beverley?),² all graduates in the service of Roger, we have forerunners, from the outset, of Pickering, Nassington and Avenel, quite distinct in their scope of activity from the shadowy figures of earlier years who grouped together to witness local charters. Yet they, too, are known to us largely through charters and, having assured us of the new place of the Beverley chapter in the ordering of the diocese, they quickly disappear from view in the turbulent and sparsely documented years which followed Roger's death.

¹. See above, pp. 37 - 43.

². See above, p.38 ; and below, pp. A.33 - A.34.

It is this interlude in the records of prebendaries, and the misfortunes that befell both diocese and Minster, rather than any further constitutional innovation which give the advent of Archbishop Gray the appearance of a new beginning in the history of Beverley.

The thirty years which preceded the translation of Walter de Gray from Worcester to York in 1215 were dark days for Beverley and its church. Such records as survive from the period report disaster rather than progress and construction. We learn that within the space of twenty-five years two calamities of the first magnitude befell the fabric of the Minster.

More than one chronicler tersely notes that on 20 September, 1188, a great fire swept through Beverley, burning much of the town, "together with the noble church of the Blessed John the Archbishop."¹ We are not told of the extent of the damage, but doubtless it was severe. If the fact that the relics of St. John were not recovered until 1197 is a clue,² the presbytery of Ealdred, and the choir with its beautiful ceiling must have suffered greatly.

The choir was already in use again, however, by the time of the second catastrophe. This came in c.1213. It appears that some years earlier the canons, having effected the repair of the more essential parts of the Minster, had been minded to heighten the already imposing tower of Archbishop Cynsige. The architects who undertook the work seemingly indulged that Early Gothic propensity for overreaching itself, for in creating a structure of acknowledged beauty they overloaded the Saxon piers. An anonymous chronicler has left a graphic account³ of how, on the fateful day, the clergy were called to matins an hour early by mistake, and, being warned by falling masonry and other portents of disaster, concluded the Office at the west end of the Nave. The devastation caused by the

1. See above, p.16 , n.1.

2. ibid

3. H.C.Y., i, pp.345 - 347; see above p.16 n.1.

collapse of the great tower must have been immense: the whole of the centre of the church, together with the splendid pulpitum of Ealdred, can scarcely have escaped being reduced to rubble. Some twenty years later, when initiating a building appeal for a new church, Archbishop Gray could still lament the miserably ruined state of the old Minster.¹

The same years were, of course, unhappy ones for the diocese as a whole. The see was in fact vacant during the decade which followed Roger's death, for it was not until 1191 that Geoffrey Plantagenet at length received consecration and enthronement. The stormy primacy of this royal bastard, in particular his quarrels with the York chapter, is well known.² For the most part only the central figures on the diocesan stage are known to us by name, and perhaps it is not surprising that the prebendaries of Beverley who lived through this depressing period remain anonymous.

Since those who subsequently appear witnessed the first years of Gray's splendid primacy, and saw the first work on the present Minster, the coming of the new archbishop is a natural point at which to begin our survey of the later chapter.

We know next to nothing of the chapter which Gray inherited at Beverley. It seems likely that two canons known to us by name provide continuity with earlier years: Roger Marmion,³ a graduate of noble birth, had almost certainly received his prebend from Archbishop Geoffrey.⁴ Apparently active in the diocese from the first decade of the century, he clearly preceded the first Marmion of West Tanfield by several years.⁵ Possibly

1. Reg. Gray, p.55. Cum igitur ecclesia Beverl' miserabili ruina sit enormiter deformata Fragments in the fabric suggest extensive post-Conquest construction, but no record of the work survives.
2. See D.L. Douie, Archbishop Geoffrey Plantagenet and the Chapter of York (Borthwick Publications No. 18).
3. See below, p.A.34.
4. He witnessed a charter which cannot be later than 1214 (Chartulary of Bridlington Priory, p.323).
5. In 1215/16 Robert Marmion, younger half-brother of the 4th Lord Marmion of Tamworth, married Avise, heiress of the manor of Tanfield (cf. H.B.McCall, Richmondshire Churches, p.201).

he was one of the Marmions of Tamworth, whose association with the Percies would explain his early link with Beverley and the East Riding.¹ Though Roger's survival into Gray's episcopate may fairly be assumed we hear nothing of him in the years which followed.

Mr. Roger de Richmond,² though he must have been an elderly man when Gray arrived, was probably senior canon as late as 1220 when he witnessed a charter with three others of the chapter.³ He had served as the official of the Archdeacon of Richmond in the closing years of the twelfth century, and may safely be identified as Roger de Melsonby who appears as vice-archdeacon in the same period, and who also found his way to Beverley. He therefore belonged to that prolific clerical family which flourished south of the Tees in the thirteenth century, and whose most distinguished son was Thomas de Melsonby, prior of Durham from 1233 till 1244.⁴

The three prebendaries who witnessed the 1220 charter with Roger were all probably of Gray's early appointment. It is, of course, possible that Ralph de dei Bone⁵ was one of the numerous papal provisors beneficed in England after King John's submission to the papacy, but, if so, he was apparently no stranger to Beverley. Possible, too, that Richard de Vescy,⁶ a relative of that restless tenant-in-chief, Eustace de Vescy, was a royal nominee during the vacancy of the see, but his more active kinsman, William, a canon of Ripon, was a member of Gray's household.⁷

1. The Marmions had connections with the earls of Warwick. William, the third earl, married, before 1175, Maud de Percy, daughter and coheir of William de Percy II. One of the earliest charters witnessed by Roger (c.1190-1204) was a grant by Maud to Fountains Abbey, to which she then gave her body for burial (E.Y.C., xi, No.45). Shortly before this her nephew, Henry de Percy, had married Isabel, daughter and heiress of Adam de Brus II, thereby acquiring the manor of Leconfield, three miles from Beverley. Leconfield became a favourite home of the Percies before the family established itself at Alnwick.
2. See below, pp.A.116-117. He occupied St. Mary's prebend (Reg.Gray, p.68). See also below p.A.35.
3. Y.D., ix, pp.101-102.
4. For reasons for this identification see below, p.A.116 n.3. Richmond's connection with Thomas de Melsonby is strengthened by the fact of his donation to the monks of Durham (Reg. Gray, p.68 n.1).
5. See below, p.A.35.
6. See below, p.A.35.
7. Reg.Gray, pp.77 n.2, 288 et passim.

The third, however, Richard de Cornubia,¹ was certainly one of the new archbishop's early importations, and may well have accompanied him north in 1215.

Cornubia was already a canon of York when he received his Beverley prebend, and was soon to succeed John de St. Laurence in the chancellorship.² Until his death c.1234 he remained Gray's valued counsellor, and undoubtedly a key figure in diocesan affairs. Readily assumed by most to have originated from Cornwall,³ we believe he was in fact a native of Cornwell, a village near Kingham in north-west Oxfordshire, just over the border of the diocese of Worcester, Gray's earlier see.⁴ Whatever the truth of this, it would appear that members of his family came north also, settling at the village of Etton, to the north-east of Beverley, where

1. See below, pp.A.153-154, where his prebend of 'Risby' is identified as that of St. Peter.
2. Cornubia is the first Beverley prebendary (apart from the possible instance of Becket) known to have held a canonry of York.
3. Sir Charles Clay accepts Cornwall as his homeland, but recognises 'the faint possibility that he came from Cornouaille in Brittany' (Y.A.J., xxxv, p.138 n.3)
4. Gray's own family was, in fact, not unconnected with Cornwell: sometime between October, 1214, and November, 1215, Walter Gray, as bishop of Worcester, witnessed his mother's (Hawisia de Gray) grant of the church of Cornwell to Oseney Abbey, 'pro animabus antecessorum et praecipue pro anima Johannis de Grey, fratris mei, quondam episcopi Norwicensis, assensu domini Roberti de Gray filii et haeredis mei. Teste Waltero de Grey episcopo Wigorn, filio meo.' (Dixon, Fasti Eboracensis, p.280 n.1, citing Blomefield, Norwich, i, p.478). Six years later one Richard Gray became abbot of Oseney.

It may well be that Richard de Cornubia had served Gray during his brief episcopate at Worcester, just as Mr. Ivo de Cornubia, who eventually became archdeacon of Derby, had been a household clerk of the bishop's predecessor, Roger de Gloucester, in the twelfth century. (C.R. Cheney, English Bishops' Chanceries, 1100-1250, pp. 10, 16.

they flourished throughout the ensuing century and into the next.¹

The early appointment of this trusted clerk from Gray's Worcester days set the pattern for the archbishop's approach to his patronage at Beverley. Cornubia was joined, as vacancies occurred in Beverley's prebends, by others recruited in the south to bring new order to the faction-ridden diocese. Serlo de Sonning, William de Wisbech, Geoffrey de Bocland and John de Richborough all entered the chapter in the earlier years of Gray's primacy. All were his household clerks or men entrusted with key preferment in the diocese, men chosen for their loyalty and reliability in a scene where these qualities must have seemed sadly

1. T. W. Hall, Etton, an East Yorkshire Village, 1170 to 1482. Hall's dating of early charters relating to Etton is suspect, but Robert de Cornubia, clerk, and Nicholas de Cornubia both witnessed documents originating from the first half of the thirteenth century. Nicholas, who had a daughter, Margaret, did so on several occasions (pp. 9-10, 13). Their descendant, Sir Warren de Cornubia, knight, features in Etton charters in 1331 and 1336 (pp. 24, 25, 26). For Richard de Cornubia's own interest in the village, especially his disputation of the advowson of the church of Etton with Nicholas de Stutteville in 1233, see below, p. A.153, and Reg. Gray, p.64. His claim may have arisen through his tenure of the chancellorship of York. How is not obvious, but the appearance as a witness of an early thirteenth-century confirmation relating to Etton of a certain Henry de St. Laurence, surely a kinsman of his predecessor in the dignity, John de St. Laurence, seems more than a coincidence, and suggests that the chancellor of York had rights in the place (p.8). Also of note is a similar occurrence of one Richard de Evesham among local witnesses of a charter of the same period (Hall incorrectly puts its date at c.1170, basing it upon the wrong William Fossard (p.6) - the co-witness William ii, son of Geoffrey Fossard, belongs to Gray's era). Simon de Evesham, a canon of Beverley and precentor of York, was another of the archbishop's importations from Worcester, and Richard de Evesham's appearance in this context is most readily explained by his kinship with him. Did the families of these alien southern clerks of Gray form a sort of colony at Etton?

Mr. Adam de Cornubia, rector of Roos, in Holderness, in 1245, but of whom nothing further is heard, was almost certainly Richard's younger kinsman. (Reg. Gray, p.95). Richard's origins have probably been confused by mental association of him with Richard de Cornubia (Cornwall), who as prebendary of North Newbold in York from 1310, was described as a royal clerk and kinsman of the king (York Minster Fasti, ii, p.60).

lacking in the wake of the recent turmoil. Sonning¹ soon received the prebend of Stillington in York, and was most probably the Mr. Serlo who became archdeacon of Cleveland in or before 1230; Wisbech,² though never actually referred to as a household clerk, witnessed numerous episcopal charters, and was clearly closely associated with his better documented namesake, Walter, who was promoted to the archdeaconry of the East Riding after its separation from the treasurership of York; Geoffrey de Bocland,³ a canon by 1233, was certainly one of Gray's faithful clerks, and remained so for most of the long primacy. The same was probably true of Richborough,⁴ though he features far less prominently.

As opportunity arose these men were supplemented or replaced by others equally dedicated to the archbishop's service: Peter de Fichelden,⁵ Gray's domestic chaplain, and later his treasurer, was a prebendary by 1239; Simon de Evesham,⁶ his scribe or secretary, whose name appears so frequently at the end of episcopal documents, and who held in turn the prebend of Weighton in York, the precentorship, and the archdeaconries of the East Riding and of Richmond, acquired St. Michael's prebend in the course of this promotion.

Only towards the end of the episcopate do we find northerners being granted prebends at Beverley. Roger de Holderness⁷ entered the chapter at some time before 1252/3. Though known locally as Roger de Skeffling - a parish far out on the Holderness peninsula, he was described as "clerk of St. Alban's" by Matthew Paris at the time of his elevation to the deanery of York, and we know little of any previous association he may have had with Gray. A more complete episcopal register might have shown Thomas de Thirkleby⁸ to have been in the archbishop's employ, but it does reveal

1. See below, A.34.

2. See below, p.A.35.

3. See below, p.A.36.

4. See below, p.A.35.

5. See below, p.A.36.

6. See below, pp. A.134 - 135.

7. See below, pp. A.36 - 37.

8. See below, p.A.37.

that William de Calverley¹ (in the West Riding) was a member of the household from before 1245,² and he almost certainly received St. Katherine's prebend on Gray's collation.

Of Archbishop Gray's fourteen known collations to Beverley prebends no less than six, probably even eight, were thus in favour of his personal clerks or officials - a fact the more remarkable when we learn that two more of his canons were his relatives.

John le Gras,³ who had collation of St. Andrew's prebend sometime before 1242, was undoubtedly a close kinsman, a connection which probably brought him also the prebend of Bugthorpe in York. Walter de Gray,⁴ the occupant of the plum prebend of St. Martin in the archbishop's later years, was the latter's nephew, and it is hard to escape the conclusion that it was nepotism that secured for him the stall of Masham, the wealthiest in York, and possibly in England, as well as a canonry of Southwell and the attractive rectories of Seamer, near Scarborough, and Gargrave, near Skipton.

The participation of Walter in the affairs of Beverley was probably minimal, and he was almost certainly that Walter de Gray whose involvement in politics brought about his downfall in 1266, forfeiting his preferment as the price of his support of Simon de Montfort. John le Gras' association with the Minster seems confirmed, however, by his foundation of a chantry in the chapel on Hull Bridge, attached to his prebend, conveying the impression that, in his later years at least, he was an active member of chapter.

Obviously, therefore, the archbishop was able to keep unchallenged control of his Beverley patronage throughout his long episcopate. In

1. See below, p.A.200.

2. Omitted from his biographical notice, as also is his presentation to^a moiety in the East Riding rectory of Beeford in 1249 (Reg. Gray, pp. 97 - 98, 106 et passim).

3. See below, p.A.42.

4. See below, pp. A.88 - 89; York Minster Fasti, ii, pp. 52 - 53.

this he was probably helped by the fact that all the prebends were held to imply 'no small cure of souls', a fact that made them unattractive to curialists and royal clerks alike. Only one of the former, Adenulf de Anagni,¹ a papal chaplain and a nephew of Pope Gregory ix, gained a place in the chapter, probably before his uncle's death in 1241, and, so far as we know, no absentee king's clerk was ever admitted. Such a lengthy primacy not only denied the king the opportunity of a vacancy in which to override the ecclesiastical obstacles which an archbishop could plead, but it also meant that Gray outlived all, at home and abroad, to whom he was beholden for his elevation. The value of the protection afforded by this circumstance was to be seen all too clearly when it was removed in the second half of the century.

All this worked equally in favour of the sister churches of Southwell and Ripon: seven of Gray's clerks received prebends in the former, whilst four of the six canons of Ripon named in his Rolls witnessed charters as members of his household.

Prebends in all three churches were distributed sparingly among these men, clerks holding a plurality of stalls in the lesser chapters being virtually unknown. Peter de Fichelden, alone among the Beverley canons, held a prebend in Ripon, and, apart from the exceptional instance of Walter de Gray, Beverley was never represented at Southwell. Similarly no prebendary of Southwell is on record as holding a further stall at Ripon. Contrary to what one might expect, there was not at this time, or at any other in the middle ages, a recognisable community of interest among the chapters of the daughter churches of York.

All three had much closer links with the mother church than with each other. From the time of Archbishop Gray onwards the chapter of York was nearly always represented at Beverley. Cornubia and Serlo de Sonning had a place in both chapters in Gray's earlier years, and later Evesham, Skeffling and the two Grays followed them in this. No policy need be inferred from this, however, a plurality of prebends being permitted, with papal approval, to meet the needs of individuals rather than those of the chapter.

1. See below, p.A.65.

Since all but a few of the later prebendaries were newcomers to the diocese local associations with Beverley and district can scarcely have been an influence in their appointment, as was often the case in the following century. This being the case, we cannot know to what extent Gray's placing of them was anything more than arbitrary. Certainly, first and foremost, the majority of these clerks were his servants in the administration of the diocese, constantly on the move in his company, though doubtless keeping a stipulated term of residence. Their occasion for meeting with prebendaries of the other chapters was their attendance upon their master, not as representatives of their church as suggested by Canon Raine. "From the lists of witnesses appended to the official acts of Walter Gray", he observed, "it is evident that he had with him not only several representatives of the chapter of York, but at least one from each of those of Ripon, Beverley and Southwell. These seemed to have formed a kind of travelling council to which he could at all times refer. They were a kind of committee representing their chapters at home".¹

To believe this is both to ignore the chronology of their individual careers and to mistake the archbishop's priorities: they were his clerks prior to preferment. Whilst Gray doubtless valued their local knowledge and had a genuine concern for his chapters and their churches, his prime concern was the diocese as a whole, and he saw their prebends as a means of support in this.

There is indeed unmistakeable evidence of the existence of such a close group of advisers; but, whilst this may never have been clearly defined, a distinction must be made between leading ecclesiastics, personal confidants present for the sake of their counsel, and the numerous clerks of lesser standing whose professional business it was to oversee the episcopal chancery and treasury and fulfil special commissions. The former were for the most part dignitaries or canons of York, and as such normally head the lists of witnesses to many episcopal charters. In the earlier decades of the primacy they included such notables as Cornubia, Geoffrey de Norwich and William de Rotherfield - chancellor, precentor and treasurer of York respectively - and it was to secure their attendance

1. Reg. Gray, p. xxiv.

on his person that Gray obtained their partial release from continuous residence at York from Honorius iii in 1226/7.¹

The latter group, it is true, was to some extent a school for this circle. Several proved clerks such as Simon de Evesham of Beverley and Walter de Taney of Southwell graduated in the course of time to the role of counsellor, but by then they had been raised to high preferment elsewhere.

Finally, just as Gray augmented the incomes of specially valued York clerks with a prebend in a daughter church, so he frequently awarded an additional benefice to prebendaries of lesser stature. Also in 1226/7 he requested and received the permission of Honorius to grant a second benefice to certain worthy lettered clerks, notwithstanding the injunctions of the recent Council.² At Beverley the beneficiaries from this concession are not hard to find. Shortly afterwards William de Wisbech received the rectory of Skipsea, between Bridlington and Hornsea; John de Richborough that of Weaverthorpe in the East Riding in 1230; Geoffrey de Bocland the rectory of Lund (just outside the provostry) in the same year, whilst Thomas de Thirkleby, who obtained the rectory of Lowthorpe in Dickering in 1227, continued to hold it when a prebendary. Clearly Gray expected these, his clerks, to be rector in more than name to these parishes, all not far removed from Beverley.

Chosen on account of their ability, mutual attraction, the commendation of friends and, even at this early date, through an Oxford University connection,³ the men who came to Beverley from Gray's retinue were for the most part young with their careers before them. Gray was typical of so many medieval bishops in recruiting clerks who had come to his notice during his own rise to prominence. It was therefore his advantage as well

1. Reg. Gray, pp. 154, 157; H.C.Y., iii, pp. 136, 137.

2. ibid, p.151.

3. Gray had studied at Oxford (Emden, Oxford, ii, pp. 807-808), as had many magistri in his service. In the first half of the thirteenth century, however, this common background is significant only in that it points to Oxford as an obvious recruiting ground for able and lettered administrators.

as his problem that this strong bishop came north to a diocese torn by dispute and lacking stable government - a situation which made the introduction of new administrators not only congenial but expedient.

Gray, himself young, outlived most who came north with him, and they ended their ministries in his service. Of those who survived him one or two threw down deep roots in the diocese, but for others, like most of their kind, their's remained a personal loyalty - to their bishop rather than to his see or a chapter. No doubt those who joined him from southern parts had shared their master's chilly reception in the north.

(c) From Bovill to Greenfield (1256 - 1315).

(i) Patronage in Four Churches.

The hard-pressed archbishops who followed Gray must have looked back wistfully on the days of their distinguished predecessor when they surveyed their depleted patronage at York. The next sixty years saw a considerable increase in external demands for prebends in English dioceses in general. It was, however, the particular misfortune of the see of York to fall vacant no less than eight times within this short span.

Analysts of the cathedral chapter concur in telling us of the unprecedented intrusion at this time of curial provisors and royal servants into the dignities and richer prebends. The interregnums created by a succession of short episcopates provided both Crown and papacy with opportunities of pasturing their favoured clerks and suppliants on what were the most financially attractive ecclesiastical prizes in England. Not only was an inordinate number of prebends placed at the disposal of the king through his acknowledged right of presentation during vacancies, but it is now well known that the curia was prepared and able to exact a heavy price in benefices for its co-operation in the consecration of northern primates. Persistence in resorting to Rome, rather than to Canterbury, for consecration by those not the subject of translation from lesser sees, ensured an almost perpetual and accepted indebtedness. "Archbishops who cast themselves humbly before the blessed feet of the Apostles were naturally expected to yield to apostolic demands in future.

During the first half of the fourteenth century, the Avignonese popes obtained a control over the Church in England which was nowhere more conspicuous than at York".¹

The bitterness arising from this subservience came early. The death of Sewal de Bovill, Gray's immediate successor, was allegedly hastened by his excommunication in defence of the deanery of York against a papal intruder.² It was probably during his brief primacy that a second papal chaplain, a certain John 'called Grifo',³ obscure at least in northern records, joined Adenulf de Anagni⁴ as a prebendary of Beverley, for he was a canon by 1258.

The absence of the registers of both Bovill and his successor, Ludham, and the brevity of that of Giffard, make it difficult to assess the number of their collations to prebends motu proprio. We do know, though, that Walter Giffard found at least six provisors⁵ and five crown nominees⁶ installed at York in 1266. Whilst in the nature of things the latter group decreased as his episcopate progressed, the papal element was strengthened as the result of increasing pressure, so that Wickwane inherited eight provisors, nearly all Italians, in the York Chapter, whereas royal promotions numbered only three.

It was under John le Romeyn that successful papal provisions reached their peak at York. Though his primacy (1286-1296) was longer than most, he never broke free from the hold of that group of influential curialists, most of them cardinals with an interest in York, whom the pope convened to re-elect him.⁷ Towards the end of his episcopate papal nominees accounted

1. A. Hamilton Thompson, *The Fourteenth Century* (p.6) in York Minster Historical Tracts 627 - 1927.

2. W. H. Dixon, Fasti Eboracenses, pp. 298 - 299.

3. Below, p. A.37.

4. Above, p. 221.

5. Henry de Fieschi of Lavagna (Ampleforth), Giovanni Gaetani (Fridaythorpe), Philip de Eya (Knaresborough), Adenulf de Anagni (Riccal), Ancher Pantaleon (Warthill) and Perceval de Lavagna (Wistow).

6. Simon de Rochechouart (Apesthorpe), Godfrey Giffard (Dunnington), John Mansel (Fenton), William de Fecamp (Langtoft) and Bogo de Clare (Masham).

7. Reg. Romeyn, ii, p.xi.

for at least twelve prebends - one third of the entire chapter.¹ Thereafter, up to 1316, the number varied between seven and ten, being kept in check not so much by Romeyn's successors as by Edward I's masterful exercise of his regalian rights at the turn of the century, and his vigour in contesting rival claims.

The dignities of York were no less vulnerable: the treasurership, one of the choicest plums, had already slipped permanently from the archbishop's gift, to become a bone of contention between crown and papal protégés. During the course of Greenfield's episcopate the deanery itself, normally elective, fell to an Italian, as did the subdeanery and two of the four archdeaconries. Yet apart from the treasurership, to which the prebend of Wilton and the portion of Newthorpe were appropriated, these losses did not, as a rule, increase the alien element, since those thus benefiting were already members of the chapter by reason of their prebends.

The dramatic rise in the number of royal nominees was occasioned by the vacancies of the archbishoprick of 1296, 1299 and 1304, especially the last which was of seventeen months' duration. The king, who had already initiated the upward trend after the death of Wickwane in 1285, used these 'windfalls' to great effect. William Greenfield found no less than fourteen royal nominees in York prebends in 1306.² The preferment of only half of them dated from the previous century, and most were distinguished royal clerks, not dissimilar from the new archbishop himself, to whom many must have been well known. Though it is true that the titles of some were disputed by provisors, effective possession almost invariably rested with the king's men, occasionally themselves supported by papal letters granted in a moment of co-operation. Nor need we suppose that Greenfield was personally averse to their promotion: he owed his own

1. ibid, pp. xiv - xviii. Though an earlier tendency to exaggerate the extent of foreign intrusion into English prebends and benefices in general is now well recognised, the exceptional plight of the York chapter, a prime target for curialists, cannot be denied.
2. For a general survey of the position at York under Greenfield see A. Hamilton Thompson, Reg. Greenfield, i, pp. xiv - xviii.

advancement to the Crown, as its loyal servant over many years and these men for the most part were his former colleagues. Certainly he acquiesced when Edward made the recent vacancy the excuse for filling three more prebends after his confirmation in the see - even though this meant that active royal servants now occupied half the stalls open to seculars,¹ seventeen in all.

With provisors in possession of nine prebends, and a further royal clerk (William Melton, Greenfield's successor as archbishop) having obtained another by means of an exchange, the number of York prebendaries of episcopal collation thus reached its lowest ebb of seven.²

1. Two prebends were permanently occupied by the priors of Nostell and Hexham.
2. The situation at York receives striking clarification in the account of the election of William de Pickering to the deanery in 1310 (Reg. Greenfield, i, pp. 44 - 50).

All prebendaries deemed in a position to attend (i.e. within reasonable call) were cited. Of the nine who responded in person five were of the archbishop's collation: Robert de Ripplingham, John de Nassington and Robert de Pickering, all residentiaries, Stephen de Mauley and William de Pickering, archdeacons of the East Riding and Nottingham respectively. The two absentees of the archbishop's appointees were Peter de Lisle who was probably ill (he died within months) and John de Wareana, of Romeyn's collation, who was clearly indifferent and ostensibly studying in 1310 (Fasti Parochiales, i, p.116).

The four others appearing in person were all king's clerks: Walter de Bedwynd, the treasurer, John Fraunceys, John de Markenfield, Robert de Cottingham. Eight other royal admissions participated by proxy: Ralph de Stokes, Adam de Osgodby, John Busshe, Ingelard de Warley, John de Berwick, Robert de Barlby, William Melton and Maurice de Poissy. The remainder of the thirteen proxy votes were cast by Peter de Lisle, William de Bliburgh, an English provisor, Peter de Ros, the precentor, and the priors of Nostell and Hexham.

Four royal clerks (Adam de Blythe, Richard de Cornubia, John de Husthwaite and Richard de Havering) together with nine provisors (curialists, Savoyards and protégés of Queen Eleanor) were absent and unrepresented. The thirty-sixth prebend is accounted for by the fact that two prebends were appropriated to the treasurership. (See also H.C.Y., iii, p.227).

In such circumstances the importance of the prebends of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell needs no underlining. Though the chapter lists of these churches also reflect the increased pressure, it was here that many diocesan administrators were still able to find means of support.

The precise position in all three churches prior to 1286 is uncertain, but the evidence, such as it is, suggests that aliens continued to be exceptional. The names of prebendaries known to us - and they are not a few - include those of solitary Italians, and occasionally one of the Savoyard connection whom the pope had been induced to oblige. At a time when foreigners still dominated the lists of provisors this, of course, implies a certain immunity from papal demands. It is attractive to regard this as a matter of policy, conceived out of consideration of the plight of the York chapter, but it more probably reflects the misgivings of absentees as to their prospects in these lesser chapters. Whatever the reason, the fact remains that under Giffard and Wickwane there were seldom more than four known provisors in possession simultaneously in all three churches taken together: Southwell, more often than not, supported two, and Beverley and Ripon one each. Occasionally a prebend seems to have been awarded by way of consolation for failure at York, but usually the recipients were men of lower status - household officials of the legate or some other prince of the Church, whose good offices had worked in their favour.

The number of royal grants in these years was also small, partly, no doubt for similar reasons, but chiefly because it happened that few deaths of prebendaries coincided with vacancies of the see (i.e. in 1255-6, 1258, and 1265-6). To the best of our knowledge, therefore, royal clerks were no more numerous than were provisors, but since they are not to be distinguished by their names, further evidence of actual appointments might increase their representation.

Under Romeyn and his successors, when the position is clearer, it is evident that the burden of external appointments fell unequally on the three chapters.

Beverley escaped more lightly than did the other two. The most obvious explanation is the greater protection afforded by the constitution

and unique revenues of the church, which kept to the fore ancient statutes and qualifications.¹ These were invoked not only to ward off unwelcome interest,² but also to dislodge those permanent absentees who succeeded in gaining a foothold.³ Even so it was probably the practical problems posed by the collection of prebendal income which deterred fortune hunters. It is scarcely surprising in the circumstances to find rarely more than two genuine outsiders, of any origin, at Beverley at any one time.

Southwell, on the other hand, shared the vulnerability, if not the attraction, of York, in that its prebends were for the most part territorially based,⁴ and, being more clearly defined, offered fruits more readily realisable by an agent. Here, moreover, a larger chapter encouraged a tradition of non-residence, or at least made absence less reprehensible in the eyes of colleagues and lawful authority - especially since the pastoral obligations entailed by a single vast parish did not exist as the corporate responsibility of the canons, as they did at Beverley, and to a lesser extent, at Ripon. Three, sometimes four, and even five, prebends were in the hands of alien provisors at various times in Romeyn's episcopate. Under Greenfield this number reached six. Thus from c.1295 onwards provisors on average accounted for one third of the whole chapter.

1. See above, pp. 31, 158, 167.

2. B.C.A., i, pp. 275 - 279.

3. Although Archbishop Romeyn's quarrel with Robert de Scarborough, dean of York, was of much wider significance, the latter's failure to keep adequate residence at Beverley, where he held St. Stephen's prebend, provided the initial grounds for the primate's attack (See below, pp. A.91, A.173-4). For another cause célèbre, see Corbridge's prosecution of the Savoyard provost, Aymo de Carto (A.92). Here the grounds for de Carto's deprivation were his failure to take priest's orders as his prebend (St. Martin's) required, and the contention that a prebend in Beverley constituted a cure of souls (de Carto lacked dispensation to hold more than one such cure) (B.C.A., ii, 194-5, 199).

4. See Visitations and Memorials of Southwell Minster, ed. A.F. Leach (Camden Soc.), *passim*.

Fortunately royal grants did not greatly add to this depletion of episcopal patronage at Southwell - not, that is, until 1304-1306, when the voidance of the see occasioned by the death of Thomas Corbridge allowed the king to fill three prebends. This representation was not long sustained, however, for of the four royal clerks installed at the time of Greenfield's consecration only one remained ten years later.¹

Finally, the constitution of the Ripon chapter was in some respects a blend of those of Beverley and Southwell. All the prebends, with the exception of Stanwick, were based upon a territorial apportionment of the extensive Minster parish.

Despite the numerous foreign clerks whose names are associated with Ripon in the episcopal registers closer study rarely reveals more than two provisors simultaneously in possession of prebends. At the beginning of the fourteenth century it was Crown nominees who, having been markedly few in earlier decades, descended upon the chapter in force. Greenfield found no less than four installed in 1306, and since two of the other canons were usually absent this left a solitary prebendary of Stanwick, upon whom perpetual residence was officially enjoined, to "make chapter".

Such is the wider canvas against which we must set a consideration of the Beverley chapter at the time of the Act Book. Its prebendaries, we may well conclude, had entered upon one of the richest sections of the archbishop's patronage, perhaps the most valuable in the context of diocesan administration.

Whilst it is true that no stall at Beverley came near to rivalling the wealth of the richest York prebends, the latter, even when they fell to the archbishop's gift, were rarely regarded as a suitable reward for the most exalted diocesan servant. By the end of the thirteenth century

1. John Vaan who held Norwell iii. William Melton, one of the three king's clerks appointed during the vacancy, also remained in possession throughout Greenfield's episcopate. During this time, however, he had relinquished his prebend (Oxton ii) in order to receive the archbishop's collation to Norwell ii in the same church (Reg. Greenfield, i, p.33). Another king's clerk was a member of the chapter in 1314 through episcopal initiative - Ingelard de Warley whom Greenfield collated to the prebend of Normanton in that year (ibid, p.98).

the chapter of the mother church had long since taken on the character of a national institution. Indeed its plums were among the richest prizes of the Western Church, and as such were fought over by its most formidable princes.

There was always, of course, a hard core of distinguished servants of the see to form the residentiary body, but these, usually three or four in number, had normally to be content with less rewarding prebends, many of which fell considerably short of what Beverley had to offer. Few of them, it seems, made serious bids for such prebends as South Cave, Masham, Wetwang, Langtoft and Laughton - all in the three-figure income bracket - their preferment being confined, for the most part, to the thirteen stalls of under £25 value.¹ Instead they sought augmentation in the daughter churches or in a substantial rectory. In the lesser chapters, where they tended to form a dominant minority, they were joined by a continuous flow of lesser men - able and highly valued administrators who were key figures in the running of the diocesan machine in its well-worn grooves, and others, sometimes retired officials, whose prime concern became the domestic affairs of the church.

In all this successive archbishops seem to have concurred. The popular view of them fighting a losing battle to preserve their cathedral patronage for diocesan ends is probably a mistaken one.² In the first instance it would appear that additional residentiaries at York, over and above the four or five normally found there, were not encouraged. The reasons for this cannot be considered here, but undoubtedly one of them was a reluctance to divide further the common fund. In the pages which follow we shall have occasion to remark upon the number of notable clerks,³ holding prebends in

1. The prebends of Warthill, Dunnington, Apesthorpe, Grindale, Bilton and Tockerington were all taxed at £10, Givendale at £12, Barnby at £14, Holme at £16.13.4, South Newbald, Ulleskelf and Botevant at £20, Bole at £24. Five of Beverley's eight prebends were taxed at £25 or over. (York Cathedral Statutes, p.42; B.C.A., ii, pp. 340 - 342).
2. The general anxiety shown by archbishops regarding provisions is, of course, another matter.
3. Walter de Gloucester, John de Nassington and Nicholas de Huggate - all of whom feature in the Beverley Chapter Act Book - to name but three (see below, pp. A.42 - 43, A.97 - 98, A.66 - 68).

both York and Beverley, who chose the latter church as their place of retirement. Secondly, the archbishop's own collations motu proprio are not always in accord with a jealous defence of York on behalf of his own clerks. Though primates were obviously irked by papal demands, there is little evidence of their hostility towards influential English clerks who often shared their own background. On the contrary, when a rich prebend did fall to a primate's appointment he more often than not obliged an outsider. When we find an austere churchman of the character of William Wickwane personally reserving a prebend in York for Gerard de Graunson the younger 'for the love the king bore him and his family',¹ we need not be surprised to find archbishops of the background of Giffard and Greenfield treating favourably former colleagues whose very grants passed through the chancery over which they themselves had earlier presided.

There were other obvious reasons for the apparent lack of episcopal concern regarding the influx of royal servants. The great majority of Crown grants were made during vacancies of the see, and were usually faits accomplis when the incoming primate arrived. Patronage which the latter had never had he was less likely to miss, and prudence, if not gratitude, would inhibit him from recording his disapproval. It was one thing to remonstrate with a distant pontiff, secure in the goodwill of Crown, when provisions ~~and~~ snatched patronage from one's grasp, quite another to quarrel with a masterful king with whom one had to live. At Beverley provisors were constantly under attack from more than one archbishop, but, with the exception of the unfortunate Robert de Scarborough,² royal clerks, whose residence was no better, escaped more than passing censure.

Finally, we have tended to assume that the source of promotion of a clerk necessarily indicated the nature of his employment and origin. In later years this would be a wholly unwarranted assumption, but in our present period it is a fairly accurate guide. The king almost invariably

¹. Reg. Wickwane, p.329, where the archbishop granted him a pension pending his receipt of the prebend of Apesthorpe, to which he was collated later in the same year (ibid, p.332).

². See below, pp. A.173-174.

exercised his regalian right in favour of his own clerks. Popes were rather more flexible, occasionally yielding to a royal request, and less frequently to those of the archbishop. Even so, barely one-tenth of the clerks receiving provisions or effective reservations in York in the period 1216-1307 were Englishmen.¹ Only the archbishops, as we have already noticed, promoted in any number men outside their own following, but these were nearly all English clerks who owed their prebends to the fact that a primate was a great figure of state, himself involved in government, as well as a diocesan bishop.

At the same time we must beware of erecting 'bulkheads' between categories of clerks. There was of course a sizeable hard core of clerks for whom the work of a civil servant provided full-time permanent employment, and who were therefore perpetual absentees, seldom coming north, and then on crown rather than ecclesiastical business. But even some of these lived to spend a useful retirement in the diocese, joining with others for whom the label 'royal clerk' was no more than a temporary description: Robert de Pickering and John de Nassington, both prebendaries of Beverley as well as of York, who were towers of strength to Corbridge, Greenfield and Melton, were designated 'royal clerk' on occasions in their careers. When, therefore, the king made a grant of a prebend to one of his clerks he was not necessarily appointing a man indifferent to the affairs of the church: John de Dinnington at Beverley, John de Markenfield at Ripon and Elias de Couton at Southwell all benefited from royal favour, yet each was no stranger to his respective Minster.

1. Sir Charles Clay has analysed appointments to York prebends in the period 1216-1307 as follows: 'There were thirty royal appointments definitely described, and about seven more were made by the king for various reasons and two were at the queen's nomination under the terms of papal grants. The number of specified papal provisions is about twenty-six; and an additional number of appointments due to papal influence, sometimes the result of the grant of a canonry with expectation of a prebend, can be estimated as about twenty-two. Of these apparently twenty-six were Italians, eleven Frenchmen and five Englishmen; three were made as a result of papal delegation, and the balance is due to the tenure of more than one prebend in succession. All these numbers must be regarded as only approximate, and their value is diminished as there are considerable gaps in the lists for some prebends.' (York Minster Fasti, ii, pp. ix-x).

All things considered, however, it is easy to understand the tenacity with which primates such as Romeyn, Corbridge and Greenfield guarded their Beverley patronage, and the almost indecent haste with which collations and admissions to its chapter were executed in order to thwart outsiders. Without it, and that of the two sister churches, the plight of diocesan administrators in the later decades of this period would have been hard indeed. So long as a reasonable portion of it was preserved intact, on the other hand, the archbishop's position in respect of prebendal patronage might well have been the envy of other diocesans.

(ii) The Beverley Chapter.Provisors.

When, in 1289, the cardinal deacon of Ste Maria in Via Lata urged satisfaction in the matter of a prebend on behalf of a youthful Roman provisor he did so in ignorance of the Minster's constitution. Such at least was the contention of John le Romeyn, the recipient of his letter. Had the cardinal known, the archbishop replied, of the terms of Athelstan's foundation charter (of which he himself had only recently had sight) he would not have pressed the young man's claim to a preferment which required him to celebrate mass daily at Beverley, sustained by an allowance of victuals.¹

Half-truths and remonstrations couched in placatory terms, appealing to stipulations locally long ignored, at once reveal the somewhat devious mind of Romeyn and his exasperation at curial demands. Odo de Conti, the claimant in this instance, was, he wrote, the tenth alien provisor to seek a prebend in the York diocese in his three-and-a-half years as archbishop.

Not all of these had been successful, and Beverley, in particular, had remained relatively immune from such incursions. Romeyn's anxiety was that it should remain so, being genuinely engaged throughout his primacy in restoring in the chapter a proper regard for residence.² In the event his present protest presumably proved effective, for the prebend went to a diocesan clerk of his own choosing.³

Odo remained in the wings, hopeful of a second opportunity, but Beverley was troubled little, if at all, by his particular faction in the decade that followed. It had been the death of his elderly kinsman, Adenulf de Anagni, prebendary of St. James' for perhaps forty years,⁴

1. B.C.A., ii, pp. 156 - 157.

2. See above, p.166.

3. William de Haxby (below, p.A.65), who had been in Romeyn's employ in Paris, and whose subsequent residence at Beverley proved exemplary.

4. See below, p.A.65.

which had given rise to this first claim. Though the latter had been joined for a brief period by another papal chaplain, John 'called Grifo,'¹ the circumstances of the appointment of both must by now have been long forgotten. No doubt Romeyn saw in this new bid the thin edge of the wedge which would open the door to a fresh generation of intruders from Rome.

Unfortunately for both the archbishop and for Beverley, curialists were not the only recipients of papal graces. References to largely forgotten ordinances might confuse a distant cardinal, but they availed little against aliens who enjoyed royal support of their claims.

Of such were clerks of the French and Savoyard connections. It was on a provision granted at the request of Edward I that Boniface de Aosta² had received Beverley's richest prebend in 1288. Thereafter two more high-born foreigners associated with Queen Eleanor entered the chapter by similar means. When Boniface became bishop of Sion in 1290 his place was taken by a kinsman of the count of Geneva, Aymo de Carto,³ alternatively described as a papal chaplain and a king's clerk. Aymo also acquired the provostship four years later, and held it with St. Martin's prebend as an absentee until 1304, when his timely elevation to the see of Geneva spared him deprivation at the hands of Archbishop Corbridge.

The other intruder, Charles de Beaumont,⁴ may possibly have been of Romeyn's own collation, for he received St. Katherine's (also in 1290) in the face of a further bid from Odo de Conti,⁵ at the personal request of the Queen, whose relative he was. Perhaps the archbishop acquiesced in what he saw as the lesser of two evils.

1. See below, p.A.37.

2. Otherwise referred to as Augusta; see below, pp. A.90 - 91.

3. See below, pp. A.92 - 93.

4. See below, pp. A.201 - 202.

5. Reg. Romeyn, i, p.389.

Crown Patronage.

Royal nominees, however, normally gained their prebends during vacancies in the archbishoprick. Against them the longevity of episcopal men, rather than constitutional stipulations, was the best, if not the only proof. It was indeed this factor which greatly curtailed the king's power of appointment at Beverley in the latter decades of the century: of the prebendaries in possession at the close of Gray's primacy at least five outlived both Bovill and Ludham. John le Gras, Adenulf de Anagni, Walter de Gray, Simon de Evesham and, we think, William de Calverley,¹ all witnessed the arrival of Archbishop Giffard. Thomas de Thirkleby² may well have been a sixth.

True the notable clerk-in-chancery and future dean of York, Robert de Scarborough³, almost certainly found his place in the chapter in this period, but the likelihood is that he owed it to Archbishop Ludham, whose friend and executor he was, rather than to the king.

This being so we can think with certainty of only five Beverley prebends falling to Edward I's grant in the whole of his reign. Two of these went to much favoured clerks on the brink of high office of State, two to alien administrators who spent most of their tenures in France, whilst the fifth was the reward of a servant of less significance who subsequently kept exemplary residence.⁴

Godfrey Giffard,⁵ shortly to become Chancellor of the Exchequer, received St. Martin's and the prebend of Dunnington in York a few months after the death of Ludham in 1265, thus anticipating by almost a year the translation to York of his brother from Bath and Wells. In 1268 he relinquished all his preferments on his own elevation to the see of Worcester.

In the grant of St. Katherine's to William de Louth⁶ a few weeks

1, See above, p.180.

2. See below, p.A.37

3. See below, pp. A.173-174.

4. John de Dinnington (see below, p.A.66).

5. See below, p.A.89.

6. See below, pp.A.200-201.

prior to the consecration of William Wickwane we have, perhaps, the most flagrant instance in this period of the royal disregard for the basic requirements of the church. Still a subdeacon, and a permanent absentee, this future keeper of the Wardrobe was thereby placed in receipt of the offerings of the pilgrims at the Shrine of St. John. For a decade he held a prebend which, besides demanding Holy Orders, continued to require perpetual residence, proceeding to the diaconate and the priesthood only in 1290. In that year his consecration as bishop of Ely made way for Charles de Beaumont whose collation, scarcely less reprehensible, we have already mentioned.

The two foreigners of Edward's appointment, Raymond de Ferrara¹ and Peter Aymerici (Emery),² occupied in turn St. Mary's prebend.³ The former was about the king's business overseas when he received his grant soon after Romeyn's death in 1296. He appears to us as no more than a name in the records, and if he subsequently came to England his purpose was certainly not to visit Beverley. He died opportunely three years later, at about the same time as Archbishop Newark, for within nine days Edward gave his prebend to Aymerici. In a tenure of ten years the latter made only two recorded visits to the Minster - to dispute, it seems, certain prebendal revenues withheld during the initial delay in his admission. He died in partibus Gallicanis in May, 1309.

Thus seen the demands of the Crown upon Beverley might well appear scarcely more onerous than those of the papacy in this period. Yet these royal appointments by no means account for all the government servants who entered the chapter under Edward.

Not only did Scarborough remain a king's clerk whilst continuing to hold St. Stephen's throughout the primacy of Walter Giffard, his former master in the Chancery, but it was this archbishop who awarded St. Michael's, together with two choice rectories, to Adam de Norfolk,⁴

1. See below, p.A.118.

2. See below, pp.A.118 - 119.

3. This succession, and that of Louth by Beaumont, are reminders of the necessity of considering length of tenures and the identities of prebends, rather than mere numbers of appointments, when considering the make up of the chapter at a given time.

4. See below, p.A.135.

constable of Bordeaux from 1276 till 1280 and a well-known administrator for many years previously

Even if Norfolk did not in fact come to his prebend until after Giffard's death in 1279, as is conceivably possible, his occupation of it then, with Louth in St. Katherine's, still meant that William Wickwane found three out of eight prebends in such hands when he returned from Rome later that year.

Norfolk's possession, however, was short-lived, and after Romeyn succeeded in his purpose of ousting Scarborough from the whole of his Yorkshire preferment, the number of king's clerks in the Beverley chapter thereafter never exceeded one until after the death of Corbridge in 1304. Then, in the vacancy which followed, the king appointed John de Dinnington,¹ a clerk of uncertain occupation, to St. James' prebend. He had already had a hand in ensuring the succession of John de Nassington,² the official of York, to St. Martin's at the outset of the vacancy, and in both grants rendered the Minster no small service.

If Dinnington was indeed a royal clerk, he kept prolonged residence at Beverley throughout the last eight years of his eleven as a canon, whilst Nassington, though on occasions in his busy career described as a king's clerk, represented, with Pickering, that York element of the chapter, which proved so invaluable to the Minster in the Act Book period. Indeed, during the early years of Greenfield Aymerici was the only prebendary whose interest in the church was minimal.

Though Aymerici's death in 1309 allowed the archbishop to introduce one of his own household clerks, William de Eastdean,³ the same year and the one which followed saw the return of the high-ranking figures of national significance: William de Lincoln,⁴ a residentiary of long

1. See below, p.A.66.

2. See below, pp.A.97-98 ex collatione Domini Thomae Archiepiscopi Eboracensis ne^enon ex collatione Domini Regis. (B.C.A., i, p.27).

3. See below, pp.A.119-120.

4. See below, pp. 136-137.

standing, was induced, possibly constrained, to exchange his prebend (St. Michael's) with William Melton¹ for another in far away Westbury-on-Trym in the diocese of Worcester, whilst in 1310 Greenfield obliged the king and queen in collating John de Sandal² to St. Andrew's prebend on the death of Walter de Gloucester.³ Thus in the space of a few months two canons who had spent much of the past twenty-five years in the precincts of the Minster were replaced by the Keeper of the Privy Seal and the Treasurer of England, whose chief memorials of possession were dilapidated prebendal mansions.

It could be, however, that both archbishop and chapter acquiesced gladly in these changes, for reasons which offer insight into otherwise concealed considerations of chapter life.

Residentiaries.

The collegiate church was probably embarrassed by a surfeit of residentiaries at this juncture. In a measure the situation which existed at Beverley in the early years of the Chapter Act Book is evidence of both the earnestness and the ultimate impracticability of Romeyn's efforts to restore the standard of residence.

Walter de Gloucester, who had received collation of St. Andrew's prebend way back in 1279 at the hands of Wickwane, whose household treasurer he had been, had resigned the archdeaconry of York early in Romeyn's episcopate to take up more or less permanent residence at Beverley. Now blind and infirm he was still officially president of the chapter. Perhaps it was Romeyn who also induced his chancellor, Robert de Sleaford⁴ (also inherited from Wickwane), to vacate St. Michael's in favour of another of his clerks, William de Lincoln, who offered better prospects of residence, and unlike Sleaford held no prebend in York.

1. See below, pp. A.138 - 140.

2. See below, pp. A.43 - 44.

3. See below, pp. A.42 - 43.

4. See below, pp. A.135 - 136.

In the event Adenulf de Anagni's prebend (St. James') had gone to another of Romeyn's household, William de Haxby,¹ who shortly became an exemplary resident. Though his successor in 1305, John de Dinnington, was apparently ~~of~~ royal nominee, Beverley became his home from 1308 onwards. Finally, it was Romeyn who replaced the unfortunate dean of York, Scarborough, also ousted from St. Stephen's, with that familiar figure of the Act Book, Henry de Carlton.²

Thus at the beginning of 1310 no less than four of the occupants of the seven ancient prebends were keeping more than statutory residence at Beverley. William de Eastdean, who, on admission protested his intention to reside in the following year, was shortly to make a fifth, whilst William de Soothill, appointed to the inferior St. Katherine's prebend by Archbishop Corbridge in 1301, was also frequently in attendance, though not, as of right, a member of the chapter.

The remaining two prebendaries, Robert de Pickering³ (St. Peter's), another of Romeyn's appointments and soon to become dean of York, and John de Nassington (St. Martin's), whilst normally preoccupied at York, were both frequent visitors to Beverley, dominating its convocations when present. Nassington, as a clerk in the service of the archbishop, in any case received all the benefits of residence, and Greenfield personally ensured that his claim was recognised by the chapter.⁴

Since most of the canons were residentiaries of long standing it would be unjust to attribute this zeal for attendance to the handsome remuneration with which it was rewarded. The reason is rather to be seen as lying in the circumstances and character of the individual prebendaries: most of them had, after all, been appointed on account of their ability to reside. Nevertheless Greenfield's Ordinance on Residence of 1307 had recently made the rewards singularly attractive. Encouraged, no doubt,

1. See below, p.A.65.

2. See below, pp.A.174-175.

3. See below, pp. A.154-157.

4. B.C.A., i, p.136; below, p.A.97 & n.

by the availability of the canons he had reduced by half Romeyn's requirement of twenty-four weeks as 'reasonable' residence. At the same time he had united the corrody or daily distribution, the corpus long since commuted to money payments, with the rest of the prebend, so that it was henceforward due to every canon regardless of residence. Hitherto the residentiaries had received their own corrodies, and had also divided among themselves those of absentees. Up to 1307 this had meant that as many as six prebendaries had simply shared the corrody of the absent and disgruntled Aymerici, who clearly had the sympathy of both the king and Greenfield. It was a situation unlikely to satisfy anyone.¹

Now, to reimburse the common fund Greenfield annexed to it half the offerings at the Shrine and the High Altar, previously due in toto to the prebendary of St. Katherine's. The latter continued to receive the other half, and not surprisingly he (in the person of Soothill) was reluctant to join his fellow canons in ready acceptance of the plan.²

Precisely how great a sum this produced in 1307 we do not know. Beyond doubt it was very considerable indeed - certainly too great to be left in the hands of the solitary inferior prebendary. From the round estimates of the latter half of the fourteenth century, when it was probably much reduced by pestilence, decline and a changed expression of piety, one gathers that 100 marks was available for distribution among the canons in due proportion to their length of residence.³

In these circumstances, with the primitive ideal of permanent residence always in the background, and with a constitution which allowed all the canons, save the eighth, equal opportunity to take up residence at will and without impediment, we may readily believe that the advent of Sandal and Melton, whose absence was guaranteed, was not unwelcome.

1. For a fuller consideration of Greenfield's approach to the matter of residence see above, pp.153-155.

2. B.C.A., i, p.189.

3. See above, pp. 113-115.

By and large the pattern of chapter membership which emerged during the primacy of Archbishop Gray persisted throughout the whole of this period and for much of the fourteenth century. The benevolent concern of the York element, first clearly represented by Cornubia, Skeffling (Holderness), Evesham and the like, was maintained by men of similar calibre, such as Gilbert de St. Leofard,¹ Walter Giffard's official who became chancellor of York and ultimately a splendid bishop of Chichester, Robert de Sleaford, Walter de Gloucester and later Pickering and Nassington. Their pre-eminence in the affairs of the daughter church was always acknowledged by those lesser men who formed the permanent residentiary body. For the most part drawn from the episcopal household, the latter, if they did not immediately take up residence, frequently found in Beverley an acceptable haven after the death of their respective masters. There they remained and, with few exceptions, there they died.

Unsuccessful candidates.

Finally, it is in this period that we detect at Beverley a new urgency in the conduct of appointments to prebends. It was all done with almost indecent haste, certainly with an expedition lost to modern patrons. When a canon died the archbishop was invariably ready with a replacement, even though he was not necessarily of his own choosing. For long awareness of other powerfully backed candidates had made each new vacancy in the chapter a minor test of episcopal diplomacy, but towards the end of the thirteenth century the rising number of provisors, mainly English clerks, anxiously awaiting the death of a prebendary, called for speed of action rather than tact.

Few of the recipients of expectative graces, granted wholesale in these later years with remarkable impartiality, could claim the personal interest of the donor. It was usually their lot to be overlooked with equal indifference when the time came to make good their aspirations.²

1. See below, pp. A.89 - 90.

2. See W. A. Pantin, The English Church in the Fourteenth Century, pp. 47 - 75.

Since actual possession of a benefice gave the new occupant an immense advantage in subsequent litigation, the diocesan machine, anticipating the challenge, acted with a resolution few could hope to match.

If Greenfield's innovations of 1307 were advantageous to residentiaries their obvious attractions for the absentee produced an unprecedented spate of claims from the humbler sort of provisor. Among the more persistent was a youth by the name of Nicholas de Bakewell¹ who, in spite of his inadequate Orders, had been granted a grace by Clement V. Wholly unacceptable to Greenfield, Bakewell's bid for a foothold in the chapter in 1309 undoubtedly explains the speed of William de Eastdean's succession to Aymerici's prebend and also, perhaps, Melton's resort to an exchange with Carlton. The archbishop had been empowered to appoint one of his clerks to a Beverley prebend, and as early as June, 1308, had commissioned the abbots of Meaux and Thornton to ensure that, when the first opportunity arose, that clerk should be Eastdean.

Bakewell, thus thwarted in the matter of at least two prebends, remained hopeful, conscious no doubt, as was everyone else, of the impending death of Gloucester, who had sometime earlier retired to Sutton-on-Trent. Again, however, he was no match for the diocesan officials. News of the old canon's death must have reached the archbishop at Cawood within a day: his death occurred on 27th December, 1310, and John de Sandal had collation on the 28th, being duly admitted by proxy on 5th January.² The way for speedy action had been well prepared, for, at royal request, Sandal had been accorded a canonry earlier in 1310, to await the next vacant prebend - an expedient soon to become commonplace.

¹. For Bakewell's quest for a prebend in Beverley see B.C.A., i, pp. 127, 128, 236, 273-279, 327-329, 331-333.

². B.C.A., i, pp. 268-280.

Thus Bakewell, returning to the scene on 13th January, was confronted with a fait accompli. The good offices of the abbot of Waltham, the papal delegate, availed him nothing, and he retired to contest, five years later, Eastdean's prebend with Denis Avenel.¹

Gloucester in his thirty years as a prebendary, most as a residentiary, had seen many of his kind come and go. Perhaps this favoured clerk of Archbishop Wickwane found life close to Romeyn, with his contrasting personality, less congenial. Retiring to Beverley in 1288, he there joined Robert de Fangfoss² and John de Penistone,³ both Giffard's men. He far outlived them both to share the day-to-day oversight of the Minster with Haxby, Lincoln and Carlton, the three diocesan clerks of Romeyn's promotion. Together these four composed the residentiary body in the first years of the Act Book. All save Haxby (whose death followed closely on that of Corbridge) remained in their prebends, as we have seen, to provide the stable element in the chapter well into the episcopate of Greenfield.

1. See above p.209.
2. See below, p.A.154.
3. See below, p.A.118.

(d) From Melton to Arundel (1317 - 1396).

(i) The Erosion of Standards.

It was probably with some misgiving that the three canons who submitted to Alexander Neville in 1381 produced for the archbishop's inspection that ancient Ordinance of the Refectory.¹ It recalled in practical terms the primitive ideal of perpetual residence.

The change in character and approach to obligations which had overtaken the chapter in the intervening years, even in the present century, finds some analogy in the respective roles of the presiding bodies of a modern school. If the canons of earlier days can be seen as essentially 'the staff' of the collegiate establishment, then their successors of the late fourteenth century had assumed the guise/^{of} governors, albeit stipendiary ones.

All were men of significance in realms remote from the Minster. For the majority Beverley had become as blatantly a source of pecuniary advantage as it had been for any curialist a century earlier. Even in those with local connections fitful and benign concern had replaced active participation in the life of the church. Sixty years earlier the absence of a recognised residentiary body had encouraged the involvement of the whole chapter as equal partners in a common interest, now it issued in a common neglect - or so it must have seemed.

The most striking difference between this chapter and the one which met the thraves crisis of 1325 was the virtual disappearance from its membership of the diocesan official, and his replacement by additional civil servants. It was not total, for senior clerks, such as Richard de Thorne,² who became Arundel's first vicar-general, usually maintained a solitary representation of York even in these years. But we look in vain for the diocesan clerk of the second rank, willing, ultimately, to take up prolonged residence in the precincts. Gone are the Henry de

¹. B.C.A., ii, pp. 249-252; see above, p.137.

². See below, p.263.

Carltons and William de Soothills, the industrious clerks of the household, who, withdrawing early on the death of their respective masters, retired to Beverley as it was no doubt expected they should. Fierce competition among greater men had crowded them out, and successive archbishops were powerless or unwilling to help.

In the chapter's last two centuries Beverley's best hope of a conscientious residentiary lay in its appeal as a final resting place to successful clerks of local origin, after a lifetime spent elsewhere.¹ In responding to this men like Nicholas de Huggate² had set a pattern others of similar background were to follow.

At the same time, lest preoccupation with prebendaries should lead us to suppose that the Minster had degenerated into an eventide home for worn-out royal officials, we need to remember that in the routine affairs of the church, especially in the daily round of worship, the chapter had become, in a practical sense, surplus to requirements. It could reasonably be argued that its members were indeed more usefully employed in wider service. Though Beverley and its church had already entered upon their years of slow decline, the latter continued to be served by a multitude of, for the most part, competent inferior clerks, well able to manage routine business and to perform the Divine Office without the supervision of their canonical masters.

Nevertheless the eight prebends of Beverley could not properly be regarded as fair game for the absentee pluralist, in the same pool of preferment as places in the great chapters of York, Lincoln and Salisbury. Whilst a measure of absenteeism was undoubtedly expedient in practice, this had been allowed for in the modest requirements of residence laid down by Archbishop Greenfield, which at least paid lip service to the 'no small cure of souls' each prebend involved. Here permanent absence

1. For a brief survey of northern clerks in the royal service see J.L.Grassi, *Royal Clerks from the Archdiocese of York in the Fourteenth Century in Northern History*, v, pp. 12 - 33.
2. See above, p. 212.

had never been openly acknowledged, but had grown by default, in the face of statutes, through, as the archbishop put it, 'the malice of the times'.¹

In seeking to trace the virtual taking over of the chapter by absentee royal protégés and servants we shall, of course, find no definite point of departure. In the previous century the door had been opened by the king's appointment during vacancies in the archbishoprick of such notables as Godfrey Giffard and William de Louth. Moreover, with the church well served through the longevity of older residentiaries, Greenfield at least concurred in the admission of clerks of his own background. Perhaps it was more than lack of resolution on the part of the archbishop which made the award of prebends to such men as Melton and Sandal a precedent for future years.

Papal provision.

It is with the succession of Melton himself to the primacy that we find the chances of episcopal clerks gaining a prebend greatly diminished. The price he paid for consecration by the pope in September, 1317, amounted to a virtual abandonment of any claim to appoint motu proprio to even the lesser chapters of his diocese. Of all the frustrations of his prolonged stay in Avignon none can have been greater than the replacement of Clement V, an English subject by birth, by John XXII. An easy going pope, who could claim in 1308 never to have provided to an English benefice a clerk who was not a subject of the king of England, was thus followed by a determined and clear-sighted French lawyer, bent upon reasserting the authority of a centralized papacy. 1316 was the year of the Bull Ex debito which formalized and extended papal claims to a wide general reservation of benefices. It was a difficult moment at which to secure

¹. See above, pp. 153, 167.

consecration and at the same time retain the independence of one's predecessors.¹

Admissions to Beverley's prebends in the years following demonstrate the extent of Melton's subservience. Of the ten canons who entered the chapter in his episcopate eight came by means of provision, another was appointed by the archbishop under papal indult, and the tenth as the result of an exchange.

Contrary to popular belief, however, neither in intention nor in practice did this mean, here or elsewhere, a wholesale pasturing of aliens on the English Church. The award of some of England's richest preferment to curialists aroused deep resentment, voiced mainly by lay leadership, but the actual number of recipients represented but a small proportion of provisors, the overwhelming majority of whom were Englishmen.

So it was at Beverley. Though Melton's own prebend went to Barnabas de Mala Spina,² an Italian attaché with the papal nuncio in London, the provision which enabled Bertrand de Cardiliaco,³ a clerk of Aquitaine, to succeed Benedict de Paston⁴ in St. Andrew's was almost

1. What exactly transpired during Melton's months at the papal court is by no means clear: we are left to draw our own conclusions from subsequent evidence of his episcopate. His frustration is well known. Elected by the York Chapter at the king's request on 21 January, 1315/16, he left for Avignon preceded by a letter of commendation from Edward. The months which followed saw endless delays, occasioned not least by the death of Clement, but also by opposition and hard bargaining on the part of certain curialists, among them Francis Gaetano and Pandulf de Savelli, whose possession of prebends in York was presently disputed by royal clerks of Melton's ilk. Consecrated on 25 September, 1317, he reached his diocese in time to usher in Advent at Beverley. He had been able to retain the provostship and St. Michael's prebend up to the time of his consecration, and in the following April claimed also his corrody as archbishop which had accrued during the vacancy: Cumque nos et ecclesia nostra, tam in Curia Romana quam alibi, variis et legitimis causis, ob utilitatem et necessitatem ecclesiae nostrae aere simus alieno graviter onerati, et nos oportet indies magna sustinere onera expensarum. (B.C.A., i, pp. 356 - 357).

2. See below, p.A.140.

3. See below, p.A.45.

4. See below, p. 209.
above

certainly made at royal request. Benedict himself had been the subject of a provision early in the primacy of Melton, and the remaining five vacancies, as they occurred, were filled by such varied and useful men as Richard de Ferriby,¹ controller, and later keeper of the Wardrobe, Anthony de Goldesborough,² the official of the bishop of Lincoln, and William de Abberwick,³ formerly chancellor of Oxford and ultimately of York.

The Archbishop used the papal indult, as it applied to Beverley, in favour of his clerk, Richard de Ottringham,⁴ who had earlier been his own vicar in the Minster. Perhaps it was a sign of the times that this late promotion of a household clerk occasioned the most heated dispute ever to surround a Beverley prebend, and that he should be ousted eventually by Richard de Thorne, then a king's clerk.

Thus far the chapter had been reasonably well served by papal provisions. Quite apart from the judicious choice of recipients one detects a marked restraint in the total preferment of each, not hitherto apparent in the lucrative collections of Godfrey Giffard, Louth, Huggate and Melton himself, and still less in the rapacity of royal and episcopal favourites of later years.

Edward III and the Papacy.

Comparing the situation at Melton's death (1340) with what was to follow, one cannot help associating this moderation with the strength of the papacy under John XXII (1316 - 1334) and the weakness of the Crown

1. See below, p.A.158. Knowledge that Ferriby was a kinsman of Melton, and the likelihood that the succession of Robert de Northburgh to John de Nassington's prebend of St. Martin's (see below, p.A.93) had been carefully contrived within the diocese remind us that the decline in the archbishop's formal powers of discretion by no means closed the avenues of negotiation.
2. See below, pp. A.68 - 69.
3. See below, pp. A.203 - 204.
4. See below pp.A.175 - 181; C.P.L., ii, p.268. Abberwick may have had collation to St. Katherine's under the same indult.

under Edward II. When the position was reversed under Edward III and less assertive popes we find the welfare of the chapter largely ignored in the interest of national administration. This is not necessarily to impute to John any special regard for residence in a church such as Beverley, but simply to observe that a masterful king's single-minded and often quite ruthless approach to appointments resulted in a much more restricted selection of prebendaries.

Edward's opportunity of making direct grants of prebends in Beverley was, as it happened, severely limited by the extended primacies of Melton and Thoresby. Only three vacancies in the see occurred in the whole of his long reign, and in each he was able to appoint but a single prebendary. Even the two-year interregnum which preceded the consecration of Zouch placed only St. Andrew's at his disposal. This he granted to William de Kildesby,¹ keeper of the Privy Seal, and formerly his secretary. A second royal clerk, Alan de Waynflete,² received St. Mary's shortly after Zouch died in 1352, and a third, Robert Crull,³ again St. Andrew's, some twenty-two years later, shortly after Alexander Neville's consecration (the vacancy having occurred in the interregnum created by Thoresby's death in November, 1373).

Most of Edward's nominees came therefore to Beverley through co-operation with the papacy. In order to win his backing in such a matter it was necessary for a clerk to have proved his value in the royal service, or to commend himself to someone close to the Crown. When so qualified it was usually a mixture of diplomacy, opportunism and a veiled threat of sanctions, rather than open confrontation with the pope, which produced the desired result. Evidence of the advancement of Edward's candidates supports the view that, whatever parliament may have expected of the Statutes of Praemunire and Provisors,

1. See below, pp. A.45-46.

2. See below, p.A.122.

3. See below, p.A.48.

he preferred to use and manipulate the system of provisions, holding anti-papal legislation in reserve as a threat in negotiation.¹

Though matters cannot have been helped, in times of hostility with France, by the pope's continued residence in close proximity to the French king, Edward appears to have pursued this policy successfully throughout the long episcopate of Thoresby. Popular feeling in England certainly did not inhibit him, or Queen Philippa, from seeking graces for their protégés. So far as Beverley was concerned it is doubtful whether greater success would have been achieved had the Statutes been rigorously applied.

William de Wykeham's² receipt of St. Mary's prebend in 1361, though ostensibly by royal grant, almost certainly came with papal blessing. The chancery clerk, Richard de Lyntesford,³ who succeeded him on his consecration as bishop of Winchester, undoubtedly owed his success to a direct approach by the king to Urban V. The Queen was instrumental in obtaining St. Andrew's for the fourteen-year-old John de Saundford,⁴ and St. Katherine's for Nicholas de Louth,⁵ who was her cofferer at the time. She may well have cleared the way for Richard de Ravenser's⁶ succession (by means of an exchange) to St. Martin's - by then he was a clerk in Chancery, but had formerly been her receiver.

Thus, having earlier filled four of the six vacancies occurring under Zouch,⁷ royal clerks contrived successfully to occupy no less than

1. For a comprehensive summary of the system of provisions in the fourteenth century, and Edward's approach to it, see W.A. Pantin, 'The Fourteenth Century', in The English Church and the Papacy in the Middle Ages, ed. C.H. Lawrence, pp. 183 - 194. /e
2. See below, p.A.123.
3. See below, pp. A.123 - 124.
4. See below, pp. A.47 - 48.
5. See below, pp. A.205 - 207.
6. See below, p.265, A.95, 99 - 101.
7. i.e. Thomas Helwell (below, pp. A.46 - 47), Andrew Offord (pp.A.158 - 159), Robert de Beverley (pp.A.142 - 143) and Richard de Meaux (p.A.205). The other two newcomers under Zouch were Cardinal Aymer Robert (pp. A.121 - 122) and Ralph de Turville (p.A.122), who followed him in St. Mary's prebend.

eleven of the thirteen prebends vacated in Thoresby's primacy. Three, it is true, gained admission by exchange, whilst one or two more, secure in their master's patronage, entrenched themselves in defiance of the papacy. The remainder, however, obtained its acquiescence, if not its entire goodwill.

It is not to be supposed, on the other hand, that the Statutes remained a dead letter. Hugh de Ferriby,¹ who contested possession of St. James' prebend with Henry de Snaith,² keeper of the Wardrobe and Edward's chaplain, over a period of fifteen years, finding no help at home resorted in desperation to the papal court. Outlawed in consequence, he was only restored to the king's protection after Snaith's death in 1381.² Thereafter a royal ratification allowed him to enjoy the prebend in peace.

Nicholas de Riston,³ a papal chaplain and auditor, incurred similar penalties under Richard II. He opposed the award of St. Stephen's to the latter's personal physician, John de Middleton,⁴ whose provision at the king's special request had been enforced by Archbishop Arundel. Riston himself had been provided to the prebend by Boniface IX, and his claim was upheld in the papal court. It was whilst pursuing his appeal that he heard of his outlawry.⁵ Quickly discovering that his quest was ill-founded he himself obtained an annulment of the papal decision in his favour.

Both these clerks were of local origin - men who, representing the wider spread characteristic of provisions as a whole, might ultimately have fulfilled statutory residence. Towards the end of the fourteenth century, however, there were few places for clerks of their sort in the

1. See below, p.A.69 . The Ferribys' kinship to Archbishop Thoresby availed him little.
2. C.P.R., 1370-1374, p.315; C.P.R., 1381-1385, pp. 293, 303.
3. Riston never gained effective possession of any prebend, but see below, p.A.184, n.1 for a more detailed account of this dispute.
4. See below, pp.A.184-186, where is omitted from the list of his preferments the prebend of Stanwick in Ripon, which he exchanged for the rectory of Brandsby, some 20 miles east of Ripon, in 1397. (A Calendar of the Register of Robert Waldby, Archbishop of York, 1397, Ed. D.M.Smith, pp. 6-7.)
5. Riston was a student of law at Bologna at the time.

chapter of Beverley.

Such was the background to the composition of the chapter of 1381, when Alexander Neville made his sensational descent upon the Minster. Whatever hidden motives he may have harboured, his approach to the ordering of the church, in so far as it attempted to set the clock back fifty years, resembled that of Romeyn a century earlier.¹ Both archbishops have left behind unattractive memories; both found themselves at odds with influences ultimately more powerful than their own, and suffered humiliation in consequence. Yet in their dealings with the chapter each could claim, with some justice, to be combatting an acknowledged erosion of standards within living memory.

The cause célèbre created by Neville's onslaught has been described in detail by A. F. Leach.² In the next chapter we will consider closely the canons who endured it. At the root of the trouble lay the conflicting personalities of the two chief protagonists, Neville and the redoubtable Richard de Ravenser,³ the prebendary of St. Martin's and a former provost. Once these two men were removed from the scene a new archbishop, Thomas Arundel, seems to have experienced little difficulty in resolving the dispute, and in securing acceptance of the main principle his predecessor had sought to establish, namely, that 'the archbishop was known to be a true canon and prebendary, and also president when present'.⁴

1. See above, pp. 240 - 241.

2. B.C.A., ii, pp. lxxiv - lxxxi; see also Leach's 'A Clerical Strike at Beverley Minster', in Archaeologia lv, pt.1.

3. See below, pp. 266 - 269

4. In primis igitur ordinamus et statuimus, quod numerus ministrorum ecclesie, qui est in presenti; viz. novem canonicorum, Domino archiepiscopo Eboracensi, qui verus canonicus et prebendarius, ac eciam presidens dum presens fuerit esse dinoscitur, incluso,..... (B.C.A., ii, p.267). See also Margaret Aston, Thomas Arundel, A Study of Church Life in the Reign of Richard II, pp. 289 - 293.

Arundel's Chapter.

Arundel indeed met with a more compliant gathering. It was headed by Richard de Thorne,¹ who had been, until recently, the archbishop's first vicar-general, and was now in the last months of his life, and by Richard de Chesterfield,² one of the two canons represented to Neville as having kept better residence than the rest. Subsequent records suggest that the latter later improved upon what had, even so, been an inadequate standard, and that he ultimately became an active president of the chapter. Both these clerks had submitted to Neville in 1381, and one is left with the impression that, whilst they remained loyal to their co-canons, they were essentially men of peace who had been caught up in a quarrel not their own.

Only two other prebendaries joined them to approve in person the revised constitution: the prominent chancery clerk, Robert Manfield,³ who at the height of the troubles had begun his long and distinguished tenure of the provostship, and Adam Fenrother,⁴ a Durham clerk, who kept residence at Beverley, and later at Ripon also. By 1417, when Simon Russell compiled his account of the provostry, Manfield, too, could be described as a residentiary.⁵ As provost he 'stood peacable with the said church and all its ministers', and, as presiding prebendary, his frequent appearances as a witness of chapter business declare a genuine and abiding concern for its welfare.

If Arundel's settlement led to an arrangement whereby these four took consecutive turns of twelve weeks' residence, and to their meeting together regularly in convocation, as would appear to have been their wont, much had been achieved.

1. See below, p.263.

2. See below, p.264.

3. See below, pp. A.73-74, 143-144.

4. See below, pp.A.73, 144. It was Fenrother who exchanged St. James' for St. Michael's with Manfield in 1397; for what inducement does not appear, but see below, p.A.74 n.2.

5. B.C.A., ii, pp. 306-307.

No help in this, however, was likely to be forthcoming from the other four prebendaries. John de Wellingborough,¹ Ravenser's associate in adversity, still retained St. Mary's, but, as before, remained aloof from Beverley until his death in 1405. It is equally doubtful whether John de Burton,² Master of the Rolls when he received St. Katherine's in 1387 (presumably in anticipation of Neville's final deprivation), ever came near the Minster. One of the prolific Ferriby family³ had succeeded in wresting St. Martin's prebend from an East Riding clerk of gentle birth, Anthony de St. Quentin,⁴ Nevilles's choice on the death of Ravenser (1386), but his own local origins never induced him to reside.

In the identity and inadequacies of the other absentee are to be found the most eloquent evidence of decline, and also a portent of things to come. Though John de la Pole⁵ had already held St. Andrew's prebend for four years, he was still barely sixteen in 1391. The second son of Michael, Earl of Suffolk, Richard II's former governor, he was not the first child to gain effective admission to the chapter.⁶ Yet there is something especially brazen in the fact that he had been able to do so in the face of the claim of Thomas de Walkington,⁷ a senior officer of the papal court, but a priest of local origins with impeccable qualifications, for in making the provision the pope had exercised his undoubted right to replace Walter de Skirlaw, the new bishop of Durham.

1. See below, pp. 269 - 270 ; A.124 - 125.
2. See below, p.A.209.
3. Thomas de Ferriby (see below, pp. A.102 - 103).
4. See below, pp. A.101 - 102.
5. See below, pp. A.51 - 52; See also M.V.Clarke, *The Lancastrian Faction and the Wonderful Parliament* in Fourteenth Century Studies, ed. M.S.Sutherland and M. McKisack, p.50, where Pole's preferment features in the impeachment of his father.
6. John de Saundford had received St. Andrew's in 1364 at the age of fourteen (See above, p.252).
7. See below, pp. A.49 - 51. For a resumé of this dispute see E.F. Jacobs, *English University Clerks in the Later Middle Ages*, in Essays in the Conciliar Epoch, pp. 238 - 239, where Walkington is referred to as Wallington.

So far Pole's tenure had survived the disgrace of his backers at the hands of the Appellants and the Merciless Parliament, thanks, perhaps, to the continued anti-papal feeling which issued in the second Statute of Provisors (1390). Walkington's persistence was rewarded, however, for, having returned home after twenty years as auditor of the Sacred College, he died desiring burial behind his prebendal altar. Pole, who by this time had gained maturity, and also a degree at Cambridge, remained to reoccupy the prebend, and probably to hold it until his own death in c.1416. Owing his preferment to parental influence, he opened the door at Beverley to a new and shameless kind of nepotism. More than a symptom of decadence, his appointment was, we must believe, an active agent of decay.

The rewards of non-residence.

The means by which the prebendaries of the later fourteenth century reached their prebends is clear enough. Less obvious are the reasons why such preferment, hitherto unattractive to curialists, should now be coveted by Englishmen whose prospects of residence were almost equally remote. Why was the chapter now as vulnerable as any other to the attentions of the absentee?

Several factors worked to this end. We have already noted the diminished powers of collation of Melton and his successors. Neither the papacy nor the Crown, who now shared the initiative, ever posed as guardians of Beverley's statutes, least of all those relating to residence. Earlier archbishops such as Wickwane, Romeyn and Corbridge had made it their business to uphold at least the spirit of these ordinances, but their successors, who had risen to prominence in government, and had themselves sat lightly ^{to} on the obligations of their benefices, clearly lacked the same resolution.

In the long term Greenfield's halving of the required term of statutory residence to a mere twelve weeks favoured the absentee, as, of course, did his annexation of the corrody to the rest of the prebend. Whereas initially his action had benefitted the busy diocesan official, with patronage in less caring hands it rewarded equally others further

afield. Modest requirements are the more lightly regarded, and human nature soon finds relaxed standards as irksome as the ones they replace. Especially was this true at Beverley, as the profitability of residence diminished with the decline in receipts at the Shrine of St. John, now the main source of the common fund.¹

These were the years which also saw the rationalisation and commutation of thraves, with all that this meant for an assured and stable prebendal income.² The odd reference here and there suggests that the East Riding parishes never became entirely reconciled to the levy, but by the latter part of the century the heat had gone out of the controversy. With this major source of income readily identifiable and capable of immediate calculation, and the corrody secure, an absentee unacquainted with the church could now anticipate a yield as consolidated as that of any other prebend.

Since no canon was charged above his fellows with the obligation to reside, and with the financial inducement to do so thus removed, more general considerations may have caused a well-endowed clerk to think twice before resorting to Beverley for any length of time. The East Riding has always been something of a cul de sac, out on a limb from the mainstream of events. With Beverley now a town in deep decline, its Minster, for all its grandeur, wealth and ancient past, must have had an 'end-of-the-line' ring about it for the men of affairs now entering the chapter in large numbers.

Moreover, in the latter half of the fourteenth century the whole area must, by all accounts, have borne a singularly depressing aspect. Though the country in general had experienced the tragedy of the Black

1. Towards the end of the century there are signs that the offerings of pilgrims were not what they had been (see above, p.113). One would like to know the effect of the Black Death upon the popularity of a shrine famed for its powers of healing. It may be that, as was the case at Canterbury, the flow of pilgrims continued, even increased, during the height of the epidemic. (See Philip Zeigler, The Black Death (Pelican Edition), pp. 168 - 169). We have no means of learning whether subsequent reflection upon this all-pervading tragedy placed any strain on medieval credulity.

2. See above, p.97.

Death, the north bank of the Humber seems to have been in the front line of its onslaught, due, perhaps, to its proximity to the port of Hull. A pestilence which carried off about half the incumbents of the archdeaconry,¹ and reduced the community of nearby Meaux Abbey from fifty to ten in the summer of 1349,² is unlikely to have spared the Minster clergy.

Moreover, as we have already had occasion to note, the period saw an undoubted worsening of the climate and a raising of the sea-level relative/^{to}the Humber banks. The North Sea storm-waves which breached Spurn Head and swept away for ever the once busy port of Ravenserodd thereby gained freer access to the painfully reclaimed salt-marshes of the Estuary. By 1400 most of these had been lost, and the constant flooding of the tidal reaches of the Ouse and Derwent served to isolate still further the area from the rest of the country.³

It may be significant that, whilst St. Peter's prebend changed hands five times between 1349 and 1368, St. Mary's four times and St. Andrew's three between 1347 and 1364, no canon is recorded as dying at his post in this time of pestilence. Though there is nothing dramatic about these quick successions, especially as reasons other than plague explain more than one vacancy, short tenures did not make for an involved and interested chapter. Perhaps the detrimental consequences of the Black Death were more general and more subtle, to be found rather in its debilitating effect upon the whole nation, and in a climate which more readily accepted eroded standards.

1. 61% in the deanery of Dickering. K.J. Allison, East Riding of Yorkshire Landscape, p.100.
2. Chronica Monasterii de Melsa, R.S., p.37.
3. See above, p.56 ; June A. Sheppard, The Draining of the Marshlands of South Holderness and the Vale of York, E.Y. Local History Series No. 20, pp. 6, 15-16.

Beverley and York.

Before leaving the fourteenth century it remains to explain that we have neglected consideration of the wider patronage of prebends in the diocese chiefly because the episcopal influence in collations was so diminished as to rule out any sustained overall policy on the part of the diocesan. The trends we have described were equally evident at York, Southwell and Ripon. In the rush for preferment influential clerks took prebends where and when opportunity offered, and exchanged them for others at will as pieces of property. Such pattern as there was in later years was set by the claimants themselves, not by the archbishops.

Superficially the fourteenth century saw little change in the representation of the York chapter at Beverley. After the death of Giffard the numbers of canons of the Mother Church holding prebends in the Minster ebbed and flowed, but only slightly:

1280 - 4;	1285 - 5;	1290 - 4;	1295 - 2;	1300 - 2;
1305 - 3;	1310 - 4;	1315 - 4;	1320 - 4;	1325 - 3;
1330 - 3;	1335 - 3;	1340 - 2;	1345 - 3;	1350 - 2;
1355 - 3;	1360 - 2;	1365 - 4;	1370 - 4;	1375 - 5;
1380 - 5;	1385 - 3;	1390 - 3.		

In a small chapter of eight prebendaries these figures at first sight appear impressive. At their highest level, however, they point to rampant pluralism, rather than to an increased community of interest: not a few of these men never graced either York or Beverley with their presence. Until 1335 more than one York canon usually represented a real link with Beverley, to the great benefit of the lesser church. Though isolated diocesan figures such as Richard de Thorne may well have preserved a tenuous personal association, in the years that followed numbers cease to have significance. After 1370 it is possible to argue that the chapter of Lincoln was almost as well represented at Beverley as was that of York, numerous canons having prebends in all three churches. The renewal of genuine and closer ties between mother and daughter churches is one of the happier features of the fifteenth century.

(ii) The Chapter under Alexander Neville.

When every allowance has been made for the volatile temperament of Alexander Neville, and for the impetuous and provocative way in which he went about his visitation of the Minster in 1381, things were not as they should have been in the Beverley chapter when the fiery archbishop descended upon its members for "the refreshment of their souls."

In marked contrast to circumstances barely fifty years earlier, those prebendaries who tardily answered Neville's summons had to acknowledge that neither they nor their absent colleagues kept even the modest residence ordained by Archbishop Greenfield.¹ Even though two of their number were said to have a better record than the rest, the fact that none met the statutory requirement of twelve weeks' attendance must have meant lengthy periods when no canon was present in chapter or choir.

The proceedings of this dramatic episode, as they unfold, distinguish three groups in the chapter of the day:

First, there were three prebendaries who, despite their failure to respond to the visitation call, escaped Neville's strictures altogether. Walter Skirlaw,² Henry de Snaith and William de Birstall remained aloof from the contest, and feature only as names in the initial summons. The probability is, however, that only Skirlaw was alive when the storm actually broke, and that he was then overseas in the king's service.

First rising to prominence in the north as Archbishop Thoresby's secretary, Skirlaw had clearly enjoyed Neville's confidence early in the latter's primacy, for he remained at York as his official until 1377. In that year he became a clerk in Chancery and, after a period overseas, was appointed keeper of the Privy Seal in 1382. Ultimately reaching the see of Durham by way of Coventry and Lichfield and Bath and Wells, he was one of those able clerks who, rising from relatively humble

1. B.C.A., ii, p.248.

2. See below, pp. A.48 - 49.

origins in the East Riding villages, continued to provide distinguished service in national affairs throughout the fourteenth century.¹ He had been awarded St. Andrew's prebend in his York days, doubtless at the hands of Neville himself, and though Beverley can have seen little of him in subsequent years his abiding affection for its church was handsomely evinced in his will.

If Skirlaw escaped censure through his stature and clear inability to attend the visitation (together with the possibility that he continued at this time to commend himself to Neville) the same was probably true of both Snaith and Birstall. Both had been favoured clerks of Edward III, under whom they had held high office, and though their precise dates of death are uncertain it was probably known that both were not long for this world when Neville issued his formal summons.

Snaith,² who hailed from the town of that name, across the Ouse from Howden (in which he also held a prebend), had been keeper in turn of the Privy and Great Wardrobes under the late king, and was latterly his chaplain. He had recently honoured his master's memory in the foundation of a chantry in his home church. Though he also held the prebend of North Newbold in York until his death his preferment beyond the diocese was such as to make him wholly independent of Neville's goodwill. Yet he was named by his co-canonists as being one of those two prebendaries who kept better residence at Beverley than did the rest, and no doubt Snaith, Howden and the Minster, linked then as now by good roads, all benefited from the attentions of this busy and distinguished man.

It was probably Birstall's³ age as much as his standing as Master of the Rolls which secured his apparent immunity from the archbishop's wrath. Coming from that part of the West Riding between Leeds and

1. Never among the closest to Richard II, Skirlaw lent his support to the Appellants and was translated to the bishopric of Durham in the year (1388) of Neville's deprivation. (See Anthony Steel, Richard II, pp. 113, 140, 164).
2. See below, pp. A.72-73.
3. See below, p.A.143.

Halifax now long defaced by modern industry, he had been a master in chancery since 1350, and continued to hold his high office until his death in the year of the visitation. It would be surprising if Beverley had ever featured in his itinerary, for St. Michael's prebend was his only preferment in Yorkshire in a collection of lucrative benefices stretching from Guernsey to Houghton-le-Spring in the diocese of Durham.

In this last respect the three canons who submitted to Neville's visitation were less happily placed, for their preferments lay almost entirely within the archbishop's jurisdiction, and for each the income from a Beverley prebend represented no small part of the whole. We may readily conclude that it was vulnerability, rather than reverence for their Ordinary, that compelled their attendance.

It must have been an agonising decision as well as a fearsome prospect which confronted these three worried men. Richard de Thorne (St. Stephen's) and Nicholas de Louth (St. Katherine's) made their appearance together, a week after Neville opened the visitation. Some three weeks later they were joined by Richard de Chesterfield (St. Peter's), who also took the oath.

Thorne¹ had earned the description of king's clerk as long ago as 1354, and was no doubt still so employed when he was appointed keeper of the temporalities of the see in the vacancy prior to Neville's consecration. He had, however, seen service in the diocese under Thoresby, during whose episcopate he had acquired the prebend of Holme in York, a preferment he continued to hold till his death in 1391. In the 1360's he seems to have seen his future as lying in the North, for he relinquished his prebend in Chichester in 1366, exchanging it with his brother John de Thorne for the wardenship of Bawtry Hospital, near Doncaster. Five years earlier he had come to terms with Richard de Ottringham, with whom he had long disputed St. Stephen's in Beverley, but only by offering his Salisbury prebend in exchange. So when

1. See below, p.A.183.

Neville came to Beverley in 1381 Thorne had much to lose by refusal to comply with the archbishop's demands. His predicament becomes yet clearer, however, when we discover that he was in fact very much a local man, deriving his name, not from Thorne in the West Riding, but from Thearne (Thoren) a short distance from Beverley, downstream on the River Hull.¹ His local interests and connections seem not to have encouraged his residence at Beverley, for whatever his occupation in 1381 it had little to do with the Minster.

Ordinary prudence, prompted by a sense of self-preservation, must likewise have induced Thorne's companion, Nicholas de Louth,² not to delay his submission. It is true that he still retained a prebend in Salisbury, but its fruits were as nothing compared with the offerings of the faithful accruing to St. Katherine's in Beverley, or for that matter, with his choice rectory of Cottingham adjacent to the Minster parish - just over the border from Thorne's birthplace. He too had spent long years in the royal service, initially in the household of Queen Isabella and later as a clerk of the Exchequer and king's treasurer for Ponthieu. During this latter time he had been closely associated with Edward the Black Prince, who had presented him to Cottingham. It is just possible that Beverley Minster had seen more of Louth in recent years than is apparent from the records. Statutes enjoined perpetual residence upon the holder of the eighth prebend, so that his confession to falling below requirements may have meant something very less X reprehensible than failing to keep Greenfield's twelve weeks' attendance. Since he was one of those who bore the brunt of Neville's onslaught it is attractive to believe that the words rixantes pacificavit in his epitaph at Cottingham refer to a conciliatory role in the present dispute.

Richard de Chesterfield,³ who thirteen years earlier had exchanged his prebend in Southwell for St. Peter's in Beverley, still held others in

1. E.R.A.S., v, p.48.

2. See below, pp. A.205 - 208.

3. See below, pp. A.161 - 162.

Lincoln and Darlington, as well as the rectory of Brancepeth in the diocese of Durham. Together with Snaith, however, he was said to have kept better residence than the rest, and he certainly lived on to become an active president of the chapter in happier times. He too had been a royal clerk, but one is led to believe that things had never been the same for him in administration after his being accused of misappropriation of funds whilst serving as a treasury clerk in the receipt. Though exonerated, and his accusers punished, he may well have felt his career blighted by the inquiry of 1364, for in the years that followed he is found detaching himself from southern involvement, at least in the matter of his preferments. It is not until the closing years of the century, however, that he features in the records as a consistent residentiary at both Lincoln and Beverley. In the meantime, therefore, in view of the absence of his name in northern registers, we must assume him to have continued in the civil service, valuing his Yorkshire prebend, at least when it was placed in jeopardy.

It was the two remaining canons - Richard de Ravenser,¹ prebendary of St. Martin's since 1363 and a former provost of Beverley, and John de Wellingborough, recently appointed by the king under papal authority to St. Mary's prebend - who were the particular objects of Neville's wrath. Highly placed king's clerks, rich in preferment outside the diocese, both ignored the archbishop's summons and had no qualms in resisting his designs to the utmost. They were in the enviable position of being able to view both excommunication and deprivation of their prebends as calculated hazards and expendable assets in a vendetta.

'Vendetta' seems the only word to describe the sustained ferocity with which Neville and Ravenser pursued the dispute. For how long and for what reason bad blood had existed between the two does not appear. There was no hint of ill-will in 1376 when Neville acquiesced in the enlargement of the latter's pleasure garden at Beverley.² Even as late

1. See below, pp. A.99 - 101.

2. E.R.A.S., v, pp. 37 - 38; Y.D., ix, pp. 18 - 19.

as the autumn of 1379 episcopal endorsement of a somewhat dubious transaction relating to a chantry in the Minster, in which Ravenser was an undoubted beneficiary, was readily forthcoming.¹ Yet early in 1381 the canon viewed the archbishop as his mortal enemy.² Such was the personal animosity then existing between the two that Thorne, Louth and Chesterfield, in making their submission, conceivably saw themselves, on reflection, as caught up in a quarrel no longer their own.

All appearances suggest that both men entered the contest from embattled positions. Turbulence at Beverley was matched by unrest in high politics, and it could well be that their antagonism had its roots outside the diocese.³ Even so, given the notorious temperament of Neville,⁴ we probably need look no further than the formidable personality and standing of Ravenser for an explanation of much that transpired.

Richard de Ravenser occupied a key place in an intricate family connection which had virtually dominated the diocese of York for much of the century, and which continued to exercise an influence in national administration well in excess of that of Neville and his adherents. The ties which linked the great East Riding clerical families of Ferriby, Melton, de la Mare and Ravenser with those of Waltham and Thoresby south of the Humber have been described elsewhere in the context of the succession to St. Martin's prebend.⁵ Here we may simply note that the connections of this nephew of the late archbishop and first cousin of John de Waltham, soon to become keeper of the privy seal, were alone likely to make for a delicate relationship with a prelate of Neville's disposition.

1. See below, pp. 268 - 269.

2. capitalis inimicus. B.C.A., ii, p. 220.

3. M.V. Clarke, 'The Lancastrian Faction and the Wonderful Parliament in Fourteenth Century Studies' (ed. L.S. Sutherland & M. McKisack); A. Steel, Richard II; M. McKisack, The Fourteenth Century, 1307 - 1399, pp. 424 - 461.

4. For a review of Neville's life and character see R.G. Davies, 'Alexander Neville, Archbishop of York, 1374 - 1388', Y.A.J., 47, pp. 87 - 101. See also B. Dobson, 'The Later Middle Ages, 1215 - 1500', in A History of York Minster (ed. G.E. Aylmer and R. Cant), p. 101.

5. See below, pp. A.93 - 96.

The standing of this man, however, rested upon more than good connections. If Ravenser brought to his service of the Crown the same vigour and ability he displayed as provost of Beverley and master of St. Leonard's Hospital, York, we may well understand the high regard in which he was held by both Edward III and Richard II. Having lived close to royalty most of his working life, he was, in 1381, a leading master in Chancery, and no doubt his prompting lay behind at least some of the royal pronouncements upon the dispute.

Though now concentrated in the North the sources of his financial support were such as to make him largely independent of Neville's favour. Whilst the latter was able to deprive him of his prebend of Knaresborough in York, as well of St. Martin's in Beverley, safe enough were the archdeaconry of Lincoln, his prebend there, and also the mastership of St. Leonard's. This last plum, which rivalled the deanery of York, was a royal foundation - virtually a chancery benefice - and so beyond the archbishop's reach.

Whilst Ravenser's name never appears among the residentiaries of Lincoln,¹ (where his prebendal house provided refuge for the vicars of Beverley), his vigorous and astute oversight of St. Leonard's² and of the provostship (1360-1369) was in both places recorded with gratitude. His forceful stewardship at Beverley was recalled in 1371 when the king entrusted him with making good the maladministration of his successor, Adam de Lymbergh.³ Originating from the Holderness port of Ravenser,⁴ now long engulfed by the North Sea, he remained a local man at heart, and though his residence at the Minster is unlikely to have been prolonged, there is no doubting his genuine concern for a church for which he had so successfully laboured.

1. See K. Edwards, op cit., pp. 350 - 354.

2. V.C.H., Yorkshire, iii, p.340.

3. E.R.A.S., v, pp. 36 - 37.

4. 'Ravenspur' which witnessed the landing of Bolingbroke in 1399.

This being so, it is perhaps churlish to detect an eye to the main chance in not a few of his dealings. The enlargement of his pleasure garden through a hard bargain with the chapter was doubtless innocent enough, but one may question its necessity for an absent master in chancery; the appropriation of the church of Welwick to the provostry, largely his work,¹ ultimately brought benefit to the Minster, but it was he, in the first instance, who entered upon its greater tithes. Neither of these arrangements would merit mention were it not for two other more obvious instances of opportunism, both to do with the refoundation of chantries.

The first concerned the reconstitution of an impoverished chantry in the church of Belleau, in the diocese of Lincoln, whereby Ravenser, with the bishop's consent and at a cost of only two and a half marks, transferred it to Waltham, his own rectory, where it became known as the Chantry of Richard de Ravenser. 'The well-to-do king's clerk,' as Miss Wood-Legh observed, 'seems to have been getting rather more than his modest benefaction merited.'²

At Beverley the establishment of a chantry in 1379 to 'pray for the good estate of Richard de Ravenser while he lives and for his soul after his death' probably cost him nothing at all. It was the revenues of the manor of Bentley, part of the canons' Domesday estates, but somehow alienated in the intervening years,³ which provided for two chaplains, one of whom was to serve a foundation which also bore his name.⁴ That

1. Edward III's licence for the appropriation pays him a glowing tribute, granted as it was 'in consideration of the good and gratuitous service, which our beloved clerk, Richard de Ravenser, provost of the same church, has paid to us and to Philippa, Queen of England, our most dear consort, and also to Isabella, late Queen of England, our mother, and ceases not daily to pay to us (E.R.A.S., v, p.36).
2. K.L. Wood-Legh, Perpetual Chantries in Britain, pp. 108 - 109.
3. A.F. Leach, 'A Fifteenth Century Fabric Roll of Beverley Minster', E.R.A.S., vi, pp. 57 - 58.
4. Poulson, op cit., ii, pp. 605 - 606.

the manor ever came to the disposal of Ravenser and his three fellow trustees may well have been due to his efforts, but in regaining this valuable piece of property for the church it does look as though he could not resist the chance of a chantry 'on the cheap'.

All these transactions were ratified by the highest authority, and certainly others engaged in dealings far more reprehensible. Yet brought together they betray a certain meanness of spirit on the part of an unquestionably astute, vigorous and wealthy man. More especially they help us to understand the tenacious and resourceful character of the leader of the revolt of 1381.

Exactly why John de Wellingborough,¹ the prebendary of St. Mary's, should have been singled out with Ravenser for deprivation does not appear.² Also a royal clerk rich in preferment, he remained ostensibly aloof from the contest, as he had always done from Beverley affairs. Though he later disputed unsuccessfully the provostship with Robert Manfield,³ for him a prebend in the church was never more than an additional source of income, albeit one which he was concerned to regain after Neville's downfall. He appears to have suffered deprivation merely as Ravenser's declared and willing associate. In any event he is unlikely to have been greatly perturbed by the temporary loss of his recently acquired prebend.

The whole disgraceful episode of Neville's visitation reflected credit on no one. The chapter's chronic neglect of obligations, and the truculent indiscipline of the vicars, stand revealed scarcely less than the intemperance and inadequacy of the archbishop.

1. See below, pp. A.124 - 125.

2. R.G. Davies (op. cit., p.96) confuses him with Ravenser's brother, John, also a chancery clerk. The latter, however, had no prebend in Beverley, and, so far as we know, was not directly involved in the dispute.

3. See above, p.202.

Primates of an earlier generation, how ever readily they accepted the prolonged absence of individuals, would certainly not have acquiesced in the corporate omissions of these canons. Only a dwelling upon the notoriety of Neville has saved them from censure in retrospect. Their common ground no longer lay in any united concern for their church, but rather in their experience of civil administration, and, we may suppose, a shared distaste of their Ordinary.

Even so, their reaction to the archbishop's claims was by no means uniform. Skirlaw's detachment,¹ whatever his reasons, stands in striking contrast to the beligerence of Ravenser; and the more peaceful role of the three who submitted, induced by vulnerability, we think, rather than by conviction, never amounted to an heroic defence of collegiate rights. Acknowledging our lack of information regarding personalities, we are driven to the conclusion that each responded individually to the dictates of expediency and temperament rather than to the call of a common cause.

¹. We can find no explicit evidence to support R.G. Davies' assumption (op. cit., p.96 n.41) that Skirlaw actively 'supported his fellow canons', or that the dispute resulted in strained relations between him and Neville.

(e) The Fifteenth Century (1396 - 1500).

Viewing the new century in retrospect we see it marked by a gradual return of the archbishop's powers of collation to prebends in general. Slow to register in the chapter lists, it was never, of course, more than partial, for the successors of Scrope remained subject to obvious constraints and a host of subtle influences. Yet the ability of, say, John Kemp, the Booth brothers and Thomas Rotherham to promote prebendaries clearly of their own choosing recalls, on a superficial view, the primacy of Walter Gray two centuries earlier. Superficial, because the outlook and priorities of these men were much changed from those of their distinguished predecessor.

Such liberty of action arose, not from any bold assertion of independence on the part of individual primates, but rather from an easing of pressure from both the papacy and the Crown.

The decline of papal influence.

Consideration of the system of provisions in the fifteenth century has dwelt mainly upon papal pretensions and conciliar legislation, whilst the ability of successive popes to make effective their provisions has been left mainly to speculation.¹ As the actual membership of collegiate chapters is brought under scrutiny, however, it becomes clear that the vast majority of appointments to prebends were determined, one way or another, in England. As the century progressed a successful provisor in any of the four great churches became a rare figure indeed. In this the York diocese was in no way exceptional,² and it would seem that a more rigorous application of anti-papal legislation only awaited the absence of forceful and sustained diplomatic handling by the Crown. Whereas in the past litigants having recourse to the Curia had trodden

See
Lunt II
here.

1. F.R.H. Du Boulay, The Fifteenth Century, in The English Church and the Papacy, pp. 215 - 216; E.F. Jacob, English University Clerks in the Later Middle Ages, in Essays in the Conciliar Epoch, pp. 223 et seq. ✓
2. 'Bishop Langley appears to have enjoyed almost complete freedom in the exercise of his ecclesiastical patronage; no instance is known of any effective papal provision during his episcopate' (R.L. Storey, Thomas Langley and the Bishopric of Durham 1403 - 1437, p. 177).

a precarious and usually unprofitable path, by now the futility of such a journey must have impressed itself upon all but the most desperate petitioner.

Fifteenth-century popes continued, of course, to insist upon their right of general provision. The abolition of the Statute of Provisors long remained the special objective of their diplomacy, and Archbishop Chichele suffered censure and humiliation for his failure to secure its repeal.¹ Yet Kemp, who, like Beaufort, was created cardinal in preference to him,² took little account of provisors when dispensing prebends. We shall look in vain among his collations at York or Beverley for a known papal candidate, or for a clerk featuring in one of university grace lists.

Of less significance by this time was the fact that no fifteenth-century archbishop made the long and often servile quest for consecration to the Curia. Every primate from Arundel onwards (with the exception of Edward Lee) came to York by translation from a lesser see. Though this circumstance can now have had little bearing upon the question of provisions, it must have weakened that direct and personal bond of gratitude and obligation so exploited in the previous century by the papal court.³

Crown patronage.

All this served to restore to the northern archbishop his role as the effective patron of prebends, and, if anything, to diminish the influence of the Crown. To a strong monarch able quietly to discount anti-papal feeling in parliament, such as Edward III, the system of provisions offered an ecclesiastically acceptable means of promoting his clerks without recourse to the goodwill or coercion of individual bishops. Now, in times of political instability, not only did the assertion of lay opinion inhibit the Crown from pursuing this policy, but the demise of the pope as an effective broker placed patrons close at hand open to the competing demands of ascendant factions, all eager

1. E.F. Jacob, Archbishop Henry Chichele, p.52.

2. i.e. Chichele.

3. See above, pp. 224 - 226.

to advance their adherents and kinsmen. Domiciled for long periods in the south, as Bowet, Kemp, Rotherham and the like often were, archbishops were the more vulnerable to such pressures, and they reflected these in their collations. Yet they retained sufficient independence to look well after their clerical relatives, to reward generously those who administered the see in their absence, and to show, as we shall see, a marked partiality towards the products of their own university.

In the case of Beverley a more obvious restriction upon the king's powers arose from a simple lack of opportunity to appoint during vacancies in the see. Translations tended to make for shorter interregnums, and it so happened that even the longer of these, created by the deaths of Scrope and Bowet,¹ coincided with few empty places in the chapter. Moreover, since the king more often than not exercised his right in favour of highly-placed officials, the tenure of prebends by his nominees was frequently cut short, if they were young, by the award of a bishoprick, and, if advanced in years and service, by death.

The troubles of 1387 - 1388 which brought disgrace and deprivation to Alexander Neville had allowed the king to take a hand in the replacement of the greater part of the chapter: John de Burton,² master of the rolls, was granted St. Katherine's, Robert Manfield and Adam Fenrother both had their disputed titles to prebends settled in their favour by re-grants, Thomas de Ferriby,³ who came to St. Martin's with the goodwill of both Archbishop Arundel and the king, was almost certainly a royal clerk, whilst John de la Pole received St. Andrew's, as we have seen, as a mark of Richard II's special favour towards his father, the Earl of Suffolk.⁴

1. 8 June, 1405 - 7 October, 1407; 20 October, 1423 - 20 July, 1425.

2. See below, p.A.209.

3. See below, pp.A.102 - 103. Ravenser's successor, he was a former clerk of Arundel. Associated with the Appellants, he was currently the chancellor of Thomas, duke of Gloucester. It was these two patrons, rather than the king, who secured him the prebend (see M. Aston, Thomas Arundel, pp.317 - 318).

4. See above, pp. 256 - 257.

All these were established in their prebends by the end of 1391. They retained them, without exception, throughout Arundel's primacy. Indeed only St. Stephen's fell vacant - through the death of the veteran Richard de Thorne - before the end of the century. It was filled at the king's request by John de Middleton,¹ his personal physician.

The composition of the chapter being thus decided up to the last years of Scrope, actual Crown promotions remained few and far between. The long-lived and long-absent Wellingborough died a few weeks after the archbishop's execution in 1405. To his prebend (St. Mary's) Henry IV then appointed the treasury clerk, Richard de Kingston.² Robert Rolleston,³ the son of a notable Beverley family, who had risen to become keeper of the wardrobe, received St. Katherine's in 1425 by royal grant, following Bowet's death. Otherwise, it would seem, those senior state officials who found preferment at Beverley in these years did so through the co-operation of archbishops and popes, chiefly, we think, of the former.

Nevertheless, this class never lacked a representative among the prebendaries. Rolleston, in fact, was one of a lengthy succession of such men who virtually took over St. Katherine's prebend. John de Burton, who died in 1394, had been followed by Roger de Weston,⁴ almost certainly a king's clerk. Though the latter was in fact refused collation by Arundel he retained effective possession for close on twenty years. After a brief tenure by John Woodham,⁵ Bowet's official, the archbishop awarded the prebend to William Kynwolmerssh,⁶ then Treasurer of England

1. See below, pp. A.184 - 186.

2. See below, p.A.125.

3. See below, pp. A.214 - 215.

4. See below, p.A.210; Weston, however, appears to have been a close associate of Archbishop Arundel (Aston, op cit;, pp.239, n1, 318, n5).

5. See below, pp. A.53, 210. He exchanged the prebend for St. Andrew's within two years.

6. See below, p.A.211.

(a post he himself had occupied when bishop of Bath and Wells). This was in 1418. Six months later, however, St. Katherine's was in the hands once again of the Master of the Rolls, now Simon Gaunstead.¹

Thomas Bryan,² who next held it, was another of Bowet's clerks, but within months he had exchanged it with Thomas Haxey³ who, in 1424, after an eventful and at times perilous career as a king's clerk, was ending his days as treasurer of York and master of the royal mint there. In Robert Rolleston, next in succession, Beverley found at last a keen residentiary and also an active provost, similar in aspiration and career to Nicholas de Huggate a century before. Robert de Kirkham⁴ and Edmund Chadderton,⁵ whose terms in the prebend took the succession up to 1478, were both distinguished in government. Only then did St. Katherine's slip permanently out of the hands of national administrators. One wonders whether the devotees of the Shrine of St. John ever realised the destination of their offerings all these years.

Ironically it was probably an ordinance of Alexander Neville, prior to his visitation of the chapter, which made this eighth prebend a suitable and worthwhile award to such men. The effect of his statute of 1378 had probably been to stabilise an otherwise unpredictable income at about 50 marks, and, in effect, to guarantee a sum of this order whether the canon were resident or absent.⁶ The expectation of a clear-cut emolument which required no collection must have been an attractive picking for a far-away civil servant.

1. See below, p.A.212.

2. See below, ibid.

3. See below, p.A.213. See also Y.A.J., xxxvi, p.171; M.Aston, op cit, pp. 311, 363-365. For further sidelights on the activities of this energetic man see Angelo Raine, Mediaeval York, pp. 8, 49, 53, 82; R.B.Dobson, Durham Priory, 1400-1450, pp. 216-217; C.B.L. Barr, The Minster Library in A History of York Minster, pp. 495-496.

4. See below, p.A.215.

5. See below, pp. A.59-60, 215.

6. See above, pp. 113-114.

Though we cannot assume any formal policy behind this almost perpetual assignment of St. Katherine's to likely absentees, the fact that the prebend carried no place in chapter as of right no doubt made its loss to such men the more acceptable to both church and diocese. In the event, and in marked contrast to the position at the turn of the century, the seven ancient canonries were left well alone by this class of clerk during these years - that is, until more demanding administrations than that of Henry VI pressed the claims of favourites.

Royal clerks first reappear in any number in the later years of Edward IV. For a short time St. Martin's fell to the Gascon clerk, Peter Tastar,¹ and later to Robert Morton,² Master of the Rolls and a nephew of the archbishop of Canterbury, whilst Peter Courtenay³ and William Dudley,⁴ secretary and chaplain to the king respectively, had each brief tenure of St. James' prebend. It was Richard III and Henry VII, however, pursuing the interests of their adherents with a lack of restraint which recalls the ruthlessness of Edward III, who re-established such men as a sizeable element in the chapter. Richard induced Archbishop Rotherham to grant St. Stephen's to Thomas Barowe,⁵ his chancellor when duke of Gloucester and now Master of the Rolls, and it was certainly he who had earlier influenced the appointment of Chadderton to St. Katherine's. Chadderton, like Barowe, had linked his fortunes with Richard in former years, as his treasurer and domestic chaplain. Both survived their patron's death with their preferments intact. Chadderton, indeed, having relinquished St. Katherine's in an exchange, re-entered the chapter under the new regime as prebendary of St. Andrew's, by now the richest prebend.

1. See below, p.A.108.

2. See below, pp. A.109 - 110.

3. See below, p.A.77.

4. See below, pp. A.77 - 78.

5. See below, pp. A.190 - 191.

Even a chapter as small as that of Beverley reflected in its new membership the triumph of Henry Tudor, and his gratitude towards faithful clerical adherents. Among those who came into their own after Bosworth were Oliver King,¹ a clerk once close to Edward IV, who, having spent some time in the Tower under Richard, was now restored to the chief secretaryship; Christopher Urswick,² one of Henry's confidants in exile, who became royal almoner in 1485; and a young clerk, Thomas Magnus,³ now embarking upon a lifetime of service to the new dynasty. All three received Beverley prebends in the ensuing reign: King had collation of St. James from Rotherham, Urswick was granted St. Martin's in the vacancy which followed the archbishop's death, and Magnus received St. Stephen's at the hands of Archbishop Savage.

With few exceptions, therefore, fifteenth-century royal clerks found prebends in Beverley, of necessity, through the co-operation, if not always the goodwill of successive archbishops. When confronted by a determined and masterful king the latter proved as accommodating as had their predecessors, and it may well be that their ability to confine Crown servants to St. Katherine's prebend in the mid-century arose only from the weakness of the monarchy and the rapidly changing fortunes of aristocratic factions in these years.

Nepotism, lay and clerical.

The sons of the aristocracy found comparatively little place in the Beverley chapter. In former times they had been constant supplicants for prebends but papal provisions had availed them nothing in the face of unbending episcopal opposition. Only now, when their families were close to the seat of power in national government or in the diocese, were these youthful nobiles successful in gaining admission. Occasionally a clerk belonging to one of the ecclesiastical dynasties of the fourteenth century may have been underage at the time of appointment, but it was John de la Pole⁴ who had led the way in complete

1. See below, p.A.81.

2. See below, pp. A.111 - 112.

3. See below, pp.A.192 - 194; see also A.G.Dickens, The English Reformation, pp. 44 - 45.

4. See above, pp. 256 - 257.

disregard of statutory requirements. Beverley was perhaps fortunate in that his example was followed in the present period by only three high-born juveniles.

William Scrope¹ obtained St. Michael's prebend at the age of seventeen, when, in the closing years of Henry IV, the fortunes of his ill-fated elder brother, Henry, third Lord Scrope of Masham, were in the ascendant. A student at Oxford at the time, and a nephew of the late archbishop, he chose the relatively obscure, but safer, existence of a residentiary at both Beverley and Ripon, and so lived to enjoy both preferments for fifty-two years - longer than any canon in either church.

Yet more blatant was the premature promotion some eight years later of Robert Neville,² the fifteen-year-old son of Ralph, Earl of Westmorland. His receipt of St. James' prebend, to which was added the provostship in 1422, was made less remarkable, however, by the fact that he had already been granted a prebend in Auckland when only nine, and one in York soon afterwards. Papal dispensations flowed fast to enable Bowet to accede to the most powerful family pressure in the north, just as another facilitated ^{the} youthful canon's consecration as bishop of Salisbury at the age of twenty-three.

James Stanley,³ like Scrope, was in his early days at Oxford when William Booth obliged his father, Thomas, Lord Stanley, by granting him St. Andrew's prebend. For this youth it was clearly a dispensable addition, for though he retained his York prebend until his death in 1485, he severed his ties with Beverley within four years, concentrating his preferments around those areas of Stanley influence in Lancashire and the Welsh marches.

Neither Bowet nor William Booth was well placed to resist on principle such family aspirations. Both, especially Booth, themselves

1. See below, pp. A.144-145.

2. See below, p.A.75.

3. See below, p.A.55.

provide examples of the pursuit of family interests, notorious even in an age of unprecedented episcopal nepotism.¹ Again, Gray, in his partiality towards his numerous kinsmen, is recalled, but with the redeeming qualities of an outstanding archbishop, wedded, first and foremost, as he was, to the welfare of his see and its great churches.

Bowet, who came of a modestly landed Westmorland family which later moved to Lincolnshire, bestowed St. Peter's prebend upon his illegitimate nephew, Robert Bowet,² in 1415, and followed it with the archdeaconry of Nottingham, a prebend in St. Mary and the Holy Angels and another in York itself, together with a hospital near Beverley and two substantial rectories.

More lavish still were the preferments showered on another illegitimate kinsman, Henry Bowet.³ Successively archdeacon of the East Riding and of Richmond, he received prebends in York, Beverley, Southwell and Ripon, exchanging each for others more rewarding as opportunity arose, ending up with the richest in each church. There are indications that he fell foul of John Kemp, his uncle's successor, who doubtless took an unfavourable view of so many plums of his patronage in the hands of one man. In 1442, the year of his resignation from all but his prebend of Masham in York, Henry Bowet was pronounced contumacious for his lack of representation at a visitation of Beverley, and his punishment reserved to the archbishop.⁴

At all events Kemp's own nephew, Thomas, was in possession of the archdeaconry of Richmond a few months later. By this time Thomas Kemp⁵

1. Bowet, despite his lavish life-style, was a decidedly more pleasant character than either Kemp or Booth, and has received favourable comment from Professor Hamilton-Thompson (*The Fifteenth Century, in York Minster Historical Tracts*, pp. 5 - 9), who also reserves a charitable judgement for Booth (*ibid*). Regarding the latter, however, C.N.L. Brooke (*A History of St. Paul's Cathedral*, pp. 63, 91 - 92, 95 - 96) perhaps comes nearer the truth.
2. See below, p.A.164.
3. See below, pp.A.52, 104 - 105.
4. *Miscellanea*, ii (SS), p.292.
5. Emden, *Oxford*, ii, pp. 1032 - 1034.

had progressed through several prebends in York in search of higher revenues, and had eventually reached the lucrative stall of South Cave. This he temporarily lost on his receipt of the archdeaconry, but he regained it to hold until his elevation to the see of London, or rather till his consecration in 1450. This solitary clerical kinsman of Archbishop Kemp never acquired a prebend in any of the three lesser churches, but his acquisition of the rectory of Bolton Percy compensated for anything they had to offer. We may be excused for believing that it was lack of nephews rather than restraint that kept the Kemp family from Beverley.

Whatever else the Archbishop William Booth may have lacked it was not relatives in Orders. Earlier instances of nepotism at Beverley were as nothing compared with the veritable invasion of the chapter by his rising kinsmen. Within a year of his translation Booth's younger step-brother, Laurence,¹ occupied St. Stephen's prebend, and had just obtained the provostship also when, in 1457, he was promoted to the bishoprick of Durham. In the same year, however, the first of his nephews, Thomas Booth,² entered the chapter, and by the time of his death in 1464 members of the clan filled no less than four of the ancient canonries, thus constituting a majority of the chapter.

In fairness it should be said that Thomas and John Booth,³ Robert Clifton,⁴ (all nephews of the archbishop) and Thomas Worsley,⁵ the son of a niece, were not wanting in ability. John Booth, who had already followed his uncle, Laurence, in the provostship, was secretary of Edward IV, an office he continued to perform whilst chancellor of the University of Cambridge, where Thomas Worsley was long a fellow of King's Hall, and where Thomas Booth and Clifton eventually graduated.

1. See below, p.A.188.
2. See below, p.A.107.
3. See below, pp. A.55 - 57.
4. See below, p.A.146.
5. See below, p.A.128.

For the most part the Booths were competent lawyers, whose academic associations alone qualified any one of them for a prebend in the mid-fifteenth century. In their uninhibited greed for preferment they were no different from many others of their time, and in part it is their sheer weight of numbers which has marked them out as obvious examples of their kind. They came of a modest family rooted in the borders of Lancashire and Cheshire and within two generations supplied four bishops to six sees. It was their shameless and unrestrained pursuit of family interests wherever fortune took them which has soured their memory. Human nature, not without a hint of envy and self-righteousness, has always reserved special censure for "the pen-feathered gentry" who use newly found power to such ends.

Diocesan officials.

To what extent any of the Booths were usefully employed within the diocese is hard to discover, the inference being that for them high preferment did not imply local responsibility. The business of running the diocese, often in the prolonged, even perpetual, absence of the archbishop, fell to trusted clerks for the most part imported by individual primates. Usually they had proved their worth in their master's previous see, or earned his respect and favour at a still earlier stage in his career.¹ It was these men who provided the effective part of the Beverley chapter, and certainly offered the best promise of residence, even though it must have been undertaken as part of their general oversight of the diocese.

Some stayed on, or returned after an interlude, following the departure of their initial master, to serve under more than one of his successors. Such a one was Richard de Conington,² who, as Alexander Neville's official, had played some part in the visitation troubles.

¹. Of the mother church at this time it has been said "The chapter, in fact, or rather the small inner body which constituted its executive in York, reverted to its old condition with a difference. It was once more the archbishop's familia, but a familia whose head was continually absent." (A. Hamilton Thompson, The Medieval Chapter in York Minster Historical Tracts, p.15).

². See below, pp. A.162 - 163.

After Neville's fall he took up a similar post under Richard Scrope in the diocese of Coventry and Lichfield, and returned with him to York, still as official, in 1398. Scrope used his sole opportunity of presentation at Beverley to grant him St. Peter's prebend in 1405. Conington survived suspicion of implication in the archbishop's treason, to receive reappointment as official, this time to Bowet, in 1408, keeping all the while prebends in York and Southwell as well as in Beverley.

Bowet, in fact, showed uncommon kindness to his predecessor's adherents. Not only did he collate Scrope's young nephew, William,¹ to St. Michael's, but he was also responsible for awarding a prebend in York and St. Mary's in Beverley to Thomas Parker,² who proved a munificent benefactor of both churches, and who had also been a friend and clerk of the dead archbishop in his Lichfield days. Besides finding places at Beverley for his two kinsmen, Bowet gave prebends to two clerks of his own household: John Woodham,³ his official of later years, received St. Katherine's (which he quickly exchanged for St. Andrew's), and Thomas Wiot,⁴ his chaplain, St. Mary's on Parker's resignation.

Kemp's arrival at York in 1425 meant a clearer break with the past, evident not least in the chapter of Beverley. William Duffield⁵ and John Barningham,⁶ who had collation of St. Stephen's and St. Andrew's prebends, had joined him at Rochester, and now came north from London. William Felter,⁷ his chancellor, had held the same office under Nicholas Bubwith at Bath and Wells, but had been Kemp's contemporary as a fellow of Merton. He received St. Peter's prebend, resigning it

1. See above, p.278.
2. See below, p.A.126.
3. See below, pp.A.53, 210.
4. See below, p.A.126 - 127.
5. See below, p.A.187.
6. See below, p.A.54.
7. See below, pp. A.165 - 166.

shortly before his death, doubtless to facilitate the smooth succession of his younger colleague, John Lathum,¹ the archbishop's secretary. Felter's successor as Kemp's chancellor was Richard Tone,² son of a Beverley tanner. When Thomas Wiot died he had collation of St. Mary's, and continued to hold it for twenty-two years.

For these men prebends in Beverley formed but a small part of the rewards of their loyalty and service to Kemp - in terms of preferment they appear as the nephews their patron never had. Together they formed the core of the absent archbishop's administrative team, so that, in 1442, when Felter conducted a visitation of the chapter on Kemp's behalf, he met with a closely knit group of diocesan colleagues. We may suppose that such a gathering found unanimity in declaring contumacious their absentee brother, the much-beneficed Henry Bowet.

Neither Duffield nor Felter lived to serve William Booth, but the new archbishop placed every confidence in Barningham and Tone. One of his first acts was to appoint them, together with Stephen Wilton³ and John Marshall⁴ also described as residentiaries of York, his vicars-general conjunctim et divisim.⁵ Tone continued as official of York for much of the primacy. Wilton, too, was a prebendary of Beverley, having succeeded Bowet in St. Martin's in 1442. A former chancellor of Cardinal Beaufort, with a distinguished career as a royal diplomat behind him, he appears to have retired to the north sometime before Kemp's translation to Canterbury. Bishop Wilton, on the western foothills of the Wolds, was probably his birthplace, and Beverley his last home, for, a friend and executor of Provost Rolleston, another royal clerk in retirement, he was buried there in 1457.

1. See below, p.A.166.

2. See below, p.A.127 - 128.

3. See below, pp. A.106 - 107.

4. Marshall was never a prebendary of Beverley (Emden, Oxford, ii, p.1228).

5. A. Hamilton Thompson, The English Clergy, pp. 191 - 192.

The claims of William Booth's kinsmen and the lengthy tenures of Tone and Lathūm (of whom little further appears) left little room in the chapter for the introduction of more diocesan officials. With five of the eight vacancies arising during his primacy filled by his own relatives, additional, of course, to his own prebendal portion, and with the provostship in the hands first of Laurence and then of John Booth, Beverley Minster had taken on the aspect of a family church.

George Neville, who became archbishop in 1465, filled the Booth prebends, as they fell vacant, not so much with present assistants as with past friends. One of his earliest acts after translation was the appointment of his friend and associate at Exeter, Henry Webber,¹ to the provostship. He followed this two months later with St. Andrew's prebend. Whether the notion of an active dean of Exeter having oversight of the provostry of Beverley seemed absurd even in the fifteenth century, or whether such preferment was offered as an inducement to Webber to come north we do not know. In the event this distinguished West Countryman remained at Exeter, resigning the provostship but retaining the prebend, which had in fact belonged to his new bishop, John Booth. A second early beneficiary was John Burgh,² an Oxford theologian, who had also enjoyed Neville's favour at Exeter. Having already been awarded the rich prebend of Grindal in York, in 1467 he received St. Martin's in Beverley. About the same time Thomas Bloxham,³ another Oxford scholar and probably an acquaintance from the archbishop's university days, had collation of St. Michael's, but neither he nor Webber and Burgh, so far as we can tell, ever came to Yorkshire.

William Poteman,⁴ a former Warden of All Souls, who took up the provostship from Webber, and eventually acquired St. Peter's, did, however, enter Neville's service at York. He forsook Oxford to become the new

1. See below, pp. A.57 - 58.

2. See below, pp. A.108 - 109.

3. See below, p.A.146.

4. See below, pp.A.167 - 168. His name is sometimes given as Potman.

archbishop's official and vicar-general, posts which he held throughout the primacy and for much of the next. A prebendary also of York and Ripon and archdeacon of the East Riding, his will suggests that he was nevertheless a residentiary of Beverley at the time of his death in 1493. Then William Sheffield,¹ his successor as official and vicar-general under Rotherham, had collation of his prebend.

Poteman had already been provost ten years without a place in chapter, his prebend coming to him only in 1476 as the result of one of Neville's last collations. It would probably have come to him sooner had not the archbishop's political involvement resulted in his loss of the temporalities of the see for two-and-a-half years whilst a prisoner in Hammes Castle.² Four prebends became vacant during this short period. Neville may have been responsible for conferring the first, St. Michael's, upon an Oxford clerk, Richard Kelsey,³ but the likelihood is that the nomination of Edward IV's chaplain, William Dudley,⁴ shortly to become bishop of Durham, for St. James (1475), and of Edmund Chadderton⁵ and Thomas Barowe⁶ for St. Katherine's and St. Stephen's respectively, was not his doing.

Characteristically the first of the four new canons of Laurence Booth's short occupation of the see was Robert Booth,⁷ believed to be the son of a niece by an unknown nobleman. An able king's clerk who was to become Rotherham's vicar-general with Poteman, St. James' prebend (which he soon exchanged for the richer one of St. Andrew's) was for him a foretaste of better things, for in the following year (1477) he secured the deanery of York. Robert Morton,⁸ the Master of the Rolls,

1. See below, pp. A.168 - 169. See also Barrie Dobson, in A History of York Minster, p.106.

2. See B. Wilkinson, The Later Middle Ages in England, pp. 353 - 354.

3. See below, p.A.147.

4. See below, pp. A.77 - 78.

5. See below, pp. A.59 - 60, 215. See also, above, p.276.

6. See below, pp. A.190 - 191.

7. See below, pp. A.58 - 59, 78.

8. See below, pp.A.109 - 110.

as we know, received St. Martin's prebend in 1479. The other two introductions were useful and well-known Yorkshire clerks - Adam Copendale¹ and Thomas Portington². The former, who came of a prominent Beverley family, was the official of the archdeacon of Richmond, and certainly became a residentiary after exchanging his Salisbury prebend with Edmund Chadderton for St. Katherine's. Portington derived his name from a hamlet within the liberty of Howden, and his father, Sir John Portington, a king's justice, was well known to the prior of Durham.³ His friendship with Booth may therefore have been established in the latter's earlier episcopate, for though he was already a member of the York chapter, no time was lost in conferring on him the treasurership and St. James', Beverley.

Archbishop Rotherham, who succeeded Booth in 1480, had recruited a band of able administrators whilst bishop of Lincoln and imported them as a group to the York diocese. William Sheffield, Henry Carnbull⁴ and Martin Collins,⁵ who all gained high preferment at York, together with William Constable⁶ and Richard Bryndholme,⁷ who also entered the cathedral chapter, were well known to him at Lincoln. Each and all came to occupy a prebend in Beverley, and, joined in 1490 by Hugh Trotter,⁸ a Cambridge don who gained St. Michael's and the provostship in 1493, they presided over both churches, as they did over the York diocese, for the best part of twenty years. As in the days of Kemp Beverley Minster thus became a home from home for the residentiaries of the mother church, and the centre from which they presided over the East Riding archdeaconry on behalf of their normally absent master.

1. See below, p.A.216.

2. See below, pp. A.78 - 80.

3. See Thomas Burton, The History and Antiquities of the Parish of Hemingbrough (ed. James Raine) pp. 71 - 72, 382 - 383, and R.B. Dobson, Durham Priory, 1400 - 1450, pp. 132, 336 - 338.

4. See below, pp. A.60 - 61, 110.

5. See below, pp. A.191 - 192.

6. See below, pp. A.216 - 217.

7. See below, pp. A.218 - 219. *Bryndholme, in fact, never held a prebend in York.*

8. See below, pp.A.148 - 149.

Both churches had reason to remember these clerks with gratitude. Rich men furnished with ability, their association with York and Beverley is commemorated in numerous and costly embellishments of the fabric, and their pious and munificent wills bear witness to the mutual goodwill which prevailed among them.¹ Several were doubtless life-long friends: Constable, Bryndholme, Sheffield, Trotter, Collins, George Fitzhugh² and John Hool³ (who followed Carnbull in St. Martins) all possessed higher degrees in the University of Cambridge. Most of them had held official posts there, and all were intimately linked with the university when Rotherham was its chancellor.⁴

University Connections.

Throughout this survey of the fifteenth-century chapter reference has constantly been made to the university connection and background of many of its members. There is no doubting the very considerable influence of academic associations upon an archbishop's recruitment of his most trusted administrators, and hence upon the membership of the four great chapters which sustained them.

The men who found prebends in these churches, with the possible but unlikely exception of young nobiles, still in their student days, were rarely if ever the subject of papal graces, still less do they feature in university rotuli. They were clerks already on the upper rungs of the ladder of promotion in the royal service, diocesan administration or university life. A study of their scholastic background, in so far as it is traceable, confirms our belief that what really mattered in the promotion of lettered clerks in these higher realms was no longer the ability of individuals or a university to exert pressure at Rome or anywhere else, but bonds of affection and association of backgrounds and the promise of loyalty and usefulness to individual bishops. When freedom of choice has existed it has always been the case.

1. Testamenta Eboracensia (SS) 6 vols. See especially vol. iv., passim.

2. See below, pp. A.217-218.

3. See below, pp. A.110-111.

4. The recent publication of The Register of Thomas Rotherham, Archbishop of York 1480-1500, vol.i (C&Y.S.) Ed. E.E.Barker, has clarified numerous details regarding the collations of Rotherham's senior clerks (pp.93-108) ..cont.

Though the increasing influence of the university connection upon collegiate chapters throughout the fifteenth century has long been recognised, its strength is only now becoming apparent. Thanks largely to the work of Dr. Emden¹ it is now possible to reach at least a statistical assessment of episcopal favour towards graduates, and also of the partiality shown by bishops to those of their own university.²

At the beginning of the century the figures relating to the York and Beverley chapters give substance to the University of Oxford's complaints about the neglect of lettered clerks.³ Then less than half of the prebends in the two churches were occupied by graduates, many of the government administrators and high-born clerks, who gained easiest access to stalls at this time, having no academic degree.

The first ten years of Archbishop Bowet, a Cambridge man himself, perpetuated this proportion: only twelve out of twenty-five collations were in favour of university men, and only two, both at York, admitted Cambridge graduates.

When relatively small numbers are involved it would be wrong to dramatize the change which seems revealed in Bowet's remaining years. The fact is, however, that between 1418 and 1423 the archbishop filled no less than seventeen out of twenty-four vacancies with graduates, seven (again, all at York) being fellow Cambridge men. The latter representation was gained almost entirely at the expense of non-graduates; the proportion of Oxford admissions remaining unchanged.

Note 4 continued from previous page:

and the nature of their activities within the diocese.

1. A. B. Emden, A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to A.D. 1500 (3 vols); A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford, A.D. 1501 - 1540; A Biographical Register of the University of Cambridge to 1500.
2. See, for instance, Margaret Bowker, The Secular Clergy in the Diocese of Lincoln 1495 - 1520, pp. 45 - 46, 69, 157 - 158; R.M. Haines, The Associates and Familia of William Gray and his use of patronage while bishop of Ely (1454 - 78) J.E.H., xxv, no. 3.
3. E.F. Jacob, English University Clerks in the Later Middle Ages, in Essays in the Conciliar Epoch, pp. 223 - 239; On the Promotion of English University Clerks during the Later Middle Ages, in J.E.H., i, AA PP.

The effects of the healing of the papal Schism in 1417 were insufficient for us to attribute this departure to the terms of new pope's concordat with the English church,¹ yet there is no mistaking at this time a new deference to university associations, which was to be continued by all of Bowet's fifteenth-century successors. Their ability to pursue such a policy was in no way of the pope's making, for Martin V's efforts to secure the repeal of the statute of Provisors continued unabated. Whilst the blocking of provisions had favoured the administrator at the expense of the academic - an imbalance now widely recognised - a unified papacy met with more stubborn resistance in England. A greater determination not to return to the pre-Schism order of things brought the local episcopate a latitude hitherto denied it.

Archbishop Kemp's pronounced favour towards members of his own university certainly speaks of his unfettered powers in the dispensation of prebends. A fellow of Merton College, Oxford, he promoted no less than 36 Oxford men to prebends out of 62 collations in the two churches of York and Beverley. Cambridge graduates received only 6, compared with 9 which went to Merton scholars alone. 3 of the 6 Oxford prebendaries admitted to the Beverley chapter in his lengthy primacy were Merton men - William Duffield, William Felter (both former fellows) and Elias Holcote² (currently warden of the college). John Lathum, Kemp's secretary, a past fellow of King's Hall, alone represented Cambridge among the archbishop's promotions at Beverley. Unlike his Oxford contemporaries in the chapter he never acquired a prebend in York.

Apportionment between the universities was in part reversed in the collations of William Booth. Though possessing no higher academic background himself,³ Booth's family associations were entirely with

1. Further research may show that bishops such as Bowet were not unmoved by the Oxford petition and the plan put forward in 1417 for the promotion of graduates. For the general awareness of the plight of the latter at this time see E.F. Jacob, Archbishop Henry Chichele, pp. 37 - 38.
2. See below, p.A.76.
3. Professor Hamilton Thompson's assertion that Booth was a doctor of civil law (made in correction of Gascoigne) is almost certainly wrong, and is at variance with all other accounts of the elder step-brother. (A. Hamilton Thompson, Fifteenth Century (p.11) in York Minster Tracts; Emden, Cambridge, p.73).

Cambridge, his half-brother, Laurence, being chancellor of the university during much of William's time at York. His twelve years in the archbishoprick saw 15 prebends in York and Beverley go to Cambridge graduates and students (a fair number being his own kinsmen) compared with only 9 Oxford preferments. At the same time the non-graduate share of collations declined from 27% to 19% of the whole.

George Neville, on the other hand, was a Balliol man, a chancellor of Oxford for more than one period (the last whilst archbishop) and a notable benefactor of the university. It comes as no surprise, therefore, to discover that out of 31 collations to the two chapters during his eleven years' primacy 20 favoured Oxford clerks (65%) against 6 Cambridge men and 5 non-graduates. Neville's association with his university remained especially close throughout his episcopate, and is reflected in the recipients of his favour: the Oxford element counted two chancellors, four heads of colleges, two fellows of Balliol and, significantly, among those holding higher degrees, almost as many theologians as lawyers.

The fortunes of Cambridge in the chapters were restored once again by the next archbishop, Laurence Booth. During his primacy Cambridge introductions (14) outnumbered Oxford graduates by 2 to 1, King's Hall men being especially in evidence.

		Oxford		Cambridge		University Unknown	Non- Graduates	Total Collations
		York	Bev.	York	Bev.			
Henry Bowet (C)	1407 - 1417	8	3	2	-	-	12	25
	1418 - 1423	8	2	7	-	1	6	24
John Kemp (O)	1425 - 1452	30	6	5	1	3	17	62
William Booth (-)	1452 - 1464	7	2	8	7	1	6	31
George Neville (O)	1465 - 1476	11	9	5	1	-	5	31
Laurence Booth (C)	1476 - 1480	6	1	10	4	1	6	28
Thomas Rotherham (C)	1480 - 1500	13	2	11	9	-	3	38

	Oxford Graduates %	Cambridge Graduates %	University Unknown %	Graduates %	Non-Graduates %
Henry (a)	44	8	0	52	48
Bowet (b)	42	29	4	75	25
John Kemp	58	10	5	73	27
William Booth	29	48	4	81	19
George Neville	65	19	0	84	16
Laurence Booth	25	50	4	79	21
Thomas Rotherham	40	52	0	92	8

Thomas Rotherham, though a product of King's College, Cambridge, and a former chancellor of the university, had regard also for the claims of Oxford men, as befitted a former bishop of Lincoln. Above all others he chose graduates to fill his chapters at York and Beverley. Out of 38 collations only three fell to men with no degree. 20 beneficiaries were of Cambridge background against 15 of Oxford, though at Beverley the former outnumbered the latter by 9 to 2, the Cambridge clerks, who formed much the greater part of his familia, holding a place in both chapters.

The steady growth towards this virtual monopoly of stalls by men of academic attainment, characterised by a touching regard for their old universities on the part of the archbishops, is one of the two most notable features of the century which ended with Rotherham's primacy. By now senior common rooms doubtless followed the succession to the see of York, with an interest equal to that of civil servants in an earlier age. That it should have held such significance is a measure of the decline in influence of the papacy in the matter of patronage.

The virtual extinction of the power of Rome to promote to English chapters is the other factor distinguishing the processes of more recent decades from accepted practise in the previous century. Whether this was as beneficial to the local churches as it has been customary to suppose is at least questionable. The bad name gained by the papacy stemmed largely from the later thirteenth and earlier fourteenth centuries, when the attention of contemporaries, and hence of historians, focussed upon curialists and other foreigners who obtained some of the most coveted prizes of the English Church. The jealousies and indignation then aroused are easy to understand by anyone surveying the Church of York in these years, especially when account is taken of the animosity engendered by litigation. York, however, was a special target for intruders and concentration upon the composition of its chapter in a limited period has tended to obscure the fact that by far

the greater proportion of the recipients of papal graces in later years were Englishmen. If these were granted with recklessness by certain popes, they were apportioned with a detachment noticeably lacking in the collations of fifteenth-century bishops.

We have noted the presence at Beverley in earlier years of canons of few benefices and small influence, content to fulfil their residence and to merge into the East Riding scene.

When we survey the lists of highly privileged men with powerful connections who occupied their prebends a century later we must doubt whether such clerks would have commended themselves to a Booth or a Rotherham.

Papal co-operation was indeed invoked in these later years, but largely to regularise the position of members of an archbishop's close circle whose promotion was often in breach of Canon Law and conciliar injunctions. Dispensations came freely to enable such diocesan administrators as William Duffield, Kemp's chaplain, to hold more than the statutory number of benefices,¹ or to relieve the seventeen-year-old Thomas Booth, the prebendary of St. Martin's, of the necessity of proceeding to deacon's orders.² The local statute requiring him to be a priest, which in the past would have debarred him out of hand, had long been ignored, if not entirely forgotten. So had the question of regular residence. Though frequently flouted in earlier years by Crown nominees, archbishops themselves had now so far abandoned the notion of even modified residence as to make perpetual absenteeism implicit in their own appointments.

All this represented real decline at Beverley, unmitigated by our knowledge that such had always been the state of affairs in the much larger chapter at York. The requirement that the Minster should be

1. C.P.L., vii, pp. 472, 544; viii, p.529; ix, p.10.

2. C.P.L., xi, p.434; Test. Ebor., iii, p.251.

served by seven canons in priestly Orders was fundamental to its constitution, and lay at the heart of its foundation. For centuries there had been much falling away from this ancient ideal, chiefly due to forces beyond episcopal control, but in the past it had at least been upheld in principle by successive archbishops in their personal exercise of patronage. In the matter of residence Greenfield had openly acknowledged his modification of statutory demands to be a concession to "the badness of the times"; now his successors drew personal advantage from such decline. Whereas archbishops had formerly at least made gestures against encroaching decadence, in the fifteenth century they appear as active agents of decay.

The result at Beverley, as we have already noted, was that the Minster's best hope of a fully ordained residentiary lay largely in its attractiveness as a retirement home, and as an occasional retreat for diocesan officials from their labours at York. The vicars, always most active in the day to day running of the church, now took on the role of canons, and the clerkships of the Berfell, formerly regarded as virtual sinecures or bursaries for students, acquired a new importance in pastoral administration.

(f) The Pre-Reformation Chapter.

The picture we have of Beverley Minster in its closing years as a collegiate church is not a happy one. A pageant faded, manifested by neglect and decay, is the impression conveyed by such visitors as Leland and the Chantry Commissioners. All the strictures passed upon the pre-Reformation Church seem upheld by the scene they record. At Beverley, however, decline was not solely a consequence of clerical inadequacy: the number of vacant tenements listed in the provost's rentals, together with gloomy references to the fabric of buildings, bear out their verdict that town as well as church had fallen on hard times.

"There was good clothmaking at Beverle", noted Leland, "but now that is much decayed".¹ The same might have been said of the town's port and market. No longer commanding a wide and prosperous hinterland the decline of both had kept steady pace with the rise of Kingston-upon-Hull, which had long supplanted the ancient Borough as the commercial centre of the Riding.

Nevertheless, plain neglect by a spiritually debilitated Church had contributed more than a departed prosperity to the plight of Beverley's great Minster. The residences of the canons around "St. John's Chirche Yard", never in the best of repair, were now, in Leland's view, all in ruins, whilst "the fairest part of the Provoste's house is the gate and the front".² The report of the Chantry Commissioners that the Minster itself was in an advanced state of decay can only betoken many years of continuous neglect. Such was its plight in 1552, but a few years after the Dissolution, that it appeared almost past saving.³

Such a depressing picture is eloquent of the interests and attitudes of the church's custodians. It speaks of prebendaries preoccupied with temporal and scholastic pursuits in distant parts, of

1. B.C.A., ii, pp. 345 - 346.

2. ibid.

3. Yorkshire Chantry Surveys (SS), ii, p.542.

a lack of diligent oversight on the part of the Ordinary and his delegates, and of a general absence of affectionate concern for the place. A dilapidated Minster was a natural consequence of deserted prebendal mansions.

The symptoms of decay are, of course, abundantly evident in our account of the chapter in the previous century, when perpetual absenteeism must have rendered many houses in the Minster Yard superfluous. The church had survived, with indeed an embellished fabric, due to the continual representation of able diocesan officials in the chapter. Though the residence of most was at best spasmodic, Beverley was rarely left unvisited by that nucleus of northern clerks never wholly lacking among the prebendaries.

If there was any discernible departure from the past in these closing years of the collegiate body, it lay in the extinguishing even of this element of concern. In the absence of any provision within the Minster's constitution for senior dignitaries or principal personae, no canon, with the possible exception of the inferior prebendary, was charged with an obligation to reside above his fellows. At Beverley, therefore, a special responsibility rested with the patron to ensure that at least some prebends went to men likely to respond to statutory requirements. This obligation the pre-Reformation archbishops were singularly neglectful to fulfil.

Among all the sixteenth-century prebendaries about whom anything is known it is virtually impossible to find one who can be judged to have kept purposeful residence or to have been anything but a stranger to Beverley.

Thomas Savage, who came to the see of York in 1501 after three years at Rochester and five at London, can scarcely have had the interests of the chapter in mind when he filled any of the eight prebends which fell to his appointment. It is true that we know little of the activities in the north of John Foster¹ and Thomas Hulse²

1. See below, p.A.112.

2. See below, pp. A.149-150.

who were admitted to St. Martin's and St. Michael's respectively. The former had served Savage and his two predecessors in the London diocese, and though he now gained also a prebend in York he remained essentially a southern clerk. The same was probably true of Hulse, a kinsman of Andrew Hulse, keeper of the Privy Seal, in spite of the fact that he retained his prebend for twenty-seven years. Thomas Magnus,¹ more at home in the York diocese, might have held out the best hope of residence had he retained his prebend (St. Stephen's) for more than a year. As it was, he exchanged it in 1504 with Richard Mayew,² who became bishop of Hereford in the same year, for the archdeaconry of the East Riding, which he held until his death forty-six years later.

It is just possible that Thomas Dalby,³ Savage's treasurer and a royal chaplain, received his prebend during his master's primacy, and that Beverley came within the orbit of his activities in the twenty years of his association with the York diocese. We know of him only as the prebendary of St. James' Altar in the time of Wolsey, however, and the question of his residence must remain a matter of conjecture. No such hope of involvement can be held of the Tuscan Robert Munceo⁴ (possibly a kinsman of Polydore Vergil), of William Lichfield,⁵ the eminent and now elderly London clerk, or of Thomas Larke,⁶ Master of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, chaplain to Henry VIII and confidant of Wolsey, all of whom preceded him in this prebend.

Lichfield owed his prebend to Christopher Bainbridge, translated from Durham to York in 1508, another of whose collations to the Beverley chapter was that of his commissary and receiver-general, John Withers.⁷ He received John Foster's prebend of St. Martin's in

1. See above, p. 277.
2. See below, pp. A.194 - 195.
3. See below, pp. A.84 - 85.
4. See below, p. A.82.
5. See below, pp. A.82 - 83.
6. See below, pp. A.83 - 84.
7. See below, p. A.113.

1512. The possibility that Withers' business in the north brought him frequently to Beverley must be set against the fact that he held also prebends in St. Paul's and St. Martin-le-Grand in London, in Salisbury and in York, as well as the mastership of Bootham Hospital and two southern rectories.

The death in 1534 of this much favoured clerk, who had begun his career as fellow of Magdalen, provided an occasion for insight into the means by which such men came to their preferment. In October of that year Sir John Russell wrote to Thomas Cromwell on behalf of his chaplain:

"Whereas it pleased you to write to my lord of York for the advowson of the prebend held by Mr. Wythers in the Collegiate Church of Beverley for my chaplain, Manchester, and my lord replied that you should have the next prebend not much above £40, the same prebend is void by the death of Wythers. Though it is somewhat above £40, I suppose it will fall within the limits of his promise. I beseech you therefore, to remember my chaplain." ¹

In the event the prebend was awarded to the newly appointed archdeacon of Carlisle, William Holgill,² who also received Withers' prebend of South Cave in York. It really mattered little to Beverley which of the two was successful. The local church could expect little of men who regarded additional preferment as a piece of property, the acquiring of which was merely a measure of influence.

Though personal connections obviously had their uses in the quest for a prebend, on a superficial view, at least, the value of the university association still persisted. This being so, it worked in favour of Oxford graduates in the primacies of both Savage and Bainbridge. The existence of a certain fellowship is indeed implied in

1. Letters and Papers, Domestic and Foreign, viii, p.476, No. 1223.

2. See below, p.A.114.

Henry VII's recommendation of Savage and William Smith as candidates for the chancellorship of Oxford: "they both be of yow and browght upp a monge you."¹ Perhaps it is no surprise, therefore, that all save one of the eight prebends falling to Savage's disposal went to Oxford clerks.

Bainbridge was a former provost of Queen's College, Oxford, which he remembered generously in his will. Though his primacy was spent in Rome it is noteworthy that both Lichfield and Withers, and also his other nominee, Richard Newport,² were almost certainly his contemporaries in the university.

In these years, when able and ambitious clergy moved about the academic world like bees in a rosebed, it is obviously possible to press the university influence too far. Just as Savage himself had studied at Oxford, Cambridge and Bologna, and had functioned as a jurist rector at Padua, so William Rokeby,³ the future archbishop of Dublin, who received St. Andrew's prebend in 1503, was a product of both Oxford and Cambridge, and Thomas Magnus, having graduated at Oxford, acquired his doctorate of civil law in Italy.

Certainly no such common factor links the prebendaries appointed by Wolsey (1514-1530). The personal favour of the Cardinal, and usefulness in his service, now became the chief qualifications for preferment to the chapter. His collations, nine in number, were of three Oxford graduates, five of Cambridge, and one of Paris, in the person of his own natural son, Thomas Winter,⁴ who, still a student, also received the provostship.

Wolsey's prebendaries included such officials of his household (some already moved to higher things) as Robert Carter,⁵ his steward

1. Emden, Oxford, iii, p.1646.

2. See below, p.A.219.

3. See below, p.A.61.

4. See below, pp. A.169-170.

5. See below, p.A.62.

and chaplain, the humanist, Peter Vannes,¹ presently his secretary, Thomas Larke,² his confessor, and William Clifton,³ whom he appointed his vicar-general in the Province and who proved to be the last prebendary of St. James' Altar.

All of these men acquired their prebends in Beverley in the course of their progress towards more exalted posts, usually in the service of the Crown, and retained them along with the richer plums that awaited them. Though none reached the episcopate, as did Thomas Goodrich⁴ and George Day,⁵ bishops of Ely and Chichester, to whom Wolsey gave the prebends of St. Stephen's and St. Andrew's respectively, all had held fellowships in their various colleges. Some, like Robert Carter, for many years a teacher of philosophy and logic at Magdalen, continued to pursue distinguished academic careers. In any event it seems likely that all remained as much strangers to Beverley as did their patron.

If Wolsey's advancement of his academic protégés suggests a total lack of regard for the welfare of Beverley, the prebendal appointments of his successor, Edward Lee (1531 - 1544), did something to restore at least the northern character of the chapter. The king's almoner prior to his consecration, Lee was the first archbishop for over 140 years to be elevated direct to the see of York, and the last to enter upon it by a bull of provision. There is in his collations to the chapter a hint that his expressed concern for more adequate residence at York extended to Beverley. Though recipients included William Capon,⁶ for thirty years the master of Jesus College, Cambridge, and a former chaplain of

1. See below, pp. A.130 - 131.

2. See below, pp. A.83 - 84.

3. See below, pp. A.85 - 86.

4. See below, p. A.197.

5. See below, p. A.62.

6. See below, p. A.219 - 221. William (alias Salcott) was a more likely occupant of St. Katherine's prebend than his brother, John, a Benedictine monk. (loc.cit.)

Wolsey, we find among them more homely names - of men less national in character and pursuits, clerical representatives of the rising northern gentry, who had their roots in the Yorkshire scene.

Following the departure of Thomas Winter, St. Peter's prebend passed in turn to William Strangeways,¹ Cuthbert Tunstall's receiver-general, and one of the Strangeways of Whorlton who had landed interests in Osmotherley and Mount Grace, to Thomas Blennerhassett,² precentor of Lichfield, of the noted Norfolk family which found fortune in the service of the dukes of Norfolk, and finally to Robert Babthorpe³ of Babthorpe in the liberty of Howden, who, though a scholar of standing, certainly became a residentiary of York in later years.

For St. Martin's, on the death of Withers, Lee preferred, as we have seen, the distinguished northern clerk, William Holgill,⁴ rather than the chaplain of the future earl of Bedford, whilst St. Michael's was used to make modest provision for his suffragan, William Hogeson,⁵ titular bishop of Daria. Hogeson, an ex-Dominican, almost certainly carried out his episcopal functions in the East Riding, and ultimately received burial within the Minster.

Hogeson was probably a frequent visitor to the Minster throughout his fourteen years as a prebendary, but no record declares him to have been a residentiary. He died just two years before the final dissolution of the chapter, leaving Robert Babthorpe and William Clifton as the only two canons with more than a formal interest in the church.

The Chantry Certificate of 1548 gives a broad hint that these two residentiaries of York were actually present when the Commissioners

1. See below, p.A.170

2. See below, p.A.170.

3. See below, p.A.171. For the family background of this man see T.Burton, The Parish of Hemingbrough, pp. 172 - 189.

4. See below, p.A.114.

5. See below, pp. A.150 - 151.

visited Beverley. As prebendaries respectively of St. Peter's and St. James' they are listed next after the archbishop, and a valuation is placed upon their other preferments - information not available to the visitors in respect of the other prebendaries.¹ It would seem that, however infrequent and inadequate their appearances at Beverley may have been, Babthorpe and Clifton represented to the last that link of concern with the Mother Church of York which had persisted since the end of the twelfth century, and upon which our Minster had long depended for governance.

Clifton, now aged 66, was doubtless in failing health, for he died a few months later, being followed by Babthorpe, 17 years his junior, in the sub-deanery of York. Scholars both - Clifton was a doctor of both canon and civil law of Oxford, Babthorpe a doctor of divinity and a fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge - they had left promising academic careers for the field of diocesan administration in the north. Clifton had been prominent in the diocese for at least 25 years, having functioned, as we have seen, as Wolsey's vicar-general, and Babthorpe, still with many years before him, took the Oath of Supremacy and remained a residentiary at York until 1570.

Of the other canons in possession at the dissolution, Peter Vannes and William Capon, also distinguished survivors from Wolsey's day, had always been remote from Beverley, and so far as we can tell remained so to the end. We know nothing of Henry Brown,² Holgill's successor in St. Martin's, but John Rudd,³ the only other member of the chapter in 1548, pursued a chequered career which, in its way, serves to remind us of the rapidly changing face of the Church in England.

1. Yorkshire Chantry Surveys, ii, pp. 525 - 526, where Clifton's name is given as Clyeston.

2. See below, pp. A.114.

3. See below, p.A.198.

Described in the Survey as a "bachelor of dyvynyte beyng of th'age of lvi yeres or thereabouts, havynge dyverse other promotions which we know not,"¹ Rudd may still have been at Cambridge, where, like Babthorpe, he was earlier a fellow of St. John's. We, too, are ignorant of his other preferments in 1548, but two years later he received canonries in the newly constituted chapters of Durham and Winchester. Whatever the nature of his employment, his career must have been somewhat blighted by his divorce from one Isobel Weldon. He was deprived of his canonries in consequence, but, clearly not without powerful friends, he was reinstated in 1559 on an expression of penitence. If he can be identified as the John Rudd who secured the vicarage of Dewsbury in 1554, he lived on to a great age, dying sometime after 1570 as rector of Romalldkirk and the last surviving member of the ancient chapter of Beverley.

The two prebends - of St. Andrew's and St. Michael's - unaccounted for in the Survey - had in fact ceased to exist, being already in the hands of Sir William Stanhope, "chief gentleman of the Kynges Majesties Prevy Chamber."² Their last occupants had been William Gyles,³ a royal chaplain, with whom Archbishop Holgate had replaced Bishop Hogeson, and Thomas Thurlonde,⁴ also of Holgate's collation, about whom nothing is known. Both appointments can have been little more than a formality, for the prebends were, in each case, quickly surrendered to the Crown.

By Easter, 1548, under the Act for the Dissolution of Colleges and Chantries, the other six were in the hands of Stanhope, leaving the great church to its role as a simple parish church served by a solitary vicar. As such it continues to the present day, yet, brooding over the busy town in a somewhat isolated grandeur, it remains an abiding and splendid memorial to over eight centuries of "minster life".

1. Yorkshire Chantry Surveys, ii, p.526.

2. ibid, p.527. St. Michael's prebend was here apparently confused with the parish church of St. Nicholas, Beverley.

3. See below, p.A.151.

4. See below, p.A.63.

3. THE OFFICERS (OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE DIGNITARIES).

The offices of sacrist, chancellor and precentor fitted uneasily into the constitutional scheme at Beverley.¹ So, it would seem, did their occupants into the Minster community. Rarely do they feature in records as active functionaries, and numerous notices of their absence serve only to endorse what their careers generally suggest.

Though officially bound to perpetual residence,² such useful employment as remained to them in the thirteenth century justified neither their presence nor, indeed, their status. More appropriate to lesser clerks, their respective roles in the daily routine had for long been fulfilled by deputies readily available among the vicars and choir clerks.³ Both archbishop and chapter as a rule found little difficulty, therefore, in acquiescing in their prolonged absences.

By the Act Book period the value of the sacrist, chancellor and precentor alike had thus come to reside chiefly in the formality each gave to the department with which he was traditionally associated. So, when celebrants at the many altars abused their entitlement to candles, it was the rights of the absent sacrist which were invoked; adulterine schools were suppressed by the chapter in the name of the chancellor, whose moment of significance arose only when, every three years, he appointed, or re-appointed, the master of the grammar school; when, following his visitation of the Minster, Archbishop Corbridge charged the precentor with the inspection of the chant books and the correction of the choristers, he knew very well that the remedy of discordant singing lay, not with William de Hambleton, the dean of York and future Chancellor of England, but with his humble deputy, the succentor, who was probably one of the vicars.⁴

1. For their establishment see above, pp. 44 - 47.

2. B.C.A., i, pp. 290, 336.

3. i.e. the two clerks of the sacrist (later reduced to one. B.C.A., i, p.243), the succentor, and the auditor causarum and the schoolmaster who, probably from the outset, together performed the duties anciently associated with a chancellor.

4. ibid, ii, p.181.

If Hambleton,¹ in 1302, still retained the precentorship it was almost certainly as a relic of his early career. With their status pitched well below that of a canon, yet always superior to that of a vicar, the offices fell as a rule either to a young man of expectations, in the nature of a bursary, or to a lettered clerk of the middle grade, resident in the north, and probably with local associations.

Such was the case from the mid-thirteenth century onwards, and, one suspects, from much earlier years, when their holders are no more than names to us. Occupants who ultimately achieved distinction were, of course, in the minority. They included John de Crowcombe,² an esteemed and trusted servant of the see under six archbishops, who almost certainly acquired the chancellorship among his first preferments after being brought north by Walter Giffard. Encouraged no doubt by Romeyn in his zeal for residence, he resigned it in 1287. William de Ferriby,³ one of Archbishop Melton's much favoured kinsmen, held the same office (1331 - c.1334), but relinquished it whilst still a clerk of the household, long before he became archdeacon of Cleveland.

No precentor of Beverley, apart perhaps from the well-connected king's justice, Ralph de Ivinghoe,⁴ his predecessor, approached the heights of Hambleton, but a distinguished succession in the sacristy was sustained throughout the second half of the fourteenth century. It included such men as William de Dalton⁵ (1346 - c.1353) a career clerk of the wardrobe who finally became its keeper, Thomas de Oldington⁶ (1354 - 1378), also a canon of York, Hugh de Wymonderswold,⁷

1. See below, pp. A.242 - 243. He had probably held the precentorship for several years when he first appears in the office in March 1289/90. Medieval variations in the spelling of Hambleton, near Selby (his birthplace), offer no grounds for calling him Hamilton. (cf. Handbook of British Chronology, p.67).
2. See below, pp. A.250 - 251.
3. See below, pp. A.254 - 255.
4. See below, p. A.241.
5. See below, pp. A.235 - 236.
6. See below, p.A.236.
7. See below, p.A.237.

for 27 years precentor of York, and Roger de Ripon¹ who followed him, briefly, in that dignity. The sacristy, however, was the most rewarding of the three offices. Its assessment at £12,² plus the corrody of the 7th clerk of the Berfell annexed to it,³ brought it into parity with numerous rectories, and thus into the exchange market. It was by exchange that more than one much-beneficed clerk acquired it during these years.

Yet for the most part the sacrists, chancellors and precentors of Beverley were useful men of lesser stature, whose limited prospects made for longer tenures of these insubstantial benefices. The careers and employment of those who appear in the Act Book make them typical of their successors up to the dissolution, and probably of those who had gone before.

The most detailed part of the Book, covering the years from 1303 up to c.1330, speaks of nine such clerks, each office changing hands three times within the period. Together they confirm the view that here was a small but singularly useful area of preferment, of little practical consequence in the church and involving no cure of souls, which might provide suitable emoluments for small-time absentee administrators.

In the opening years the sacristy is found to be the possession of Robert de Nottingham,⁴ currently the chancellor of Archbishop Corbridge's household, and the chancellorship that of Robert de Bytham,⁵ formerly one of Romeyn's clerks, but now fulfilling an ill-defined role at Beverley. The precentorship by this time had almost certainly been bestowed upon an erstwhile vicar, Gilbert de Grimsby,⁶ probably as a reward for accompanying the English army on its recent campaign against the Scots, bearing the banner of St. John.

1. ibid.

2. C.P.L., ii, p.106; B.C.A., i, p.260 - 18 marks. Both the chancellorship and the precentorship were assessed at 10 marks.

3. B.C.A., ii, p.166.

4. See below, pp. A.231 - 232.

5. See below, pp. A.251 - 252.

6. See below, pp. A.243 - 244.

Both Nottingham and Bytham owed much to Archbishop Romeyn, who had been personally responsible for their promotion. The vacancy in the provostship following the death of Peter de Cestria had enabled him to appoint Nottingham in 1294, and so augment his rectory of Brandsburton in the provostry. Presumably receipt of this latter benefice at the hands of Cestria had meant his resignation of an interest in the church of Eaton, near East Refford, in his native county, for it was to him as rector of Brandsburton that licences to study flowed regularly to enable him to serve both Romeyn and Corbridge.

Bytham had probably come to Romeyn's notice during the archbishop's numerous visits to Castle Bytham in south Lincolnshire. It was as a 'poor clerk' promising residence that Romeyn had induced Cestria to grant him the chancellorship, and though this promise was initially at variance with his employment as dean of the farflung bailiwicks¹ the Act Book vouches for his attendance at Beverley after his patron's death.

Grimsby's promotion to the precentorship was an unprecedented departure. No other vicar in the history of the church acquired one of the offices. That this otherwise unexceptional clerk should have done so was almost certainly the result of his banner-bearing exploit.

In 1296 Edward I instructed John de Warenne, earl of Surrey, "Keeper of the realm and land of Scotland", "to provide Gilbert de Grimsby, king's clerk, who carried the banner of St. John of Beverley to the king in Scotland, and by the king's command remained there with it throughout the war, with a church in the realm of Scotland of the value of £20 or 20 marks." In view of continued hostilities in Scotland it seems likely that this Humberside clerk settled for the less substantial precentorship in his own church. As it turned out he enjoyed his windfall for but a short time, dying, not much better off, in February, 1306.²

1. i.e. of Southwell, Lanum, Sherburn-in-Elmet, Otley, Ripon, Beverley and Patrington.

2. For a fuller account of Grimsby and his fortunes see below, pp. 366-367.

Better acquainted with northern parts was Grimsby's successor Richard de Insula,¹ the son of Sir John de Insula, kt, baron of the exchequer, of Bywell² in Northumberland. His appointment to the precentorship must have been one of the last acts of Provost Robert de Abberwick, who died a few days afterwards in March, 1306. Abberwick was dean of Auckland where Insula was also one of the first canons of Antony Bek's reconstituted church. More especially he was Bek's official principal,³ and it may well have been under him that Insula first came to serve in the Durham diocese. At all events it was there that this precentor's life's work lay, not at Beverley. Appointed penitencer a month before the death of Bek in March, 1311, he subsequently exchanged his rectory of Hotham, near Beverley, for that of Long Newton, close by his more lucrative benefice of Stockton-on-Tees. Though he retained the precentorship for nearly twenty years Beverley Minster could scarcely hope to see much of such a man. Admitted initially by proxy, a long series of licences to study again provided the pretext for his perpetual absence, and any visit he may have made to the East Riding has found no record in the Act Book.

In the meantime William Melton had succeeded to the provostship,⁴ and thereafter the offices, as they fell vacant, were granted to his personal clerks, as they were to those of his associate, Nicholas de Huggate, who followed him. Nicholas de Nottingham,⁵ perhaps a relative of Robert, whom he succeeded in the sacristy, was Melton's 'dear clerk' by the time of his appointment in 1311,⁶ but whether he earned this title as a clerk of the wardrobe (he was also said to be in the king's service) or as his master's personal representative in the north we do not know. Certainly

1. See below, pp. A.244 - 245.

2. The proximity of Bywell to Corbridge suggests the possibility of a family connection with the recently deceased archbishop (See W.H. Dixon, Fasti Eboracenses, p.381, n.)

3. C.M. Fraser, A History of Antony Bek, Bishop of Durham, 1283 - 1311, pp. 132 - 135, 140 - 141, 144, 148, 160.

4. 22 October, 1308.

5. See below, p.A.233.

6. B.C.A., i, p.284.

his own successor in 1322, Nicholas de Malton,¹ was Huggate's servant in London, he being but one of the many kinsfolk of that provost to enjoy his patronage. Likewise Alan de Cotham,² who had been granted the chancellorship in the previous year, having earlier served as official of the provostry and of the archdeacon of the East Riding, appears to have ended his days in Huggate's employ.

It was in fact Cotham, acting as the latter's vicar general during his absence overseas, who granted collation of the precentorship to Richard de Grimston³ on the death of Insula. In this Huggate obliged the archbishop, whose clerk Grimston was, just as he acquiesced, in 1331, in the appointment of Adam de Haselbeck,⁴ Melton's chancellor, and of William de Ferriby, his clerk and nephew, to the sacristy and chancellorship respectively.

In all these appointments the Beverley chapter co-operated as a matter of course, readily authorising leaves of absence with the sole stipulation that a competent deputy be provided.⁵ Throughout the Act Book period two officers only, both chancellors - Bytham and Cotham, whose tenures together, apart from a brief interlude, spanned ~~its~~ years - were resident for any length of time, giving a false impression of attendance on the part of the rest. Even so, no definite niche in the routine ordering of the church appears to have been found for them. Both graduates, apparently with some legal knowledge, they feature chiefly, when not appointing the schoolmaster, as assessors of dilapidations of vacant prebendal houses,⁶ and occasionally as deputies of the auditor in the admission of prebendaries and vicars.⁷ One feels they would not

1. See below, p.A.234. At his admission he was described as natus Willelmi de Maltona de Huggate.

2. See below, p. A.253.

3. See below, pp. A.245 - 246.

4. See below, pp. A.234 - 235.

5. B.C.A., i, p. 290; ii, p.70.

6. ibid., i, pp. 92, 282, 353.

7. ibid., i, pp. 268 - 269, 295, 363.

have been missed had they not been there, any more than were the absent sacrists and precentors.

So, perhaps, it had always been, for the literary activities of Alured,¹ the first sacrist on record, and his appearances as a witness of charters in distinguished company, accord ill with the concerns of the vestry. So it certainly continued up to the final years of the collegiate church.

In the choir of Beverley Minster today are four misericords each inscribed with the name of its lawful owner in 1520, the year of the present stalls' erection.² Three remain the only tangible memorials, not merely to the sacrist, chancellor and precentor of the day, but to all their predecessors from Alured and his contemporaries onwards.³ In so far as they commemorate a locally domiciled chancellor and two absent fellow officers they recall accurately their counterparts of the Act Book.

Of William Wyght⁴ we know little beyond the fact that his condition of health in the spring of 1529 was of more than passing concern to those with an interest in the future of the rectory of Brandsburton. Patrington, another church of the provostry, was also his four years earlier, leading to the belief that, since he is not known to have held other preferment, he was essentially a local man.

The same cannot be said of Thomas Donyngton,⁵ the precentor, still less of William Tait,⁶ the sacrist. Though the former probably came from Dunnington, near York, he moved in a far wider circle. Whether he was useful to Wolsey, beyond keeping him informed regarding Wyght and Brandsburton, we do not know. We can only surmise that it was not for

1. See below, pp. A.228 - 230.
2. John Bilson, Beverley Minster: Some Stray Notes, in Y.A.J., xxiv, pp.229 - 230.
3. The fourth was that of John Wake, clericus frabrici, presumably the clerk of works.
4. See below, p.A.257.
5. See below, p.A.247.
6. See below, pp. A.238 - 239; see also S.L. Ollard, Fasti Wyndesorienses: the Deans and Canons of Windsor, p.74. He is described as 'Treasurer' on the misericord.

nothing that the Cardinal granted him prebends in both York and Southwell. In 1520 Tait's only known support, apart from the sacristy, were the rectories of Everingham and Thwing, both within the Riding. The better things which awaited him were clearly not gained through prolonged residence at Beverley, serving a church which can have offered little fulfilment to a doctor of civil law of Bologna, who was shortly to become almoner to the infant Duke of Richmond and a member of the Council of the North. By this time he had acquired prebends in York, Exeter and St. George's Chapel, Windsor, as well as the plum rectory of Chelmsford. He died in 1540, requesting burial, not at Beverley, but at Windsor.

All three had long since left the scene when the Chantry Commissioners descended on Beverley in 1548. Their successors were apparently not at hand to profer information regarding their other preferments. Others were left to report their sacrist to be 'well lerned', but unable, presumably, to boast a degree in divinity as could his two ageing colleagues.¹ We are assured elsewhere that none of them suffered penury as a result of the dissolution of their collegiate church.

¹. See below, pp. A.239; A.248; A.257. Robert Sherwood, the last sacrist, is probably the same person as the clerk of that name in Emden, Oxford, iv, p.700.

4. THE VICARS

Even an Act Book ostensibly concerned with the affairs of the chapter leaves its reader in no doubt that the burden of the daily administration of the Minster and its parish fell not so much upon the prebendaries as upon their vicars. If this was the natural lot of deputies at all collegiate churches it was especially true at Beverley, for here the vicars differed in basic function, if not in constitutional status, from those elsewhere.

From the outset their duties were first and foremost pastoral, not choral. In this they differed from the vicars choral of York and of other great secular cathedrals. It was the prime concern of each of the vicars, certainly of the seven attached to the 'ancient' prebends, to minister in the place of his master in the parochial area associated with the latter's stall.¹ Even his two colleagues whose pastoral obligations are not evident (attituled as they were to the eighth canon and to the archbishop) were never accounted clerks of the choir by reason of their vicarages. Contemporary documents (though not subsequent commentators) are therefore scrupulous in never describing the vicars of Beverley as vicars choral.² Though attendance at the main choir offices was strictly enjoined upon all of them,³ throughout the middle ages each canon was officially represented in choral duties by a second clerk,⁴ usually in minor orders, who never aspired to the title of vicar whilst holding that office.

In their work in the town and the far-flung parish beyond it was, therefore, the vicars, not the prebendaries, who in fact perpetuated the ministry of the primitive canons, and so fulfilled to the end the role of

1. B.C.A., ii, p.59.

2. For rare exceptions see Nicholas de Huggate's will (ibid, ii, p.123) and also the Chantry Certificate (Chantry Surveys, ii, p.528) where, however, their pastoral duties are summarised.

3. B.C.A., i, pp. 241, 245.

4. ibid, ii, p.59.

the ancient Minster. In all things spiritual they were the effective pastors to their respective parishioners, who, living within reasonable distance, were expected to resort ^{to} their appropriate altar in the church. It was the vicar who joined them in marriage, baptised their children, heard their confessions, visited the sick, and finally buried them. He was in every sense their parish priest, vigilant alike against poaching colleagues and intruding friars.¹

Parishioners living further afield received the Sacrament at one of the outlying chapelries at the hands of the vicar in whose area it lay. Only one of these chapels rose to anything approaching independent status. This was the Chapel of St. Mary, now itself a magnificent parish church, situated close to North Bar, approaching three-quarters of a mile distant from the Minster. Attached to St. Martin's Altar, it served that prebend's considerable area in north Beverley. In 1269 Archbishop Giffard created it a second vicarage, and apportioned to it a generous share in what had hitherto been far and away the richest prebend.² Though its dependence upon the Minster was frequently reiterated by the chapter, and though the prebendary of St. Martin's always appointed its vicar, St. Mary's gradually gained the pre-eminence as a parish church which it retains to this day.

The date of the institution of vicarages at Beverley is uncertain. It is unlikely that it preceded the creation of prebends, but it must have followed closely upon an innovation calculated to release the canons for wider service. Bearing in mind the basic necessity of their work, it is natural to suppose the appointment of vicars to have been an immediate consequence of the prebendal system, inaugurated (as we believe) by Archbishop Roger in the later twelfth century.³ We may judge it inconceivable that either this careful administrator or his successor-but-one, Walter Gray, would have induced canons to serve in their episcopal households without making alternative formal pastoral provision.

1. ibid., i, p.243; ii, p.59.

2. B.C.A., i, pp. 194 - 196; see also Leach's comments, ibid., pp.lxxix - lxxxi. In all, the income of the new vicar was to total 35 marks.

3. See above, pp. 37 - 43.

In fact the Ordinance of the Refectory, if we can accept its alleged antiquity and assume that it was not the subject of subsequent amendment, bears out this conclusion. In according to all nine vicars a corrody in the Bedern, each sitting at table 'in the place where his predecessors sat', this document asserts their existence in the closing years of the twelfth century.¹

It may well be that ^{the}work of the prebendal vicars qualified them for the description 'chaplains' in these early years of their existence, in which case seven witnesses of the grant of a rent to the High Altar (1190 - 1210), so designated, were possibly among the earliest of their number.² In much the same period a group of six, containing several of the same names, described as 'chaplains of the church of Beverley', feature in a similar charter of Peter de Fauconberg.³ It seems unlikely that the then lowly Berefellarii⁴ are referred to here, or that the church of Beverley at this time could muster so many chantry priests. Even so, the known presence of some such clerks within the Minster body must render any identification precarious.

1. See above, pp. 137 - 138 . The only copy of the Ordinance known to survive is preserved in the register of Alexander Neville, among the documents relating to that archbishop's dispute with the chapter in 1381 (See B.C.A., ii, pp. 249 - 252). A somewhat confused translation of what was probably the original is offered by Poulson (op cit., ii, pp. 532 - 534) under the heading Order for the Ministration of the Refectory in the Bedern. It is here derived from the Warburton Papers (Lansdowne MS No. 896, fol. 132) where it is said to have been written on "an old roll of parchment of the time of Henry II, Richard, or John, as the character in which it is written shows, in the custody of Master Sedgwife, vicar of Marflete, who gave it to my friend." This imprecise dating is borne out by its contents, for, as has been noted earlier (above, pp. 46 - 47), the sacrist and the chancellor are there recognised by their primitive titles of custos ecclesie and magister scholarum, no mention being made of a precentor, who would certainly have been included had his office then existed. A Master William appears as precentor, however, c.1199 (see below, p.A.241).
2. B.C.A., ii, p.291. Hiis testibus Alexandro, Roberto, Hely, Engelramo, Ada Longo, Thoma, Galfrido, capellanis (for the dating of this charter compare E.Y.C., iii, 1102 - 1103).
3. Y.D., ix, p.11. The witnesses in this instance were William, Robert, John, Ingram (Hingelram), Thomas, Adam and others.
4. See below, pp. 329 - 335.

As it is, the first vicars, clearly named as such, do not appear until 1273. By then, however, they have all the marks of a long-established body, with an independent legal identity. All nine acted together in granting a house in Minstermoorgate to Ralph Ivinghoe, the precentor, revealing themselves as a corporation, capable of receiving and conveying property, and possessing a common seal.¹

Each vicar was nominated by the incumbent prebendary. On what grounds, beyond the statutory qualifications, he was chosen was never recorded. When the appointing canon was a local man or a residentiary personal relationships could, and did, play a part, but there must have been numerous occasions when disinterested absentees left selection in the hands of the chapter. At all events it was the latter which received the nomination, examined the candidate, and, subject to a satisfactory report, admitted him to his vicarage.

Enquiry into the character, orders, learning and age of his nominee was deemed the responsibility of the prebendary concerned, and his testimony was normally accepted as sufficient.² Separate examination was made, however, of the clerk's ability to read and sing the services.³ Since the majority of vicars had earlier been clerks of the second form, and presumably, therefore, pupils of the grammar school, this was probably the task of the precentor, who had correction of the choir,⁴ and of the school-master.

On the face of it, it would seem unlikely that the chapter, ever jealous of its rights, conceded any part in the examination of its clerks to the chancellor of York. Nevertheless, in 1389, this dignitary received a papal mandate to

Examine William Ibbotson, priest, of the diocese of York, and, if he find that he reads, construes and sings Latin well and speaks it

1. B.C.A., ii, pp.295 - 296; below, p.A.259.

2. B.C.A., i, pp. 65, 211 - 212.

3. ibid, i, p.65.

4. ibid, i, p.53.

becomingly (congrue) and is otherwise fit, or if he cannot sing well, but swears to learn within a year, to collate and assign to him the perpetual vicarage of St. Mary's, Beverley ,.....¹

We are not to suppose that this process was often repeated. Though the very considerable powers of the chancellor in matters of education were effective throughout much of the diocese, it is most improbable that they penetrated the peculiar jurisdiction of a church such as Beverley. The vicarage in question was not one of the nine within the Minster, but the one attached later to St. Martin's prebend, and the vacancy occurred in the immediate aftermath of Alexander Neville's deprivation, when the situation at Beverley was particularly unstable.² Be that as it may, unfortunate experience had clearly taught all concerned to exercise great care in the vetting of prospective vicars, and, significantly, in establishing that they were acceptable to their future colleagues.³

Once his suitability had been verified little time was spent in admitting the nominee to his vicarage. Having taken the customary oath to be faithful and obedient to the chapter, to guard its secrets, and to fulfil the obligations of his office,⁴ he was inducted by one or more of the vicars to his appropriate stall in the choir, and the places assigned to him in the refectory and dormitory.⁵

Originally the value of his vicarage consisted in the ample victuals served in the refectory, noted in an earlier chapter as being the corrody of the canons also.⁶ In his ordinance of 1391 Archbishop Arundel assessed

1. C.P.L., iv, p.334.

2. The succession in St. Martin's, the prebend of the lawful patron, had only recently been resolved.

3. B.C.A., i, p.212. The chancellor of Beverley (for whose limited educational functions see above, p.192) being in no way comparable in status with the chancellor of York, and frequently an absentee, is unlikely to have been involved in these proceedings.

4. Ego A, fidelis ero et obediens Capitulo Beati Johannis Beverlacensis, eiusque ministris, in canonicis et licitis mandatis; et secreta Capituli incommunicata ad secreta tenebo et nulli pandam, in Capituli dispendium, praejudicium seu gravamen: onera vicariae meae incumbantia pro posse meo fideliter supportabo. Sic Deus me adjuvet, et haec Sancta Evangelia Dei. (B.C.A., i, p.53).

5. B.C.A., i, p.212.

6. See above, pp. 148 - 149.

the worth of these at £8,¹ which sum remained the recognised stipend of a vicar at the Dissolution.²

Whether this sustenance was ever replaced by a money payment, apart, that is, from instances of special constraint, is difficult to say. Probably not, for, to the last, the vicars were expected to reside in the Bedern, and presumably to share a common board. Certainly the findings of an inquisition into the emoluments of the Bedern's butler, which were said to be the same as those of a vicar, suggest that in 1427, at least, all received payment in food and drink.³ In addition the vicars were awarded modest sums for their observance of feast days and obits,⁴ and collectively they were in weekly receipt of 4 bushels of wheat from the provost.

This last payment in kind on the part of the provost continued to the end, but by this time it was for distribution as alms, rather than for retention by the vicars. For long the bursar of the Bedern had received a cash sum in respect of all corrodies claimed in the refectory, those of the vicars amounting to £72.⁵ It was he, with the steward, who was responsible for the purchase of their food in the markets of Beverley.

Though all nine vicars were accounted equal both in basic status and allowances certain distinctions were evidently made among them. In the first place they were led by a formally recognised senior vicar, a primus inter pares, whom they themselves probably elected, and who normally headed the list when they appeared collectively in contemporary documents. By 1316 he was Alan de Humbleton,⁶ vicar of St. James' Altar since 1285, and

1. B.C.A., ii, p.273.

2. Poulson, op. cit, ii, p.642; Chantry Surveys, ii, p.529.

3. E.R.A.S., v, pp. 42 - 43.

4. Payment for obits was probably derived from lands vested in the vicars for the purpose, producing about £12 annually (see above, p. 71). The alleged value of lands given in the Chantry Certificate of £91.17.2 undoubtedly includes the sum of the vicars' stipends i.e. £72. (Chantry Surveys, ii, p.529).

5. Poulson, op. cit; ii, p.642.

6. B.C.A., i, p.342; see below, pp. A.259 - 260.

by several years the longest standing. After his death in 1330, however, his mantle seems to have fallen upon John de Hornsea,¹ who ranked only fourth in seniority of appointment. Clearly a man of ability, he was, in addition to being the vicar of the greatly esteemed Robert de Pickering at St. Peter's Altar, both succentor² and master of the works.³

Secondly, there were occasions when a distinction had to be made between the vicars of the seven ancient canonries and those of the archbishop and the eighth canonry. The former alone shared a special relationship with the parish of Beverley - a common concern which probably set them apart from their two colleagues, at least in the minds of parishioners. This may well explain how the seven vicars of the senior canons came to be patrons of the chantry of St. Katherine's Altar, to which they presented a second John de Hornsea in 1335.⁴ All nine, however, constituted the "company of the vicars"⁵ which acted corporately on numerous occasions, and there is no evidence to suggest that the distinction extended beyond the strictly legal circumstances relating to the chantry.

Of what quality and background were these clerks who, above all others, brought both activity and stability to the Minster precincts? In the case of Beverley any conclusions must be drawn almost exclusively from the brief period of the Act Book. Fortunately the impression conveyed by later snatches of information is that the vicars as a whole varied little either in habit or character over the years.

At first sight the Act Book suggests a rapidly changing concourse in the Bedern. Investigation reveals this to be an illusion, however, created by the misfortunes of one vicarage, St. Michael's, and the relatively short tenures of the archbishop's vicars. Against these should be set the record

1. B.C.A., ii, pp. 115, 130. He was appointed to his vicarage c.1318.

2. ibid, i, p.385. From 1307 till 1318 he had been chaplain of Pickering's recently founded chantry.

3. ibid, i, pp. 264, 317, 341, 377; ii, pp. 10, 11, 30, 35.

4. ibid, ii, p.115.

5. ibid, p.6.

of the four vicars appointed during the seven years from 1285 to 1292, who together gave a total of 139 years of service to their church.¹ One of their number died in 1301, after 14 years, but the same decade saw the introduction of four more who continued with them for 32, 17, 16 and 29 years respectively.² Thus, whilst the Act Book's 35 years saw no less than eight changes in St. Michael's vicarage and four in that of the archbishop, St. Andrew's, St. James' and St. Mary's fell vacant but once, St. Martin's and St. Peter's twice, and St. Stephen's three times. Hugh de Ottringham,³ vicar of St. Katherine's for 47 years (1292 - 1339), was in possession for the whole of the period.

Clearly the general policy was to appoint young men in the expectation of long service, and for these patrons rarely looked beyond the confines of their church. The natural recruiting ground for both vicars and chantry priests was the second form of the choir. Here were 17 clerks,⁴ presumably in their early twenties, progressing towards the priesthood. Acolytes, subdeacons and deacons, in more or less equal proportions, they were almost certainly all recent "graduates" of the grammar school.⁵ Appointed for three years only, we would probably be correct in identifying them with the nine choir clerks of the prebendaries, the precentor's clerk and the seven clerks of the parsons or berefellarii.⁶

1. Alan de Humbleton, Robert de Kirton, Robert de Sigglesworth and Hugh de Ottringham (See below, pp. A.259 - 260). Their contemporary, Robert de Langtoft, whose date of appointment is unknown, was a vicar for at least 19 years (ibid).
2. John de Risingdon (see above, pp.172 - 174), Thomas de Graingham (See below, p.A.263), John de Swine (See below, p.A.265), Thomas de Grimsby (ibid).
3. See below, p.A.259.
4. Though 17 is the figure given in the Chantry Certificate (Chantry Surveys, ii, p.530) 19 were listed as present in the chapter house in 1305 (B.C.A., i, p.52) i.e. 6 deacons, 5 subdeacons and 8 acolytes. 21 clerks of the second form were summoned to appear before Alexander Neville in 1381 (ibid, ii, p.231).
5. B.C.A., ii, p.127 - where an interesting graduation custom is made binding.
6. Archbishop Arundel's Statutes (ibid, p.267); see also Chantry Surveys, loc.cit., where the variation in stipends seems to support this grouping.

Obviously not a few of these young men returned to their parishes in the East Riding and north Lincolnshire. By no means all are known to have acquired priestly Orders, but scrutiny of the ordination lists of the Act Book shows this select group of grammar school pupils to have been a training ground for future vicars. At least six occupants of vicarages in the latter part of the period are to be found working their way through the lists, or on the second form, in earlier years.¹

In view of the fact that a Beverley vicar needed to be fully ordained in order to do his work, it was a generous concession which allowed one newly appointed a year's grace in which to be priested.² Had the prebendaries been accustomed to look further afield for their deputies this would have been wholly unjustified, and it was clearly made to meet the circumstances in which no suitable deacon was ready for priesthood at the time of a vacancy.

From this common background arose several obvious features of the "company of vicars".³ Firstly, a visitor to the choir would be struck by their widely disparate ages: close by Alan de Humbleton and Hugh de Ottringham, both approaching 70 in 1330, stood the recently ordained John de Roos and Thomas de Huggate, still in their mid-twenties. At the dissolution the age-range was much the same - from Robert Flee, the senior vicar, aged 68, to Thomas Dryng, aged 27.⁴

Secondly, though vicars of the fifteenth century sometimes bore names of more distant places, in the years of the Act Book they were almost

1. John de Swine, Thomas de Grimsby, Richard de Ottringham, John de Hornsea, John de Roos, Thomas de Huggate (See below, pp. A.265 - 268). Some came to their vicarages after a period of serving a chantry. The progress of John de Hornsea is typical: an acolyte of the second form in February, 1305 (B.C.A., i, p.52), ordained subdeacon in May, 1306 (ibid, p.131), deacon in the following December (ibid, p.174) and priest in May, 1307 (ibid, p.203), he was four days later appointed chaplain of Robert de Pickering's recently founded chantry (ibid, p.205). Pickering presented him to the vicarage of St. Peter's Altar in May, 1318, when it first fell vacant. (ibid, pp.357 - 358).
2. B.C.A., i, pp.125 - 126. The canonical age for ordination to the subdiaconate was at least 18, to the diaconate 19, to the priesthood 24. (Liber Clementinarum, I, 6, iii).
3. B.C.A., ii, p.6.
4. Chantry Surveys, ii, p.529.

invariably drawn from the three deaneries of Harthill, Dickering and Holderness, together with one or two from the Lincolnshire bank of the Humber. This, we may suppose, represented the catchment area of the grammar school. The only certain importations from outside the region in the fourteenth century were in fact the six vicars choral brought over from York by Alexander Neville to maintain the services at the outset of the so-called "clerical strike" of 1381,¹ and throughout the middle ages the great preponderance of vicars remained local in origin.

Finally, these men, as they appear in the Act Book, usually turned out to be clerks of both energy and ability, and, for the most part, of stable temperament. Carefully selected, in the first instance, for the second form,² examined again and again for their Orders by the same authority, and ultimately for their vicarages, and observed over the years in their general performance, these "home-grown" products of the church entered upon its permanent service familiar with its interests and routine.

The parochial work of a vicar not being onerous,³ many of them became obvious choices for all manner of offices and tasks about the Minster. Not a few supplemented their allowance by serving chantries as well as their vicarages,⁴ as did Alan de Humbleton, who managed to find time in his earlier years to function also as the archbishop's penitencer for Beverley and as master of works.⁵ In this last important task he was succeeded by John de Swine and John de Hornsea, who performed it satisfactorily throughout a period of intense building activity.⁶ The

1. B.C.A., ii, p. 241; A History of York Minster, ed. G.E. Aylmer and R.Cant, p.101.
2. ibid., i, pp. 53, 189.
3. The population of the Minster parish at the time of the dissolution was reckoned to be 2,878, which meant an average of 420 parishioners for each of the seven parochial vicars. The Chapel of St. Mary served 1,800 "houslyng people", and Holme (St. Nicholas') Church 360, giving Beverley then a total population of 5,038. (Chantry Surveys, ii, pp. 529, 538).
4. B.C.A., i, pp. 211, 265, 282, 288, 342 et passim.
5. See below, pp. A.259 - 260.
6. B.C.A., i, pp. 264, 317, 341, 377; ii, 10, 11, 30, 35.

work of the able John de Risingdon, auditor causarum and chamberlain of the chapter for some 25 years, has already received honourable mention.¹ In conjunction with him must be noted other able administrators among the vicars such as Thomas de Graingham, who undertook the exacting task of sequestrator of the provostry following the deprivation of Provost Aymo de Carto,² and Hugh de Ottringham, succentor for fifteen years during the perpetual absence of the precentor.³ More venturesome, if less enduring, was the commission allotted to Gilbert de Grimsby,⁴ John de Rolleston⁵ and Thomas de Huggate⁶ who in turn bore the celebrated banner of St. John on the campaigns of three kings against the Scots.

On the whole Beverley was very well served by its vicars. The image of them, as it appears in the Act Book, is of a responsible, able and industrious body of men, who brought sustained dedication to their work. The colourful exploits, faults and indiscretions of a few, culled from legalistic records stretching over a long period, could be brought together to present a picture unbroken turbulence and indiscipline in the Bedern, but it would serve entertainment more than justice. The great majority of vicars, here as elsewhere, were never the subject of official complaint, and led lives blameless in the eyes of authority.⁷

In the instance of fourteenth century Beverley it is almost solely the sorry story of the succession to St. Michael's vicarage which suggests a contrary view. Of the eight vicars appointed in less than 25 years five proved less than satisfactory.

1. See above, pp.172 - 174.

2. B.C.A., i, pp. 22, 24, 28, 129.

3. ibid, pp. 66, 385.

4. See below, pp. A.261,

5. See below, p. A.261.

6. See below, p.A.268.

7. Leach's introductory comments upon the vicars follow a reprehensible, if then fashionable, approach to the misdemeanours of the medieval clergy (B.C.A., i, pp. lxvi - lxvii).

When, towards the end of 1304, William Nightingale resigned as vicar with a pleasing testimonial from the chapter,¹ his prebendary, William de Lincoln, nominated Robert de Grimsby his successor. Prior to his admission rumour had it that Robert was engaged to be married to Juliana, daughter of Stephen de Grimsby. Before a packed chapter house both parties swore that there was no truth in the allegation, and he was duly admitted by the chapter in February, 1305.² Almost exactly a year later Robert was once more summoned to answer the charge that he had not only gone through with the marriage and consummated it, but had also entered into an agreement to pay Juliana an annuity from the vicarage in order to conceal the fact.³ Suspicions must have been aroused, and matters brought to a head, by his failure to proceed to the priesthood within the time allowed. It was, in fact, for this reason that he was deprived in April, 1306.⁴

Part of the blame at least must be apportioned to William de Lincoln, whose own moral conduct was under question, and whose lack of care, or worse, initiated this local cause celebre.⁵ His reputation as a judge of character can have been scarcely enhanced by his choice of one, Thomas de Yarwell, as the next vicar of St. Michael's.⁶ Barely four months after

1. ibid, p.44.

2. ibid, pp. 51 - 52.

3. ibid, p. 111.

4. ibid, pp. 125 - 126.

5. In the autumn of 1305 Robert de Grimsby was appointed general proctor of the chapter (ibid, pp. 86 - 87). His immediate task was to protest against the summoning of Lincoln, his master, before the official of the Court of York, to answer what turned out to be his alleged moral lapse with one Cecilia de Beckingham (ibid, pp. 87 - 88, 94 - 96). No doubt it was the York official's initiative which forced the chapter to act against Lincoln, but perhaps it is pure coincidence that both prebendary and vicar were approached a second time by the chapter, on their respective counts, within the same week of February, 1306. (ibid, pp. 110 - 111).

6. It would appear that a Robert de Swineshead, who is listed as vicar but once - in October, 1305 - was in fact serving the vicarage in the interim, owing to Robert de Grimsby's inadequacy of Orders, or possibly his suspension pending enquiry regarding his marital status. (B.C.A., i, p.96; see below p.A.264).

his admission in April, 1306, this man was accused of adultery with the wife of Roger le Barber.¹ In 1309 he was the alleged ringleader in an episode which, we may suppose, led him before judges less easily satisfied:

"The jurors say that master Thomas Yarwell, vicar of the church of the blessed John of Beverley, with two other clerks and many others, by force of arms cut the cord with which John, son of Richard de la Mare, who for divers felonies perpetrated by him, was adjudged to be hung, and took away the same John by force of arms alive and led him away. Therefore a precept is issued to the sheriff of Yorkshire to attach him."²

Yarwell's departure, though not recorded in the Act Book, must have been abrupt, for his successor, Alexander de Cave,³ has all the appearance of a stop-gap. The latter appears only on the occasion of his resignation in October, 1310,⁴ in favour of Richard de Ottringham,⁵ a clerk much regarded by Lincoln's successor in St. Michael's prebend, William Melton. This fortunate young man, made acolyte at Ripon only in September, 1309,⁶ was rushed through ordination in order to reach the diaconate within a year. Shortly after Melton's consecration as archbishop Ottringham was granted the substantial benefice of Kneeton in Nottinghamshire⁷ and entered his patron's episcopal household.⁸ When he renewed his association with Beverley in 1329 it was as prebendary of St. Stephen's, thus becoming

1. ibid, pp. 149 - 150.

2. Poulson, op. cit, ii, p.552.

3. See below, p.A.265. Cave is four miles from Melton, the home of the new prebendary and future archbishop, who at this time was disputing the prebend of Cave in York with Cardinal Neapoleo Orsini (Reg. Greenfield, i, pp. 33, 35 - 36). What was Alexander's relationship, if any, with the king's justice, Sir Alexander de Cave, kt?

4. B.C.A., i, pp. 267 - 268.

5. See below, pp. A.175 - 182, 266.

6. B.C.A., i, p.253.

7. ibid, pp. 306 - 361.

8. Reg. Melton, i, (C.Y.S., pt., cxliii) Nos. 23, 24, 379, 408, ii, No.291.

the only vicar ever to enter the chapter.¹ Suspicions that Melton was responding to the claims of kinship in such advancement of an otherwise obscure clerk are reinforced by the knowledge that Ottringham's successor in the vicarage was indeed the future primate's relative.

William de Melton² proved a disappointment both to the chapter and his patron, and may have been the cause of a distinct coolness between them in the period which followed. His first five years as a vicar were unexceptional, but in 1323 he was before the auditor on a double charge of incontinence.³ A few weeks later the latter is found remonstrating with the York chapter which required him to answer a charge brought by one of its female tenants.⁴ Thereafter he went absent without leave. In deference to the archbishop the Beverley authorities postponed his deprivation three times, but, after fruitless consultation with his family at Melton, finally implemented the sentence in September, 1324.⁵

As the records of the Act Book become sparser in its closing years references to vicars also become fewer. Space is found, however, to inform us that the next two vicars of St. Michael's, Thomas de Sigglesworth⁶ and John de Roos,⁷ both shared the moral failings of their predecessors, or were, at least, required to prove their innocence before the chapter.⁸

Why the prebendaries of St. Michael's failed so consistently throughout this period to find a stable clerk to serve their vicarage

1. See below, p.A.275. The doubts expressed here as to whether vicar and prebendary were indeed one and the same man have been resolved by the recent publication of two parts of Melton's Register (Reg. Melton, i, No. 24; ii, No. 360. See also B.C.A., i, p.361).
2. See below, p.A.267.
3. B.C.A., ii, pp. 33, 47.
4. ibid, p.37.
5. ibid, pp. 50 - 53.
6. See below, p.A.268.
7. ibid.
8. B.C.A., ii, pp. 77, 128.

must remain an open question, but perhaps this sorry tale serves as an object lesson to all patrons who allow personal considerations to divert them from the best interests of their trust.

In the two centuries which followed we hear little or nothing of the vicars of Beverley as individuals. Only their perpetual residence is vouched for by the records. They were all present in the chapter house in the spring of 1381 to express corporate loyalty to their masters, if not reverence for their archbishop.¹ Reinstated after almost a decade in exile beyond the reach of Neville, the full complement next feature in a charter of 1400, acting as a resident body as they had frequently done in the Act Book.² All were present, together with a complete role of the lesser clergy, at William Felter's visitation of the Minster in 1442, when their main fault, so far as we are told, was failure to wear their habits when taking the sacrament to the sick.³ It may have been such laxity which prompted a re-drawing of the Statutes of the Vicars twenty years later. In these the chapter re-iterated in detail rules and practices which had long governed their existence, but which may have gone unobserved in the absence of active prebendaries.⁴

Of the nine vicars noted by the Chantry Commissioners (c.1548) only their senior, Robert Flee, could be described as "well lerned".⁵ Aged 68, and clearly a man of parts, he maintained to the last the vicars' tradition of wider involvement in the church's affairs, being at once

1. B.C.A., ii, pp. 233-234, Their departure and exile from the Minster have been recounted by Leach (ibid, pp. lxxvi et seq.). The exception, understandably, was Robert de Lowthorpe, the archbishop's vicar, who remained and took the oath (ibid, pp. 204, 231).

2. Y.D., ix, p.19.

3. Miscellanea, ii, (SS), pp. 274-275.

4. University College MS lxxxii. Registrum Statutorum Ordinationumque ad ecclesiam collegiatam S. Johannis de Beverlaco spectantium.

1. Praemittuntur statuta per vicarios ordinatur in capitulo; dat. 15 Nov.1462
pp. 1-5.

5. Chantry Surveys, ii, p.529.

Receiver General and Warden of the Babric¹ and also the organist² - all this in addition to holding the benefice of Leven nearby.³ Of his colleagues it could only be said that they were "of honest qualities and indifferently lerned."⁴

Nevertheless it was from their number that Thomas Michel was chosen to be vicar of the reconstituted parish church, with two of his former colleagues, Thomas Dryng and William Grigges as his assistant curates.⁵

1. Poulson, op. cit., ii, p.635.
2. ibid., p.638.
3. Chantry Surveys, ii, loc cit.
4. ibid.
5. ibid., p.553.

5. THE BEREFELARII OR PARSONS

"Also in the saide churchē there be vii persones which were first ordeyned in thē said churchē as clerkes by Saynt John of Beverley in the yere of our Lord God DCIII, and after that named persones by one Aldred, bisshop of Yorke, and be bounde to do daily servyce in the quyre of the said churchē, having, every of them, for their lyving in money paid by the provoste of the saide churchē viii. xiiis. iiiid., and be made incorporacion by Kyng Edward the Third, dated the first day of February, anno regni sui xi".¹

Clearly it was not to the purpose of the Chantry Commissioners to report precise information about the Minster's history. Little indeed is known of the origin and role of the clerks to whom they here refer, but it is enough to indicate that this brief summary was the result of slipshod recording, possibly of verbal evidence.

In what must be the realm of supposition the placing of the institution of the Berefellarii by Bishop John two years before his translation to York is an error of no great consequence, but to attribute to Ealdred the work of Arundel is to anticipate by more than three hundred years a crucial juncture in their history. The date of incorporation is also wide of the mark, the correct one being 21 February 1472/2, that is, the eleventh year of Edward IV, not Edward III.²

Dating in these last two instances is important, for they represent the salient points in the story of this mysterious body of men. Sixteenth century records assert that Bishop John, besides making provision for seven priests, the predecessors of the canons, established an equal number of clerks to serve as Levites, i.e. deacons or assistants in the Sanctuary.³ Whether this be true or not there existed at Beverley from time out of mind

1. Chantry Surveys, ii, p.529.

2. E.Y.A.S., v, p.45; see also, below, p.334.

3. B.C.A., ii, pp. 343, 344 et eos statuit fungi officis Levitarum.

a group of clerks who, if not Culdees or anchorites, were probably of similar antiquity.¹

The earliest reliable evidence of their existence belongs, however, to the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. The Ordinance of the Refectory made provision for seven pauperes who, though not listed among the corrody holders, were to receive sustenance in alms, each from the entitlement of the canon with whom he was associated.² It was probably this which, early in Gray's primacy, was jeopardised by the growing practice on the part of the canons, now prebendaries, of eating in their own houses.³

In March, 1222, it was alleged that the latter "when they meet to dine they cause their portions to be taken where they please, defrauding the poor and converting the profit made to unlawful uses".⁴ Three years later a papal mandate directed the dean, archdeacon and the sub-dean of Lincoln "to warn and induce the chaplains and other clerks to abandon the evil custom of taking their meals away from the common table, so that the poor are deprived [of the remains] ".⁵

So far as the prebendaries were concerned the process towards commuting the corrody of food into money payments had already begun. When this happened an allowance in cash to the seven clerks, in lieu of alms, could not long be delayed. From the outset this probably amounted to the four marks each, which was reckoned as the value of their portions in the Act Book.⁶ We may suppose that the ultimate result of this development

1. A. Hamilton Thompson, Northumbrian Monasticism, in Bede, His Life, Times and Writings, pp. 89-90, where the possible Culdee origin of the canons themselves is considered. See also, above, p.5 n.1.
2. B.C.A., ii, pp. 251-252.
3. See above, pp. 149-150.
4. B.C.A., ii, p.xxiii.
5. C.P.L., i, p.100.
6. B.C.A., i, pp. 150, 256.

was to make these pauperes stipendiary, and to endow them with the formality of clerkships within the constitution of the church.

In 1290 Romeyn's Ordinance of Residence lists them as such, as a matter of course, with other members of the Minster body, under the title Clerici de Berefeld (alternatively Barfell).¹ An act in convocation of 1305 refers to them as clerici Berefellarii, and a month later they are called septem clerici qui dicuntur Berefellarii.² Nothing at all is known regarding the origin or meaning of the word Barfell,³ but its association with the seven clerks persisted until 1391, when Archbishop Arundel pronounced that they should henceforward be known as 'parsons'.⁴

Thus, in the course of the mid-thirteenth century, the seven poor men who received alms in the refectory, chosen "by joint decision of the provost and canons",⁵ had gained formal recognition as seven clerks, appointed now by the provost alone.⁶

Yet this implied, so far as we can tell, no definite role in the service of the Minster. If they had been bedesmen in origin, as Leach suggested, they feature in the Act Book as little more than holders of bursaries. On being admitted, however, each was installed in a definite place in the choir.⁷ Perhaps, therefore, it was their obligation to participate in the services which required them to appoint deputies when absent,⁸ and gave the provost the right to remove them if they neglected their duties.⁹

1. ibid, ii, pp. 166 - 169.
2. ibid, i, pp. 50 - 51, 56. At no time did Berefellarius mean canon (as given in Medieval Latin Word List).
3. Occasional references to the seven clerks as 'clerks in the Barfell' indicates that it was an establishment within the precincts, in much the same way as the Bedern. The root (bere-) suggests 'a grange'.
4. B.C.A., ii, p.269.
5. ibid, p.252.
6. ibid, p.307.
7. ibid, i, p.395; ii, p.42.
8. ibid, pp. 73, 391.
9. ibid, p.50.

Beyond this no hint is given as to what their duties were. Clearly they were not of vital importance in the running of the church, for though they were charged with perpetual residence, admission to a clerkship was frequently accompanied by formal leave of absence. In such cases subsequent licences for non-residence usually followed, normally at two yearly intervals, to enable the recipient to fulfil prolonged service elsewhere.

Thus, the disreputable John le Porter received leave at the request of Sir Henry Percy,¹ returning at length to lead a rebellion of the cooks of the Bedern;² Walter de Harpham was apparently of use to John Sandal, bishop of Winchester,³ whilst John de Amcotes, described as having "a portion in the Barfell" was long in the service of Stephen de Mauley, archdeacon of Cleveland.⁴ Only one clerk is known to have used his leave of absence for genuine study at a university: William de Anlaby, who came to a clerkship whilst still a minor, received a succession of licences specifically for this purpose, and returned in due course a graduate.⁵ He remained one of the *Berefellarii* for further seven years, and since during this time he held no other benefice it is likely that he, too, found a place in some household.⁶

By the end of the thirteenth century poverty was no longer a necessary qualification for the award of a clerkship. Quite apart from the improbability of a graduate being destitute we must conclude as much from the identity of at least two of the *Berefellarii* named in Romeyn's Ordinance of 1290.⁷ Unless the circumstances of both Robert de Cruca and Osbert de Spaldington changed dramatically within the following decade both were already men of substance. In 1300 the former, now a knight, is found contesting a substantial estate in north Wales in an important

1. *ibid*, p.304; *Reg. Greenfield*, i, p.184.

2. See above, pp.141 - 142.

3. *B.C.A.*, ii, p.53.

4. *Reg. Greenfield*, i, pp. 42, 82 & n.

5. *B.C.A.*, i, pp. 73, 129, 176, 327.

6. *ibid*, pp. 256, 386, 394.

7. *B.C.A.*, ii, p.167.

law suit,¹ and by 1303 the latter, also a knight, was attorney of Lord Roos of Hamlake.² Such knowledge alone lends credibility to an entry in the Act Book showing a clerkship to have been held by Mr. William de Pickering up to within four years of him becoming dean of York.³

With the clerkships in the hands of well-to-do absentees or unruly residents, and one augmenting, as it did, the sacrist's stipend,⁴ they had obviously become a travesty of their original intention. They brought neither relief to the poor nor benefit to the church. No group within the Minster community stood more in need of rescue than did the Berefellarii.

Apparently it was left to Archbishop Thoresby to remedy matters. According to Arundel's statutes of 1391 it was he who "for the honour of the said church of Beverley, and the greater decency of ministrations in the same, ordained that the parsons, formerly called berefellarii, should conform in habit to the parsons officiating in the divine worship in our cathedral and metropolitan church of York."⁵ To this Arundel added the injunction that they should no longer be known by the derisory name of Berefellarii (probably rendered in local parlance as "barefellows") but as parsons.⁶

Since the parsons or rectors of York were in fact chantry chaplains⁷ Arundel's requirement that all officers and parsons at Beverley should be

1. Reg. Corbridge, i, pp. 34, 40 - 41.

2. ibid., i, p.141; ii, pp. 25, 122.

3. B.C.A., i, p.107. Provost Robert de Abberwick, then at his church of Auckland, assumed Pickering was dead. In spite of surprise at finding the latter in this context we prefer to think this an error (a not unusual one in medieval times, but in this instance not repeated in the local documents) rather than recognise here a second Mr. William de Pickering.

4. B.C.A., ii, p.167. This, however, was a temporary expedient.

5. B.C.A., ii, p.269.

6. ibid.

7. Serving individual foundations (See Barrie Dobson, The Later Middle Ages, 1215 - 1500 in A History of York Minster, pp. 96 - 97.

ordained priest within a year of admission applied equally to the former Berefellarii.¹ This would explain their dramatic rise in salary from four to ten marks (£6. 13. 4)², and the fresh insistence upon their continuous residence.³

Though their old name died hard⁴ there is no doubt that the reforms of Thoresby and Arundel initiated a new and more dignified era in the history of the seven clerkships. All the parsons were present, and seemingly approved, at William Felter's visitation of the Minster in 1442.⁵ Indeed, throughout the remaining years of their existence they appear as much a part of the normal resident establishment as were the vicars, enjoying rather less pay, but similar status. Housed now within the confines of the Bedern, unlike the vicars they were not there as of right, but paid a modest rent for their accommodation to the provost.⁶

It was, therefore, a body changed out of all recognition, but this time by formal injunction, which received incorporation in February 1472. Then it was the diminished "corrodies or stipends of the same parsons not sufficient to support their said status and burdens" which moved Edward IV to show them this crowning, if somewhat belated, favour:

"..... Endeavouring in the best way he can to make their amelioration, advancement, and redress greater, and to relieve their poverty, so that they may maintain their station in the aforesaid choir more decently and honourably for the future he grants to the said seven parsons in the aforesaid choir, and to their fellows and successors, the following liberties, namely, that they shall be a corporate body by the name of

1. ibid, p.271.

2. B.C.A., ii, p.273.

3. ibid, p.271.

4. It was still used to describe one of the parsons in 1398 (E.Y.A.S., v, p.41).

5. Miscellanea, ii, pp. 274 - 275.

6. B.C.A., ii, p.316.

'the seven parsons in the choir of the collegiate church of the Blessed John of Beverley', and shall sue and defend, and hold property as a corporation".¹

The benefits arising from this new status were plain to see within two months. In April of the same year the parsons described as "the seven priests in the choir", corporately undertook, for an annual payment of one mark, to pray daily for the souls of Lord Vescy and others, and to ensure the future performance of the specified masses by investing the capital sum in property.² The seventy-six years leading up to the Dissolution brought them other similar assignments, as their ultimate annual rental of approaching £9³ almost certainly indicates.

Yet though in this they conformed in role, as well as in habit, to the parsons of York, they were never their true counterpart. Their corporate identity and function of "costly and daily personal presence at all canonical hours" in the choir at Beverley⁴ remained to the last, to keep them distinct from chantry priests in both churches.

Much further removed, however, was this respectable and well-ordered group, "of honest conversacion and lernyd", from the motley collection of pensionaries of the Act Book, or from the pauperes of still earlier years.

1. E.Y.A.S., v, p.45.

2. Y.D., ix, pp. 26 - 28.

3. See above, p. 71. Leach is beyond doubt in error in accepting the Chantry Certificates' assessment of the "yerely value of the landes yssues and proffitts belonging to the said parsons" at its face value, i.e. £52. 8. 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ net, since this figure includes the sum of their stipends (i.e. £46. 13. 4). This sum, already included in the provost's outgoings would otherwise be unaccounted for. The same considerations apply to the Certificate's assessment of the vicars' revenues. Quite apart from this, however, it is quite inconceivable that these two bodies should possess estates together equalling half those of the entire provostry. (B.C.A., i, p. lxxiv; Chantry Surveys, ii, pp. 524, 529, 530; Poulson, op cit., ii, p.644).

4. E.Y.A.S., v, p.45.

CONCLUSION

The Chapter Act Book illuminates Beverley's collegiate church much as a flare displays the night scene. Coming after long years of comparative darkness, the novelty and detail of its revelations create for the reader the illusion of a new beginning. What, in fact, is offered is a vivid snapshot of an institution, functioning as it had done for many generations, and as it continued to do, albeit with declining vigour, for a further two hundred years.

The more copious coverage of the Book extends over rather less than four decades (1303 - c.1339) - a brief span in the context of almost four centuries of prebendal life, and still shorter in the history of a church claiming eighth century origins. Four hundred years had passed since Athelstan had refounded the community allegedly established by Bishop John of Beverley, and only half that time remained before it was all brought to an end at the Dissolution. Thus, by the early fourteenth century, most of the medieval Minster's long story lay behind it. So, we may believe, did the peak of its fortunes.

Though the present splendid nave and West Front had yet to be built, we can see in retrospect that both town and church had already entered upon their years of slow decline, from a high point of prosperity probably reached by the end of the twelfth century. The canons of the Act Book, sustained, as they were, by extraordinary and diverse revenues, doubtless remained unaffected by any change in the tide, but they can scarcely have been oblivious to progressive contraction and decay around them, consequent upon the departure of the cloth industry from Beverley. Moreover, it would be strange if an institution, which, in better days, had reflected the vitality of its town, did not, in the long term, share the debilitating effects of the rise of Kingston-upon-Hull, a few miles downstream.

The reasons for the Minster's decline in its latter centuries were, however, deeper and more subtle than their participation in the economic misfortune of the surrounding community. They were also more deeply seated than a mere sharing in the general religious climate (of which collegiate churches were usually sensitive barometers). To the end the

church remained one of the wealthiest in the North, indeed, in England. For provost and prebendaries alike local commercial decay was balanced by the growth of the Riding as a corn producing region, far beyond subsistence level, with all that this meant for the revenues from thraves. The ills which we discern in later years had their roots, rather, in circumstances inherent in both the Minster's constitutional development and in its geographical situation.

As a visitor to the East Riding travels eastwards he is conscious, even today, of leaving behind the mainstream of activity, of entering a limb of the North Country, somewhat removed from the vital arteries of national life. In an age of easy transport the Minster remains a diversion largely for the purposeful traveller. In the hey-day of Beverley there were, thanks to commerce and a celebrated shrine, many such, and genuine concern for a vigorous church must have made the road from York familiar to many a notable cleric. The years which followed, however, saw a diminution in the flow of pilgrims, and also in the number of canons prepared to make the journey.

In the Old English ordering of the diocese of York the churches of Beverley, Ripon and Southwell had emerged from faltering beginnings to acquire the wealth and pre-eminence, if not the formal standing, of departmental cathedrals. To describe them as daughter churches of York is to note their relative status within a vast pastoral area, rather than to assert a close family relationship. As with stars in a constellation any such image is an illusion of distance - distance, that is, in time, which tends to impose upon widely separated institutions a cohesion unknown to contemporaries. Beverley's church reached the post-Conquest era, invigorated by the recent reforms of Archbishop Ealdred, established as the focal point of a self-contained region of almost diocesan proportions. Such isolated aloofness, tolerated, perhaps even encouraged, in earlier years, no doubt accorded ill with Norman notions of ecclesiastical government, but as long as the Minster retained its ancient, self sufficient, constitution, and housed a community essentially identified with the area, it was likely to remain the centre of its own world apart.

A variety of circumstances, not least the indivisible character of the church's endowments, all at a low ebb after the harrying of the North (which seemingly left the community itself virtually unscathed), determined the response of the first Norman archbishop. His institution of the provostry effectively preserved, rather than altered, ancient forms, and allowed the consolidation within the new order of many distinctive features of the Anglo-Saxon constitution. These survived even the introduction of a prebendal system, thus postponed, some eighty years later.

Surveying from our vantage point in time the subsequent history of Beverley, we can see how prebendal reorganisation, though leaving much superficially unchanged, came to have a profound effect upon the church's role and ultimate plight. It represented the crucial step in drawing the community out of the isolation in which it had so long presided, into a mainstream in which its Minster increasingly featured as a backwater. The innovation did not, of course, spell the end of the Minster as the mother church of its region, but in releasing its chief personnel for involvement in a wider ecclesiastical scene and, at length, in the concerns of government, it introduced them to loyalties and preoccupations far removed from the precincts. Even in the primacy of Walter Gray a dramatic change had registered in the composition of the chapter, dominated now by clerks whose main vocation lay not at Beverley but in the service of their master.

From the archbishop's point of view, eight substantial prebends made a welcome addition to his total field of patronage. As dignities and prebends at York slipped from his gift it became a contribution of increasing value, not least because strange revenues, never easy to collect, and the requirements demanded by a cure of souls, deterred intruders. Under a resolute archbishop Beverley in the Act Book period could still expect a fair succession of concerned canons in its chapter.

There were, however, limits to the resolution of the archbishops who followed Gray. Though statutes were invoked to repel distant papal provisors, men such as Walter Giffard and William Greenfield, who had

risen high in national government, apparently experienced little difficulty in admitting to the chapter royal clerks of similar ilk, who offered no better prospect of residence. Moreover, the rules of the church were no proof against the Crown's nomination of wholly unqualified absentees during the frequent vacancies in the see.

The passage of the fourteenth century saw the prebends of Beverley immersed more and more in a national marketplace of preferment, or so we judge from the quality and occupation of clerks entering the chapter in its later years. The resolving, at length, of the vexed problem of thraves, consolidating prebends into more readily recognisable entities, coincided, not only with the eclipse of the papal power to provide, but also with the withdrawal from the Minster of the active and immediate concern of its patron.

Among the first casualties in the general rush for prebends, wherever they could be found, was the homely northern clerk, given to residence or, at least, to small-time involvement in diocesan affairs. Those who prevailed were, more often than not, men who added the pickings at Beverley to an already substantial collection of benefices. The best the collegiate church could hope for were men of local roots, who would, perhaps, return after long service elsewhere to spend their declining years in their native East Riding.

In the fifteenth century, vacancies in prebends tended, for the most part, to benefit either kinsmen of the ruling archbishop or his loyal representatives in the North, who ran the diocese in his absence. When, in 1442, a distinguished member of the latter group, William Felter, dean of York, carried out a visitation of the Minster on behalf of Archbishop Kemp, he met only with the proctors of five of his fellow prebendaries (two of the latter being unrepresented).¹ It was a far cry from even 150 years earlier, when archbishops, then visiting in person, could anticipate an attendance of five or six canons - still further from the closely-knit community of the post-Conquest years.

¹. Miscellanea, ii (SS 127), p.273.

In these circumstances, we may reflect, the collegiate church had not been well served by those primitive elements within its constitution, which, in better times, had redounded to its benefit. Those endowments, notably the corn renders which by their nature had perpetuated Anglo-Saxon forms through the eleventh century, had, in the event, also held the size of the chapter to seven, and inhibited the creation of dignities of the standing of those at York. Beverley thus offered only a small number of comparatively wealthy prebends which, now consolidated, were attractive to precisely the type of clerk least likely to reside. Equal in status, they left no room for a formally constituted residentiary body. Since none of their occupants was obligated to reside to an extent beyond his fellows, and all received their corrodiaries in the Bedern, present or not, by the fifteenth century Beverley, somewhat remote as it was, could expect to see little of any of them. Moreover financial inducement to reside was, we may be sure, much less than it had been in former years. From the time of Archbishop Greenfield it had been derived from a share in half the offerings at the Shrine of St. John, but now the age of pilgrimage was long past its prime, so that by the Dissolution it was scarcely worthy of mention.

By this time, we must believe, it was the vicars, for so long the true pastors of the parish, who effectively ordered the day to day life of the church. Residentiary canons of York, with a prebend in the lesser chapter, doubtless paid Beverley a visit from time to time, and asserted their rights as the chief custodians of the place. Certainly more than one embellished the fabric in a munificent and pious will. Their time there, however, was rarely prolonged. The Minster, for all its grandeur, was no longer a church to attract or detain for any length of time the busy official, still less the ambitious pluralist. Its venerable and imposing presence must alone have sustained it as the ecclesiastical centre of the north Humber region. Even so, the parish church of St. Mary, which originated as a chapelry of one of the prebends, had gone far to supplanting it in the affections of Beverley as the town church.

Testimony is not lacking of the Minster's material decay as the time of dissolution approached. At the end, even a generation often callous to architectural merit thought its magnificent fabric worth preserving, but the collegiate body, which it had sheltered for so long, was swept away, it seems unlamented.

Numerous vital institutions which perished in these years might be thought to have deserved a better fate. The hard truth is that the medieval Church of St. John had long ceased to be vital in any understanding of that word. So, in 1548, six hundred, perhaps nine hundred, years of 'Minster life' was ended, without protest, by all accounts, from a populace for whom it had become increasingly irrelevant.

APPENDICES

- I THE PARTITION OF THRIVES - Note on Archbishop Roger de Pont l'Eveque and Provosts Thomas Becket, Geoffrey and Robert.
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APPENDIX ITHE PARTITION OF THRIVES

NOTE ON ARCHBISHOP ROGER DE PONT L'EVEQUE AND PROVOSTS THOMAS BECKET, GEOFFREY AND ROBERT.

Since the opposition of the provost of Beverley might be expected to represent the major obstacle to the creation of prebends supported by thrives, hitherto his chief asset,¹ Roger's relationship with the three successive provosts of his primacy is of crucial importance in establishing him as their founder in their ultimate form.

In all the debate surrounding Becket and his colleagues his activities and interests in the Northern Province have received little or no attention. Basically this is because a single isolated and most informative charter of William Fitzherbert has gone unnoticed.

Sometime in the years 1153-1154, probably during his final thirty days at York in 1154, this archbishop handsomely augmented the York prebend of Apesthorpe, then held by Thomas, Provost of Beverley, in consideration of Thomas' expenses in coming to York to assist the archbishop in the affairs of the church.² This almost certainly means that Becket succeeded Provost Thurstan who died in 1152 or 1153,³ either at the hands of Murdac, or during Fitzherbert's brief return. With equal certainty it excludes Roger de Pont l'Eveque from the list of provosts. Belief that Roger vacated the provostry on his consecration in 1154, and that he was then succeeded by Becket hangs on a single statement of an anonymous biographer of the

1. By this time the total value of thrives throughout the East Riding almost certainly exceeded the revenues of the estates of the provostry.
2. E.Y.C., i, No.155; see also C.T. Clay, York Minster Fasti, ii, p.4.
3. See below p.A11.

latter.¹ Only W.H. Dixon, long ago, has rejected this assertion,² and his judgement and Leach's doubts³ are certainly vindicated by the chronology of the provostry succession.

Dr. Saltman's impression that hitherto "the more glittering prizes as yet eluded Thomas", and that at this stage he had acquired only "a fair collection of modest benefices"⁴ must therefore be greatly modified, for when Archbishop Roger came north to take possession of his see his rival was established in a lucrative prebend of his cathedral church and in the yet more wealthy provostry.

With this in mind it is intriguing to know why, within five months of his enthronement, Roger sought and gained for Beverley and its possessions the protection of the new Pope Adrian IV.⁵ Though there was nothing novel in this - numerous foundations, chiefly of the religious orders, resorted to each incoming pope, especially since the lawless times of Stephen⁶ - at this time its necessity, at least in the case of Beverley, is not obvious.

Honorius II had indeed set a precedent when, at the request of Archbishop Thurstan, he confirmed, in rather less explicit terms, Beverley in its possessions⁷. This was in 1125, in the provostship of Thomas 'the Norman', who, according to Simon Russell, was guilty of alienating the

1. Materials for the Life of Thomas a Becket, (Rolls Series) iv, pp.10-11. Memorato Rogerio.... in Eboracensi sede consecrato, absque mora archidiaconatum Cantuariensis ecclesiae et praeposituram Beverlaci, quae Rogerius obtinuerat, cum aliis ecclesiis pluribus Thomae assignavit. Simon Russell dates Thomas' provostship from the time of Murdac (B.C.A., ii, p.335).
2. W.H. Dixon, Fasti Eboracenses, ed. James Raine, p.234 n
3. B.C.A., ii, p.xii.
4. A. Saltman, Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury, p.167.
5. B.C.A., ii, p.254. Leach gives the date as 1 March, 1154, but this must be wrong since it precedes the accession of both Adrian and Roger. The year is 1155, bulls at this time reckoning the year from the Feast of the Annunciation.
6. Z.N. Brooke, The English Church and the Papacy, pp.185-187; Charles Duggan, in The English Church and the Papacy in the Middle Ages (ed C.H. Lawrance) pp.105-106.
7. E.Y.C., i, No.112; B.C.A., ii, p.332.

possessions of the provostry.¹ Even so Honorius addressed himself dilectis filiis suis Thome Preposito Sancti Johannis de Beverlaco et Canonicis eius imperpetuum, and proceeds to a mere confirmation.

Adrian's Bull, however, ignoring the provost, is simply to Canonicis et universo Capitulo. This may mean nothing or a great deal, but it is strange that no reference is made to the very officer in whom the possessions concerned were vested. The fact that Adrian explicitly places the canons' heritage under the protection of the Holy See may be no more than an expression of exalted papal claims at this time,² but it does seem that Roger and Becket were not acting in concert here, and that it was no part of the archbishop's purpose to establish further the latter's position as provost.

At least the way is left open to the possibility that Roger's real object was to assert the ultimate entitlement of the chapter to the church's assets, of which Thomas as provost was in reality no more than steward. Certainly this would be a necessary preliminary to wresting the thraves, specifically mentioned, from the provost, were Roger contemplating such action at this stage. If this was indeed the case, it could just be that Thomas, in the outcome, was in some measure compensated by the award of one of the new prebends, and that, after all, Simon Russell is right in crediting him with the prebend of St. Michael's Altar, with a place in the enriched chapter.³

1. B.C.A., ii, p.335. Hic vero multa de Prepositura alienavit jure hereditario de Preposito tenenda, in feodo, que de mera possessione ecclesie prius erant.
2. B.C.A., loc sit. Ea propter, dilecti in Domino filii, venerabilis fratris nostri Rogeri Eboracensis Archiepiscopi precibus inclinati prefatam ecclesiam S.Johannis sub Beati Petri et nostra protectione suscipimus et presentis scripti patrocinio communimus, Statuentes ut bona et possessiones cum redditibus que juste et canonice possidetis in Austriding, in travis et denariis et aliis ecclesiasticis beneficiis, vel in futurum, donante Deo, juste atque canonice poteritis adipisci, firma vobis vestrisque successoribus et illibata permaneant.
3. B.C.A., ii, p. 335; below p.A133. Because Russell, possibly, as we have seen, rightly, places Thomas' appointment to the provostry at the end of Murdac's primacy, we are not to assume that he received a prebend at this (we believe, too early date. Canons were always required, from the earliest times, to be in Holy Orders. Thomas was, and remained, a deacon, but we may believe that neither he nor Roger were the sort of men to be diverted from their purpose by such an obligation.

The archbishop's relationship with Provost Geoffrey, his nephew, was altogether different - one of patron rather than of rival. Though almost certainly Thomas' successor in the provostship, Geoffrey's first appearance as such occurs only in mid-1169,¹ apart, that is, from the local charter which he witnessed, and which we believe belongs to the years 1162-1164.² He died tragically in a shipwreck in 1177.³

Certainly he owed his appointment to Roger, whose favour, if a hostile chronicler is to be believed, he richly enjoyed. We are told that the archbishop purchased for him the chancellorship of the young King Henry at a cost of 11,000 marks, presumably in 1174 when the initial holder of that office died.⁴ Judging from the episcopal charters he witnessed in the ensuing years he remained close and loyal to his uncle throughout his provostship, and he seems to have had every reason to remain pliant and co-operative. Even if this extended to parting with a large part of his emoluments as provost he could scarcely claim to have gone unrewarded.

Of Provost Robert, who first appears in office in 1181,⁵ the year of Roger's death, we can say nothing in this connection. Like so many of his leading colleagues he was at odds with Archbishop Geoffrey; and with his brother Ralph d'Aunay, archdeacon of York, resorted to paying 500 marks for the king's protection "as his demesne clerks."⁶ We learn later from a legatine decree⁷ that Geoffrey had "taken things away from Robert Provost of Beverley", but these clearly involved only the latter's prebend of Sherburn, and were made good by a payment of just over 40 marks.

1. E.Y.C., i, No. 86.

2. See above, p.35.

3. See below, p.A12.

4. Imagines Historiarum of Ralph de Diceto, Rolls Series, i, p.406.

5. See below, p.A13.

6. B.C.A., ii, p.xvi.

7. Ibid.

Quite apart from the possibility that Roger dealt with Thomas or (Provost) Geoffrey in the matter of thraves, it is equally conceivable that he seized the opportunity provided by either of the two vacancies in the provostship which followed their respective departures. In this event he would negotiate directly with the chapter, which was unlikely, we may suppose, to object to such an advantageous proposal.

Such evidence of the archbishop's relationship with the three successive provosts of his episcopate is, of course, in itself inconclusive, but it serves its purpose in demonstrating that he had ample opportunity of overcoming the most obvious obstacle in creating a fully-fledged prebendal system at Beverley.

SUMMARY OF THE PROVOST'S THRIVES OF HOLDERNESS

The following corn renders (in oats unless otherwise stated) representing thrives due annually to the provost from religious houses and the parishes of Holderness appear in a composition of 1450/51 made between Provost John de Barningham and the executor of his predecessor, Robert Rolleston.¹

Designed to clarify ambiguities in a similar agreement of c.1294 between Provost Aymo de Carto and the executor of his predecessor, Peter de Gestria - which served to regulate the transfer of assets of the provostry on subsequent occasions² - these quantities had possibly held good throughout the intervening years.

The Grange of Wawne	(Abbey of Meaux)	13 quarters + 6½ drag
The Church of Keyingham	(" ")	17½ "
" " " Easington	(" ")	44 "
" " " Skipsea	(" ")	43 "
" " " Aldborough	(Abbey of Kirkstall)	63 " + 31½ drag
" " " Withernsea	(" ")	22 "
" " " Kilnsea	(" ")	21½ "
" " " Owthorne	(" ")	58 "
" " " Skelkling	(" ")	24 "
" " " Hollym	(" ")	20 "
The Rectory of Paull	(" ")	32½ "
The Church of Garton	(Abbey of Thorne)	35 "
" " " Humbleton	(" ")	72 "
" " " Frothingham	(" ")	34½ "
" " " Atwick	(Priory of Bridlington)	40 "
" " " Ottringham	(" ")	28 "
The Priory of Swine		122 " + 61 drag
The Rectory of Wawne		6½ " + 3½ drag
" " " Routh		6½ " + 6½ barley

1. Provost's Book, ff113 - 116 ; printed in Poulson, op cit, ii, pp.596 - 600.

2. B.C.A., i, pp.136, 143 - 144.

The Church	of Preston	30 quarters 6 bushels 3 pecks + 17 - 7 drag
"	" Leven	16 " + 15 barley
"	" Holmpton	$22\frac{3}{4}$ "
"	" Skeffling	$20\frac{1}{2}$ "
"	" Hornsea	65 "
"	" Barmston	21 "
"	" Catwick	20 "
"	" Burton Pidsea	20 "
"	" Coldon	$6\frac{1}{2}$ "
"	" Sproatley	22 "
"	" Goxhill	$8\frac{1}{2}$ "
"	" Hilston	$6\frac{1}{2}$ "
"	" Nuthill	3 "
"	" Beeford	47 "
"	" Mappleton	60 " 7 bushels
"	" Halsham	20 "
"	" Tunstall	21 "
"	" Patrington	77 "
"	" Roos	43 "
"	" Winestead	20 "
"	" Withernwick	32 "
The Vicarage of Paull		$6\frac{1}{2}$ "
The Church of Rise		4 " + 4 wheat 4 drag
"	" Sigglesworth	$27\frac{1}{2}$ "

Thraves due to the provost from other deaneries¹

Deanery of Dicker

Haisthorpe 3 quarters 6 bushels

Reighton 3 quarters

The College of Lowthorpe 20 quarters

Deanery of Harthill

Skidby $22\frac{1}{2}$ quarters

North Burton $22\frac{1}{2}$ quarters

Swanland ?

¹. Sources named in the above list, but quantities omitted.

Renders from Holderness omitted from the 'provost's list', possibly due to the sacrist.¹

The Church of Brandesburton	89 quarters ²
The College of Sutton-in-Holderness	55 "
The Priory of Nunkeeling	32 $\frac{1}{2}$ "

1. The Valor lists the contributions of Hornsea and Riston as being also due to the sacrist.
2. All three quantities are deduced (at 1s 4d per quarter) from money payments listed in the Valor i.e. Brandesburton 118s 8d, Sutton-in-Holderness 73s 4d, Nunkeeling ('Priory of Killing') 43s 4d (Valor, v, pp.119, 110, 115.)

APPENDIX IIISUMMARY OF PREBENDAL THRIVES

Thrive contributions allocated to individual prebends accounted for all parochial and monastic sources in the East Riding outside Holderness (i.e. in the deaneries of Harthill, Dickering and Buckrose), with the exception of the Durham liberty of Howdenshire, part (but not all)¹ of the liberty of the Dean and Chapter of York, and a few minor renders due to the provostry. Almost invariably they are available to us only in money terms.

Comprehensive lists of the commuted entitlements of the prebends of St. Andrew's, St. James', St. Mary's and St. Stephen's Altars appear together in the Valor Ecclesiasticus of 1535,² whilst about half those of St. Michael's can be assembled from scattered entries elsewhere in that Survey. The value of the thrives of St. Martin's and St. Peter's is given only in total, without mention of individual sources. In the case of St. Martin's, however, this deficiency is made good by a detailed list of the prebend's thrives (in 1308) in the Chapter Act Book.³ Other references to contributions in the Act Book, always isolated and incidental, are generally imprecise: referring in most instances to non-payment, it is usually impossible to be certain of the period of default or the scope of arrears. They are therefore ignored in this summary.

ST. ANDREW'S PREBEND

The Church of Driffeld	£6. 13. 4
" " " Kirkburn	6. 13. 4
" " " Cottingham	6. 13. 4
The Priory of Warter	2. 13. 4
The Church of Hessle ⁴	2. 13. 4
" " " Kirk Ella ⁵	2. 13. 4
" " " Wetwang Kirkby	1. 6. 8

1. Lands held corporately by the Dean and Chapter, but not prebends of York, appear to be exempt.
2. Valor, v, pp.130 - 132.
3. B.C.A., i, p.216.
4. 'Lucall'.
5. 'Elveley'. The thrives of Wolfreton and Willerby (B.C.A., i, p.260) are presumably included under Kirk Ella.

Nun-

The Church of Burnholme	£1. 6. 8
Pensions	
The Church of Cherry (North) Burton	6. 8
" " " Foston-on-the-Wolds	6. 8
" " " Nafferton	6. 8
" " " Thwing	2. 8
" " " Settrington	5. 4
" " " Garton-on-the Wolds	
" " " Rillington	4. 4
" " " Wintringham	
" " " Sherburn ¹	4. 0
" " " Birdsall ²	
" " " Yedingham ²	2. 0
" " " Helperthorpe ²	
" " " Skidby. ³	6. 8

ST. JAMES' PREBEND

The Church of Catton	£1. 6. 8
" " " Etton	1. 0. 0
" " " Full Sutton	6. 8
" " " Sutton-on-Derwent	1. 0. 0
" " " Holme-upon-Spalding Moor	1. 3. 4
" " " South Dalton	1. 0. 0
" " " Wilberfoss	16. 0
" " " Pocklington ⁴	16. 13. 4
" " " Walkington	3. 13. 4
" " " Cherry (North) Burton ⁵	4. 4

1. Appropriated to the Priory of Guisborough.
2. Appropriated to the Priory of Watton.
3. B.C.A., ii, p.18.
4. The thraves of Barnby (B.C.A., i, p.84) are presumably included under Pocklington and also those of the old chapelries of Allerthorpe with Thornton, Fangfoss (associated with Barnby), Hayton with Belby, and Millington with Givendale.
5. St. James' also drew thraves from Molescroft and Aike (B.C.A., i, p.198).

ST. MARY'S PREBEND

The Priory of Haltemprice	£4. 14. 4
" " " North Ferriby	2. 0. 0
The Church of Bishop Wilton	4. 0. 0
" " " Wetwang	4. 13. 4
" " " Cherry (North) Burton	13. 4
Pension	
The Vill of Esk	2. 3. 4

ST. STEPHEN'S PREBEND

The Church of Bishop Burton ¹	1. 6. 8
" " " Rowley	1. 6. 8
" " " Skerne	2. 0. 0
" " " Ellerker	2. 6. 8
The Priory of Watton	13. 6. 8
The Church of Scarborough	10. 0
" " " Lockington	1. 13. 0
" " " Lund	3. 6. 8
" " " Leckonfield	1. 6. 8
" " " Wressle	1. 6. 8
" " " Bubwith	1. 0. 0

Pensions

The Church of Kirkby Grindalythe	13. 4
" " " Weavertorpe	6. 8
" " " Foxholes	10. 0
" " " Folkton	8. 0
" " " Rudston	3. 4
" " " Cowlam	1. 6

1. Cherry Burton in the Valor is almost certainly a mistake - elsewhere this place invariably appears as North Burton. A parish of the provostry, it was otherwise committed to the extent of $22\frac{1}{2}$ quarters to the provost, 6s 8d to St. Andrew's, 4s 4d to St. James' and 13s 4d to St. Mary's. Bishop Burton's payment, on the other hand, is omitted in the Valor.

ST. MICHAEL'S PREBEND

The Church of Bainton	£3. 13. 4 ¹
" " " Elloughton	3. 6. 8 ²
" " " Langtoft	

To these we should probably add the churches of Kilham, Boynton, Hutton Cranwick, West Heslerton, ~~Hessele~~ and South Cave.

ST. MARTIN'S PREBEND

The Church of Etton	£2. 0. 0 ³
" " " Goodmanham	1. 10. 0
" " " Londesborough	3. 0. 0
" " " Easthorpe	1. 10. 0
" " " Bugthorpe	1. 10. 0
" " " Kiplingcotes	1. 0
" " " Burnby	2. 0. 0
" " " Fridaythorpe	1. 14. 0
" " " Market Weighton	3. 6. 8
" " " 'Geghes'?	1. 0. 0
" " " Skipton	2. 15. 0
" " " Everingham	2. 0. 0
" " " Harswell	5. 0
" " " Kilnwick Percy	13. 4
" " " Beswick	16. 0
" " " Seaton Ross ⁴	1. 4. 0
" " " Hotham	12. 0
" " " Gribthorpe	10. 0
" " " Allerthorpe	10. 0
" " " Ellerton	1. 4. 0
" " " Aughton	12. 0
" " " Holme upon Spalding Moor	2. 0. 0

1. Valor, v, p.140. *See also Rep Wickware, p335 for other thraves of St Michael.*
2. B.C.A., ii, p.133 (1339) Elloughton, to the west of Hull, is not to be confused with Ellerton, on the banks of the Derwent.
3. This and the following contributions to St. Martin's are listed in B.C.A., i, p.216. Some relate to chapelries of the larger parishes.
4. Seaton Ross and the five places following rendered only two thraves to the plough.

Pensions

The Priory of Bridlington	£1. 13. 4
The Church of Scrayingham	6. 8
" " " Langton	2. 0
" " " Norton	2. 0
" " " Wharrrum Percy	2. 0
" " " Skirpenbeck	2. 0
" " " Darkthorpe	2. 0

ST. PETER'S PREBEND

The names of the parishes contributing to this prebend are unknown to us, but by process of elimination we conclude they were probably Westow, East Acklam, Kirby Underdale, Sledmere, Wharrram-le-Street and North Grimston in the deanery of Buckrose; Huggate, North Dalton, Sancton, North Newbold and North Cave in the deanery of Harthill.

NOTE ON COMMUNICATIONS RELATIVE TO THRIVES

We know of no instance of a canon dealing personally in corn on a commercial basis. Quite apart from the prohibition of Canon Law in such matters, the gathering together of relatively small quantities of grain from diverse sources would have made the necessary stockpiling an unprofitable enterprise.

Since the general policy was to turn the render into cash on the spot with as little ado as possible the limitations of medieval transport were of no immediate relevance to the individual prebendary. On a broader and more long-term view, however, anything that enabled producers to find a ready market for surplus corn, and thus rise above mere subsistence farming, was bound to redound to his benefit.

Little can be said with certainty of East Riding roads prior to the seventeenth century. Only two feature on the Gough Map which is thought to date from the Act Book period i.e. the first half of the fourteenth century.¹ The first of these, partially of Roman origin, linked Beverley with York by way of Market Weighton and Pocklington. It must have been familiar to a long succession of prebendaries who contrived to make residence at both churches. The other, originating at Guisborough in Cleveland, converged on Beverley from Bridlington. From at least the early thirteenth century it bridged the Hull River at Tickton,² and served to link Beverley with the eastern areas of the provostry, more especially with its chief manor of Leven.

The clay lands of the low-lying areas north of the Humber, interspersed as they were with wide expanses of undrained marshes, provided an unpromising basis for anything short of scientifically constructed roads. In the absence of any evidence to the contrary we

1. R. A. Pelham, 'The Gough Map', Geographical Journal, lxxxi. Beverley, not Kingston-upon-Hull, was pre-eminent in the Riding when this map was created.
2. K. J. Allison, The East Riding of Yorkshire Landscape, p.85. The bridge with its chapel was clearly a long-established feature by c.1279 (Y.D., ix, pp.11-12).

may be sure that most of the tracks which linked the villages were wholly unsuitable for heavy road haulage, and that transportation of grain in bulk was necessarily by pack horse.¹

What was good enough for a rural peasant society, however, must soon have proved inadequate for the rising port of Kingston-upon-Hull. By 1302 Edward I was concerned that "no roads have yet been made to our new town by which merchants may bring their things and merchandise which is well known to turn to our loss and the hurt of the said town."² Accordingly the construction of four roads was put in hand: one westwards, leaving the bank of the Humber at North Ferriby, presumably to link up with the York-Beverley road at Market Weighton, two northwards to Beverley via Skidby and Woodmansey, and a fourth north-eastwards to Bilton and central Holderness. We know nothing of the progress of this programme beyond the fact that the present substantial roads in these directions follow the anticipated medieval routes.

What encouraged East Riding farmers to exploit their naturally rich soil for more than domestic purposes, to make the fertile open countryside the foremost corn growing region in the North, were not its roads but its waterways.

As late as the seventeenth century the Hull River was navigable as far as Wansford, some thirty miles upstream. To this point packhorses brought panniers of grain and wool from a wide area, not least from the broad acres of the southern Wolds, for loading on to shallow draught boats (batella). According to Henry Best these were capable, in favourable months of the year, of reaching Hull within a day. Until the middle of the fourteenth century their initial destination was more likely to be the flourishing cornmarket at Beverley. Some grain was there diverted,

1. See, however, J. F. Willard, 'The use of Carts in the Fourteenth Century', History, xvii, passim.
2. Bryan Waites, 'Aspects of Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century Arable Farming on the Yorkshire Wolds', Y.A.J., xlii, p.140, n.5. The following paragraphs draw heavily upon Mr. Waites' article, especially as it relates to corn transportation.

also by water, for milling at the mill of Meaux Abbey, or in the town itself. In 1298 430 quarters of wheat alone (cargoes of oats and barley were probably much greater) were shipped from Wansford in boat loads of at least 30 quarters, at 4s a load.¹

We have already suggested the North Channel of the Humber as the likely route for corn collected at Patrington Haven on the Holderness Peninsula.² No doubt the busier haven at Hedon, a few miles downstream from Hull, fulfilled a similar function for the Middle Hundred of Holderness.³ To Hull also came boats which plied the River Derwent, serviceable as far north as Malton, though we must doubt whether grain formed much of their cargo.

The contribution of these natural arteries to the prosperity of the East Riding, prior even to the growth of Hull as its commercial capital, is perhaps still not fully evident. This is especially true of the insubstantial River Hull which, tidal as far as Beverley and carrying trade almost as far north as Driffield, opened up a wide hinterland, and brought a whole farming community within reach of the leading markets.

At what stage this commercial impetus took a hand in the area's agriculture we do not know. If the unchanging amounts of grain realised from monastic houses and individual parishes by the canons of Beverley can be taken in evidence, its influence was apparent by the twelfth century. Four thraves was after all a modest levy on the corn to be attributed to a single plough, yet the quantities it produced for both provost and prebendaries from early times speak of crops well in excess of local needs. The individual renders which we shall note in the remaining pages of this chapter were such as to support the general impression of excessive areas under plough, and of arable farming expanding steadily up to the time of the Black Death. Then, in the latter half of the fourteenth century, when pestilence coincided with a period of disastrous weather and flooding, depopulation and general contraction returned much of the gains to pasture. Deserted village sites, especially on the Wolds, bear the most eloquent testimony to a reverse in fortune in which both Beverley and its Minster certainly shared.

1. B. Waites, *op.cit.*, p.140. 2. See above, p.89. ; below, p.

3. M. Beresford, *History on the Ground*, pp.134 - 149.

APPENDIX VPREBENDARIES AND THEIR PATRONS IN FOUR CHAPTERS

The following tables are an attempt to show the sources from which members of the four chapters derived their preferment in the period 1265-1315. The figures given are the results of surveys at five-yearly intervals, and relate to prebendaries whose possession at the time is reasonably certain. They do not take into account, of course, any fluctuations in the years between, and therefore do not reflect the number of collations, provisions and grants made in the period as a whole. In cases where a prebend changed hands in the year under review the table recognises the prebendary who occupied it for the greater part of that year.

Obviously no degree of finality can be claimed for such an analysis: not only does lack of information for the first two decades swell the number of uncertainties, but the apparent clarity of the other columns conceals a morass of litigation and confusion which must have perplexed contemporaries scarcely less than it does the present-day student.

Further evidence, however, would almost certainly add the great majority of the uncertainties to the number of episcopal collations motu proprio. We believe that, once this assertion is recognised, the statistics show fairly accurately the extent of the archbishop's free patronage and the strength of the elements which limited it.

1. YORK

	(a) Archbishop	(b) Provision	(c) Royal Grant	Uncertain - Probably		Total
				(a)	(b)or(c)	
1265	8	6	3	13	2	32 ¹
1270	9	6	5	10	2	32
1275	9	7	4	10	2	32
1280	11	7	4	9	1	32
1285	15	8	3	4	2	32
1290	16	8	5	2	1	32
1295	17	11	3	1	1	33
1300	17	9	6	-	1	33
1305	14	5	12	1	1	33
1310	7	10	16	1		
				Exch		34
1315	11	7	15	1		34
				Exch		

1. In 1265 the prebends in the Church of York numbered 35 (including the portion of Newthorpe). The creation of the prebend of Bilton in 1294 brought the final total to 36. This table, however, takes into account the fact that (a) the prebends of Bramham and Salton were occupied by the priors of Nostell and Hexham respectively, and (b) that the prebends of Newthorpe and Wilton were both appropriated to the treasurership, and were therefore represented by one prebendary in chapter. For a period after 1307, however, the Crown appointed separately to the prebend of Wilton, bringing the total relevant stalls in the last decade to 34. No allowance is made here for treasurers holding a third prebend.

36 was the final complement of the chapter: the four personae of the church were members of the chapter by reason of the prebends which they held at the time of their promotion, not of their dignities. (For the protracted dispute regarding the treasurer's position in this connection, see A. Hamilton Thompson in Reg. Greenfield, i, pp. 299-305). The five archdeaconries carried no capitular status, though their occupants frequently gained admission through prebends.

2. BEVERLEY

	(a) Archbishop	(b) Provision	(c) Royal Grant	Uncertain - Probably (a) (b)or(c)	Total
1265	3	1	1	3	8
1270	5	1	-	2	8
1275	5	1	-	2	8
1280	6	1	1		8
1285	6	1	1		8
1290	6	2	-		8
1295	6	2	-		8
1300	5	2	1		8
1305	6	-	2		8
1310	5	1	1	1 Exch	8
1315	5	1	1	1 Exch	8

3. SOUTHWELL

	(a) Archbishop	(b) Provision	(c) Royal Grant	Uncertain - Probably (a) (b)or(c)		Total
1265	7	1	1	2	2	13 ¹
1270	7	1	1	2	2	13
1275	7	2	1	2	1	13
1280	8	2	1	2	-	13
1285	6	3	1	3	-	13
1290	7	4	1	2	1	15
1295	8	5	-	2	1	16
1300	7	6	1	1	1	16
1305	5	5	4	1	1	16
1310	6	7	2	-	1	16
1315	7	7	1	-	1	16

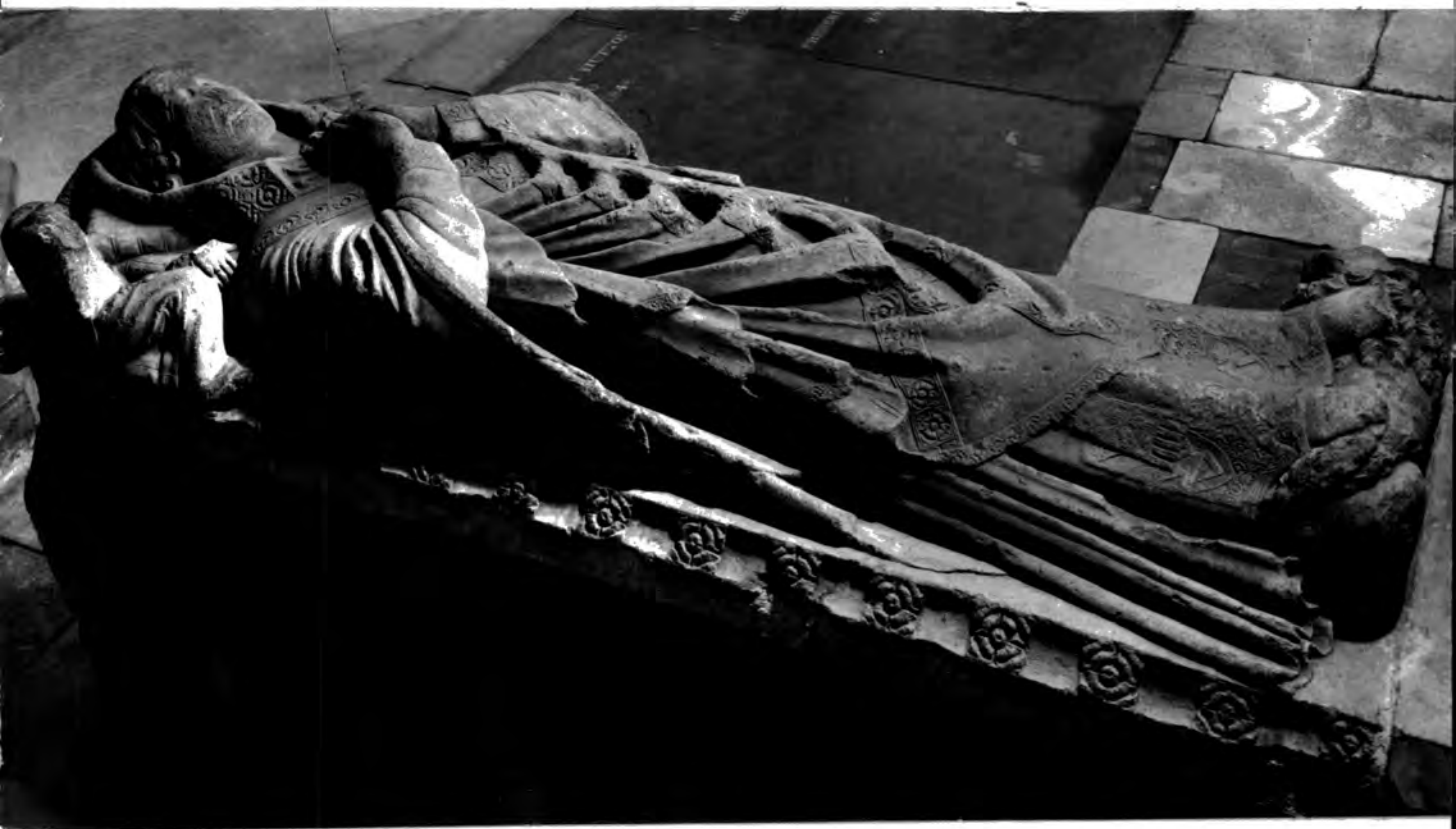
- ¹. The number of Southwell prebends was increased from 13 to 15 by the foundation of the prebend of Eaton in 1289/90, and of that of North Leverton in 1291 (the first prebendary being included here in the figures for 1290). The full complement of 16 was reached a year or two later (date uncertain) with the creation of Norwell iii.

4. RIPON

	(a) Archbishop	(b) Provision	(c) Royal Grant	Uncertain - Probably		Total
				(a)	(b)or(c)	
1265	1	-	-	4	2	7
1270	2	1	-	3	1	7
1275	3	1	-	2	1	7
1280	3	1	-	2	1	7
1285	5	1	-	-	1	7
1290	4	1	1	1	-	7
1295	4	2	1	-	-	7
1300	3	-	3	-	1	7
1305	2	1	4	-	-	7
1310	3	1	3	-	-	7
1315	5	-	2	-	-	7

5. THE FOUR CHAPTERS TOGETHER

	(a) Archbishop	(b) Provision	(c) Royal Grant	Uncertain - Probably		Total
				(a)	(b)or(c)	
1265	19	8	5	22	6	60
1270	23	9	6	17	5	60
1275	24	11	5	16	4	60
1280	28	11	6	13	2	60
1285	32	13	5	7	3	60
1290	33	15	7	5	2	62
1295	35	20	4	3	2	64
1300	32	17	11	1	3	64
1305	27	11	22	2	2	64
1310	21	18	23	2 Exch	1	65
1315	28	15	19	2 Exch	1	65



THE PRIEST'S TOMB IN THE NORTH TRANSEPT

APPENDIX VI'THE PRIEST'S TOMB' AT BEVERLEY

Any account of the clergy of Beverley Minster must include consideration of the fine tomb in the North Transept ("in all probability our finest example of Ecclesiastical Heraldry"¹), for the priest it commemorates was undoubtedly one of their number. Although no less than nineteen heraldic shields ornament the mass vestments of the effigy which surmounts it, the identity of the clerk represented still remains a problem to perplex and delight antiquaries.

For long it was supposed that this was the tomb of one, George Percy, sixth son of Henry, second Earl of Northumberland, who was alleged to have been a prebendary at the time of his death in November, 1474. The tradition seems to have arisen partly from a request in his will, dated 14 November, that he be buried in the Minster,² and partly from a note by Leland to the effect that 'under Eleanor's tombe is buried one of the Percy's, a preste'.³ As early as 1829, Poulson, whilst accepting this identification, remarked that the date of Percy's death was at variance with the style of the tomb, which, he said, placed it in the reign of Edward III.⁴ It was left to the editor of Percy's will to point out that the assumption that he had been a canon of Beverley was without any documentary support.⁵ Doubtless the inference had been drawn from the observation that the recumbent priest was shown wearing an almuce, the distinctive mark of a medieval canon.

A.F. Leach in his second volume of the Beverley Chapter Act Book was the first to follow the logic of these doubts by naming another candidate. He suggested Nicholas de Huggate,⁶ who died on 24 June, 1338, having held the provostship for twenty years and the prebend of St. James' Altar for rather longer. More recently, however, Mr. A.S. Harvey, writing in the

1. J.Foster, Some Feudal Coats of Arms from Heraldic Rolls 1298 - 1418, p.vi.

2. Test. Ebor., iii, p.210.

3. B.C.A., ii, p.345.

4. Poulson, Beverlac, ii, p.699.

5. Test. Ebor, loc. cit.

6. B.C.A., ii, pp.lxi - lxii. For biographical notices of Huggate see below pp. A.20 - 21, A.66 - 68.

Yorkshire Archaeological Society Journal,¹ has put forward the claim of Gilbert de Grimsby² who died precentor of Beverley shortly before 30 August, 1306. By common consent the tracery and other architectural features (described in detail by Mr. Harvey) place the tomb in the first half of the fourteenth century. Any attempt to date it more precisely on these grounds must, however, be inconclusive. The present survey of the collegiate body has thrown up no other likely candidate within this period, and it remains to consider the arguments in favour of Huggate the Provost and Grimsby the Precentor.

It is here contended that Leach's identification of the tomb as being that of Nicholas de Huggate remains unshaken and is much to be preferred. He did not set out the case for the Provost in full, and Mr. Harvey has not subjected it to any critical consideration. The following is an attempt to make good the omission. Before doing so, however, a word must be said about Grimsby.

Gilbert de Grimsby first appears as one of the vicars of the Minster towards the end of the thirteenth century. Then, in 1296, and again in 1299, he accompanied the army of Edward I on its campaigns against the Scots bearing the banner of St. John of Beverley.³ Mr. Harvey adds that he probably rendered similar service in 1298 and 1300,⁴ but there is no evidence to this effect. He was rewarded for his first exploit (in 1296) with a letter to John de Warenne, Earl of Surrey, then styled Keeper of the Realm and Land of Scotland, instructing him "to provide Gilbert de Grimsby, king's clerk, who carried the banner of St. John of Beverley to the King in Scotland, and by the King's command remained there with it throughout the war, with a church in the realm of Scotland of the value of £20 or 20 marks" at the earliest vacancy.⁵

1. 'A Priest's Tomb at Beverley Minster', Y.A.J., xxxviii, pp. 504-523.
2. For biographical notices for Grimsby see below pp. A.243-244, 261.
3. B.C.A., i, pp. lxxxviii-lxxxix.
4. Y.A.J., xxxviii, p.520.
5. C.P.R., 1292-1301, p.208. If Grimsby ever received this benefice its identity has gone unrecorded. Amid the fluctuating fortunes of the Scottish wars such largesse is likely to have been of little value, and his tenure of it would certainly be precarious following the English setback at Stirling Bridge in the following year.

The Minster was also remembered: on 16 September, 1296, Edward granted £40 a year to the Beverley Chapter, payable at Berwick from the Treasury of Scotland.¹ By 1305, however, payment had fallen heavily into arrears, and Gilbert de Grimsby, now precentor and described by the chapter scribe as capellanus Domini Regis illustris, was sent to collect the sum owing, which by then amounted to £208 (i.e. five years' arrears).²

To these brief encounters with Edward I Mr. Harvey attributes the inclusion of three sets of royal arms on the vestments of the effigy, adding that 'of the three Plantagenet Edwards, the one most conspicuous as a benefactor both of the Minster and of one of its priests was Edward I, who founded a Chantry in the Minster in 1296 and at the same time rewarded Gilbert de Grimsby'³

No less important to Mr. Harvey is his identification of several of the other arms on the vestments as those of magnates notable in the Scottish wars of Edward. Among those represented are Warenne, Percy, Roos, Mauley, Hastings and Wake. With the exception of Wake, who died in 1300, the bearers of these arms were present at the siege of Caerlaverock Castle in 1300, and appear in the Roll of Caerlaverock. So does the Prince Royal, whose shield also occurs on the tomb, and who, it is recorded, first bore arms on this occasion.

The argument for Huggate may be set out as follows:

1. On general grounds. The tomb was, and still is, in spite of mutilation, a sumptuous one, and is thought to have possessed an equally rich canopy before it was removed from its original site. We may suppose, moreover, that the armorial bearings of the greatest in the land were not lightly carved on the effigy of one who was not of their number, or their associate. Mr. Harvey believes that a grateful monarch placed Gilbert de Grimsby in such a tomb. Medieval kings were, however, not in the habit of honouring the memory of men of low estate in this way, and a definite instance of

1. C.P.R., 1292 - 1301, pp. 204, 255; B.C.A., i, p.lxxxviii.

2. B.C.A., i, pp. 72 - 73.

3. Y.A.J., loc. cit.

them doing so would be extremely hard to find. On a general view a splendid tomb of this or any other period speaks of the status and wealth of the deceased.

Huggate had both these attributes in good measure. A notable king's clerk, he had lived close to royalty for most of his life, enjoying the high regard of both Edward II and Edward III. He was keeper of the wardrobe to the latter for at least ten years when he was Earl of Chester, during which time the former bestowed on him much rich preferment. Though he appears never to have transferred to the Great Wardrobe, after 1327, he continued to serve the young king in a personal capacity, and in 1327/28 he was responsible for superintending the royal apartments in the archbishop's palace prior to Edward's marriage to Philippa of Hainault in York Minster.¹ By this time he had presumably relinquished the important post of King's Receiver for Gascony and Aquitaine, which he had held in the later years of Edward II.

Huggate appears to have retired from the royal service c.1332, and to have taken up more or less permanent residence at Beverley. In that year he was granted a general release of all debts due from him 'in consideration of his manifold services to the king from boyhood.'² Such a career could hardly fail to bring him rich preferment. Huggate's death in 1338 left vacant not merely the provostship and a prebend in Beverley but also prebends in York, Lincoln, Hereford, St. Martin-le-Grand, Wolverhampton, Howden and Wingham, not to mention certain rectories and lesser fruits.

Grimsby, on the other hand, spent all but the last few years of his life as a Minster vicar, or less. Though he was one of the very few vicars to rise to anything higher, it must be remembered that the precentorship at Beverley bore no comparison in status to the same dignity in most other churches, where its occupant ranked as one of the quatuor majores personae. So far from gaining a place in chapter Grimsby

1. Pell Records, Issue Roll of the Exchequer, Henry III - Henry VI, p.140. For other references relating to Huggate's career see his biographical notices below loc. cit.
2. C.P.R., 1330 - 34, p.368.

succeeded to an office which, in the fourteenth century at least, was largely a sinecure in the gift of the provost.¹ Most of its occupants were absentees, and this may have been its chief advantage to Grimsby. If it was regarded as a substitute for the promised benefice in Scotland it was certainly financially inadequate, being worth only £5. 10s 0d in 1306.²

In spheres of both Church and State there was, therefore, between Huggate and Grimsby a wide gulf fixed. Whatever their respective origins may have been, their careers brought them into wholly different circles, and identified them with categories corresponding to sublimes and ministri inferiores, recognised and obscure, national and local.

Grimsby's acquaintance with royalty was modest and passing indeed compared with the lifelong service of Huggate. He must have been a relatively obscure figure among the many clerks who attended Edward I in the North, and whilst the king undoubtedly set great store by the banner in his care, and certainly recognised his services, it is most unlikely that, six years after the campaigns were over, royal gratitude extended to erecting for him one of the finest priest's tombs in the north of England.

If we ask ourselves, on this superficial view, which of these two men was the more likely to repose in a splendid tomb bearing the arms of England, of the queen, and of the prince royal, the answer must surely be Nicholas de Huggate. Certainly the supplanting of Huggate calls for stronger and more definite evidence than Mr. Harvey has been able to marshal in favour of Grimsby.

2. Fortunately the wills of both men are recorded in the Chapter Act Book and, although in neither case is the matter of a tomb mentioned, all that has been suggested above receives strong support from their contents.

Gilbert de Grimsby died on the Feast of St. Matthias, 1305/6,³ having made his will five days earlier (19 February). In it he requested

1. See above, pp. 46 - 47, 305 - 307.

2. After certain deductions, which included 1/10th and the stipend of his clerk. B.C.A., i, p.143.

3. ibid.

burial in the Minster, if possible, otherwise in the cemetery of the Friars Preacher of Beverley. His few bequests consisted entirely of personal effects, and the only sums of money mentioned were five shillings for the purchase of wax to be burnt round his body, and ten shillings to pay for the assembly of his friends on the occasion of his burial.¹

Nothing could present a greater contrast to this than the extraordinary will of Huggate,² which allowed £300 for the cost of his funeral and subsequent masses. This eclipsed even the total sum of his monetary bequests which amounted to rather less than £100. If Huggate's tomb were not in evidence, his will would prompt us to ask what had become of it!

Two things are quite clear from Grimsby's will: he himself did not anticipate an elaborate tomb - how could he if there was a possibility of his interment in a cemetery? Secondly, it is equally certain that the expense of such a structure could not have been met from his own estate. Royal gratitude, as we have noted, is Mr. Harvey's solution; but is it realistic to suppose, as he does,³ that Edward, on a visit to Beverley in July, 1306, ordered the erection of a splendid tomb not merely in the Minster, but in a coveted place near the High Altar, probably involving re-interment, in honour of a lesser clerk who, after all, had done no more than carry a banner on a successful campaign six years earlier?

The obvious care for detail and the accumulation of so many arms suggest that the common practice of preparing one's own tomb months or years before death was followed here.⁴ The shields of great men were unlikely to be incorporated without their consent, and these and everything else about the tomb speak of careful specifications on the part of a man who would allocate £300 for funeral expenses and requiems.

1. ibid, pp. 148 - 149.

2. ibid, ii, pp. 122 - 125.

3. Y.A.J., loc. cit.

4. 'A Practice which was in all probability exceedingly common' (Herbert W. Macklin, Monumental Brasses, p.130.) Notable instances among brasses are those of Abbot de la Mare at St. Albans' and John de Campeden in St. Cross Hospital, Winchester.

Finally, in this connection, it is to be noted that, if the tomb were indeed that of Grimsby, he would be unique, not only among the lesser clergy of Beverley, but also among banner-bearers in general: there is no indication at either Durham or Ripon that the clerks who bore the banners of St. Cuthbert and St. Wilfred were so favoured, and the same is the case of at least two other bearers from Beverley whose names are known.¹

3. There is, however, more definite evidence against Grimsby. It has already been observed that the priest is depicted wearing an almuce. All but the hood, which is shown drawn up around the head, is concealed by the chasuble. In this the effigy is, so far as I can tell, unique in England - no other effigy of any period shows an almuce worn with mass vestments. This is interesting rather than important, however, because no other image of a clerk known to have been a canon appears to have survived from the earlier half of the fourteenth century.² This is odd because canons' brasses, when they first appear towards the end of the century are quite common. Then, however, they invariably depict an image wearing a processional cope which opened to show the long pendants of the almuce, the hood of which now hung back around the neck. In rarer instances where a cope is not worn the almuce is seen to broaden out to envelop the shoulders, for, made of sheepskin, it was a practical garment designed to provide warmth in a cold church.

Nevertheless the almuce was, and still is, when worn, also a vestment of dignity, and medieval representation always makes it the distinctive mark of a canon. It is true that lesser collegiate clergy often wore a black almuce (as distinct from the canons' grey), but this was never the case when it came to making an effigy, and a single instance among many brasses of a medieval clerk not a prebendary depicted wearing one has yet to be discovered.

¹. John de Rolleston in 1310 (B.C.A., i, pp. 296, 321), Thomas de Huggate, doubtless a relative of the Provost, in 1335 (ibid, ii, pp. 112-113).

². The Beverley tomb probably survived serious mutilation in sixteenth century on account of the presence of the Royal Arms.

On the present effigy the amice of the vestments made it essential that the hood should be raised in order to distinguish it. It would have been much easier for the sculptor to have omitted it altogether, and it is certainly quite unnecessary to the composition. Its deliberate inclusion would be quite pointless were it not intended to have its accepted significance - that of indicating that the occupant of the tomb was not only a priest but also a canon. Grimsby, as we have seen, was never a canon of Beverley or anywhere else, whereas Huggate was a canon of numerous churches, and a prebendary of Beverley for 22 years.

4. Before considering the shields two significant details in Mr. Harvey's account of Grimsby call for correction. "It seems probable", he writes, "that Grimsby had been vicar-choral of the prebend of St. Michael since in the same month that he first appears as Precentor, a Robert de Grimsby was presented to the vicar choralship of St. Michael's prebend."¹ This belief he links with the appearance of four Cornish choughs embroidered on the base of the apparel of the priest's alb, for the arms of Archbishop Thomas Becket, who, according to Simon Russell,² had been prebendary of St. Michael's Altar, were Argent, three Cornish choughs proper.

Grimsby, however, was certainly never vicar of St. Michael's Altar. We know this because although he was, as Mr. Harvey notes, still a vicar in 1300, on 20 June, 1299, William de Lincoln, then prebendary of St. Michael's Altar, appointed William Nightingale of Lincoln his vicar.³ The latter held the vicarage until about 3 November, 1304, when he was granted letters testimonial by the chapter on his resignation.⁴ He was succeeded by Robert de Grimsby⁵, who indeed may have been a kinsman of Gilbert, but certainly did not succeed him. Robert in fact proved a most unsatisfactory clerk: by 19 April, 1306, he had been removed from the vicarage for failure to receive priest's Orders within a year of appointment

1. Y.A.J., loc. cit.

2. Writing in the Provost's Book, 1416/17, B.C.A., ii, pp. 306, 335; and see above, pp. 37 - 38.

3. Y.D., ix, pp. 12 - 13.

4. B.C.A., i, pp. 44 - 45.

5. ibid, p.51.

as statutes required¹ - a negligence which may have been connected with the rumour that he had from the time of his presentation been engaged to be married.²

Secondly, it is crucial to Mr. Harvey's case for Grimsby that the shields on the tomb represent a fellowship of comrades in arms who took part in Edward I's Scottish campaigns, and in particular were present at the siege of Caerlaverock Castle in 1300. That the arms of Warenne, Percy, Roos, Mauley and Hastings all feature both on the tomb and in the Roll of Caerlaverock is not disputed,³ but the Roll is so comprehensive of leading northern families that the omission of these magnates would be strange indeed: Edward's army would have been sadly depleted without them. It would be possible on the same basis to link Lady Idonea Percy and the famous Percy Tomb with some Roll, and hence with some occasion with which she was not remotely connected.

More to our point here is the fact that, whoever else was present at the siege of Caerlaverock, Gilbert de Grimsby almost certainly was not there. The following extract from the wardrobe account would seem to make this clear:

'To Master (sic) Gilbert de Grimsby, vicar of the collegiate church of St. John de Beverley, for his wages, from the 25th day of November (1299) on which day he left Beverley to proceed, by command of the king, with the standard of St. John, in the king's suite aforesaid, to various parts of Scotland, until the 9th day of January, both computed, 46 days at 8¹/₂d. per diem. £1. 8s 9d.

To the same, for his wages from the 10th day of January, the day on which he departed from the court, going with the standard aforesaid, to his home at Beverley, the 15th of the same month, both days inclusive, being six days, at 1s. per diem. 6s.

By his own hands at Meriton.'⁴

This is the extent of Grimsby's only known visit to the Border in 1299-1300. It is true that the King was again at Beverley at the end

1. ibid, pp. 125-6.
2. ibid, pp. 51-53, 111.
3. "Roll of Caerlaverock, Knights of Edward I", in Harleian Society, vols. lxxx-lxxxiv. For the most recent treatment of the Rolls see N. Denholm-Young, History and Heraldry, 1254-1310, *passim*.
4. Poulson, Beverlac, i, p.83.

of May, 1300,¹ and that the banner accompanied him when he left again for the North, but there is never any mention of Grimsby, and in November, after the Caerlaverock episode, the banner was returned, as Mr. Harvey notes, by two king's clerks.²

5. The following list of shields is given in the order followed by Mr. Harvey. His careful description of the arms, involving corrections of former accounts, is not disputed. The identifications are those suggested below.

On the amice - over the left shoulder

1. Three lions passant guardant
2. A bend between two roses

England (1198 - 1340)
? Rosel or Huggate

On the maniple - from the top -

3. A chevron with a bird in base.
4. A bend
5. Three legs conjoined in the fesspoint flexed in a triangle, garnished and spurred.
6. A maunch
7. A bend engrailed cotised with a crescent in the sinister chief point.
8. Chequy
9. Three lions passant guardant with a label of three points

? Kilnwick or Thweng
Mauley

Isle of Man
Hastings

? Fortescue
Wareme

Prince Royal

On the apparel of the alb (left to right)

Upper Row

10. A bend with a mullett of six points in dexter chief (Most of this shield is obscured by the stole)

Hotham
Wake

11. Two bars, in chief three roundels

12. Quarterly 1 - (obscured by the chasuble)

England quartering

- 2 & 3 - Lozengy semeé of fleur de lis

France Ancient

- 4 - Three lions passant guardant

Percy

13. A lion rampant

14. (Hidden by the stole)

1. B.C.A., i, p.lxxxix.

2. Y.A.J., xxxviii, p.520, n.5.

Lower Row.

15. A fess between three inverted chevrons	? Insula (Lisle)
16. (Defaced)	
17. A chevron between three escallops	Tankard or Dacre
18. Three water bougets	Roos
19. A fess between three boars' heads	Salvain of Thorpe
couped	Salvin or Ferriby

Before taking a closer look at these shields it is as well to acknowledge that, taken alone, they are unlikely ever to provide certain proof of the identity of the occupant of the tomb: but it can be claimed that, considered in conjunction with the factors already noted, they place the case for Nicholas de Huggate beyond reasonable doubt.

The chief difficulty lies in the absence of any trace of tincture. A clerk occupying such a tomb was likely to have widely scattered connections and associations, and the problem confronting us in the case of Huggate is one of selection rather than one of groping around for a conjectural lead. Tinctures are therefore crucial in identifying the more obscure arms.

Secondly, not only is our knowledge of Huggate's career, and therefore of his associates, imperfect, but the arms of some of the families known to have had connections with him are unknown, and could well prove present conjecture wide of the mark. Some of the doubtful ones could well take us anywhere between Great Driffield and the head of the Humber Estuary, to the Vale of Pickering, to North Lincolnshire, to Worcestershire, and even to Gascony.

The shields, which do not appear to be arranged in any significant order, can best be considered in three tentative groups:

A. Shields associated with Huggate's career

(i) Those incorporating the Royal Arms	1, 9, 12.
(ii) Others	5, 8, 17.

B. East Riding magnates (tenants-in-chief and lesser houses)

3, 4, 6, 10
11, 13, 18, 19.¹

C. Unidentified shields

2, 7, 15.

¹. Nos. 3, 10, 17 remain open to question, but their identity is felt to be sufficiently certain to avoid group C.

IDENTITIES SUGGESTED IN THE TEXT

1. ENGLAND (1198 - 1340)
 2. ? HUGGATE or ROSEL
 3. THWENG (Ordinary normally a fess. Birds in dexter and sinister chief points concealed on the tomb)
 4. MAULEY
 5. ISLE OF MAN
 6. HASTINGS OF ALLERSTON
 7. FORTESCUE (Traces of a crescent in sinister chief point)
 8. WARRENNE
 9. PRINCE ROYAL (Later Edward III)
 10. HOTHAM OF SCORBOROUGH (Ancient)
 11. WAKE
 12. QUEEN MARGARET or QUEEN ISABELLA
 13. PERCY
 14. (Hidden by stole)
 15. ? LISLE (INSULA)
 16. (Defaced)
 17. TANKARD
 18. ROOS OF HAMLAKE
 19. FERRIBY (Ordinary normally a chevron) - possibly
SALVAIN OF THORPE SALVIN
 20. An artistic representation of the arms of WILLIAM MELTON, Archbishop of York, in the glass of York Minster, a variation of which is probably the basis of the diaper work on the orphreys of the vestments of the effigy.
21. The tinctures (absent on the tomb) are those appropriate to the above.

ARMS ON THE PRIEST'S TOMB IN BEVERLEY MINSTER



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10



11



12



13



14



15



16



17



19



20

A. (i) Shields incorporating the arms of England.

No. 1. ENGLAND 1198 - 1340 - Gules, three lions passant guardant
in pale, or.

Borne by Edward II (1307 - 27). Huggate's chief benefactor, and under whom he served as a clerk of the household for many years; and also by Edward III (1327 till 1340) who, in 1332, gratefully acknowledged Huggate's 'manifold services to the king from boyhood'.

No. 9. ENGLAND with a label of three points, azure.

Borne by Edward III prior to his coronation in 1327, as Prince Royal, Huggate being keeper of his wardrobe for about ten years of this period. It is, of course, possible that here these arms are meant to represent Edward of Woodstock (the Black Prince) born 1330, as Prince Royal at the time of Huggate's death.¹

No. 12. ENGLAND QUARTERING FRANCE ANCIENT - 1 and 4 Gules, three lions passant guardant in pale or, 2 and 3 Azure, semee of fleur de lis or

These could be the arms of either Margaret of France, second wife of Edward I, whom he married in 1299, and who died in 1317, or of Isabella, queen of Edward II from 1308. Both were daughters of a French king - Margaret of Philip III, Isabella of Philip IV - and as such were equally entitled to quarter the two royal arms (reversing the quartering adopted by the kings of England after 1340, which, of course, was unknown at the time of Huggate's death). Margaret "was the first queen of England to bear her arms with her husbands' in one escutcheon",² and these same arms are to be found on one of her seals. But if Mr. Harvey is right in believing that it is she who is represented here (as he was bound to do in support of Grimsby) it can be claimed that she was more likely to be

¹. W.H.D. Longstaffe's identification of these arms as being those of Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, would require that fleurs de lis had been erased from the label. In any case it is unlikely that a clerk loyal to Edward II would display the earl's shield on his tomb, or that he would place it next to that of John de Warenne who abducted his wife. ("The Old Heraldry of the Percys", in Archaeologia Aeliana, iv, p.172).

². Sandford, "Kings of England", in Y.A.J., xxxviii, pp. 515 - 516.

acquainted with Huggate, already a long standing member of the royal household,¹ than with Grimsby, whom she probably never knew.

Although Isabella is known to have quartered the arms of England with those of her parents viz. 1, England, 2, France, 3, Navarre, 4, Champagne, it is likely that she followed Margaret's example after the latter's death. Certainly it would be very natural for her to be so represented in heraldic sculpture. In the present view it is she who is represented here.

Huggate occupied a place close to Queen Isabella for many years. Not only had he been keeper of her son's wardrobe in his earlier days, but in 1323 he was actually described as a queen's clerk.² Although I can find no explicit statement to the effect, there are factors which suggest that in his later years Huggate was involved in some way in the administration of Isabella's estates. These included the honour of High Peak in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, Pontefract, the castle and honour of Knaresborough, and Tickhill.³

It will be seen that Huggate was one of the keepers of High Peak on behalf of Edward III, when he was earl of Chester, and when it was farmed by John de Warenne.⁴ His service of Isabella is the only obvious explanation of why he should have remembered in his will such people as the Friars Preacher of Pontefract, the Augustinians of Tickhill and the Friars Minor of Doncaster nearby.⁵

In the case of all the other communities mentioned his bequests

1. Margaret, who was well known at the Minster as a pious visitor and benefactor, died some month after Huggate was presented to his Beverley prebend, and shortly before he was granted the provostship.
2. Reg. Drokenesford, Bath and Wells, p.223.
3. See Hilda Johnstone, "The Queen's Household", in The English Government at Work, i, pp. 250 - 299.
4. C. Fine Rolls, 1307 - 19, p.389; *ibid*, p.63; C. Charter Rolls, iii, p.137; Foedera, ii, p.109.
5. B.C.A., ii, pp.124 - 125.

are otherwise explicable, but not these, which were remote from Beverley and his other places of preferment. This same connection would also explain the inclusion of the arms of Tankard among the shields on his vestments, for the Tankards were lords of Boroughbridge, an important member of the honour of Knaresborough.¹

Huggate had, after all, been engaged in this kind of work for most of his career, and in view of his earlier association with the Queen it is possible that he continued to serve her interests in the North after both had withdrawn from active public life.

Moreover, Isabella, like Queen Margaret, was well known in Beverley and district. From 1310 onwards, during the minority of Thomas, Lord Wake, she exercised wardship of the Wake fee which centred on Cottingham beyond the southern boundary of the provostry, and on a number of occasions appointed to Wake benefices in the area.² The Exquisite label stop in the south aisle of the Minster is almost certainly a portrayal of her as a girl.

A. (ii) Three shields, apart from those of royalty, have no known connection with Beverley or the East Riding, with the possible exception of No. 17 - Tankard.

No. 5. ISLE OF MAN - Gules, three legs armed proper, conjoined in the fess point, flexed in a triangle garnished and spurred. The inclusion of this shield would seem to imply that the occupant of the tomb possessed a benefice on the Island, or that it had at some time come within the scope of his administrative activities. There is no record at hand to show that Huggate had made such a connection, though in view of the uncertain possession and general state of the Isle of Man throughout most of his lifetime this is hardly surprising. One of his earlier preferments, however, was to a rectory in Ireland, so that another in Man was well within his reach.

¹. Sir Thomas Lawson-Tancred, Records of a Yorkshire Manor, passim.

². Reg. Greenfield, v, pp.267 - 268. In 1311/12 he exercised the patronage personally in the case of the church of Cottingham, which he then granted to John de Hotham, the future bishop of Ely. Reg. Greenfield, iii, p.198.

The inclusion of the shield here probably arises from a much later association, for between 1333 and 1344 the custodian of the Isle of Man was William Montague, 1st Earl of Salisbury,¹ who was another figure close to Edward III from boyhood, and with whom Huggate must have been reasonably well acquainted. He first rose to prominence in 1329-30, when, as a yeoman of the household, he played a leading part in the downfall of Mortimer. As Lord Montague he continued to be 'the most intimate personal friend' of the king in the years that followed,² and was created earl of Salisbury in 1337.

No. 8. WARRENNE - Chequy, or and asure.

In Mr. Harvey's view the magnate here represented is John de Warenne, 7th Earl of Surrey, who died in 1304, having played a conspicuous part in the Scottish campaigns of Edward I. It was he who was directed to furnish Gilbert de Grimsby with a Scottish benefice.

Huggate's connection was with John, the last of the Warenne earls of Surrey, who died in 1347, and was grandson of the campaigner against the Scots.

The fact that Warenne's estates in the North were in South Yorkshire, centred around Conisborough and Sandal, and the knowledge that in 1318 they were handed over to the earl of Lancaster to appease a private quarrel, make it certain that the association was not a local one, but arose from Huggate's career.

Warenne was one of the more constant supporters of Edward II, who in 1311 sought to ensure his good will by granting him the farm of the castle and honour of High Peak in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire

1. William Montague's link with the Isle of Man went back to the previous century: his grandmother, Anfrike Reyne, was first married to Oland Cronan, king of Mann, who bore the arms of Man. She later married Simon Montague, and their son, also Simon, who married the daughter of Simon de Montfort, was his father.
2. May McKisack, The Fourteenth Century, pp.100-101, 152-153.

for life.¹ It may be significant that on 16 January, 1318/19, Huggate, together with Robert de Mauley and Richard Damory, was made a keeper of this same Honour on behalf of his master Prince Edward, Earl of Chester.²

Beyond this little more can be said, but at least we know that the two men were known to one another for over twenty years, and were identified in the same cause on numerous occasions in this uncertain time.

No. 17. TANKARD - Argent, a chevron between three escallops gules
or

DACRE - Gules, three escallops argent.

It is the present view that the former is the more likely identification; the Tankards were lords of the manor of Boroughbridge, which was an important member of the Honour of Knaresborough.³ Although they remained close to their home countryside throughout the middle ages they had two possible points of contact with Nicholas de Huggate.

(i) When Piers Gaveston was executed in 1312 the Honour of Knaresborough, which had been granted to him six years earlier, reverted to the Crown. In the following December it was granted by Edward II to the infant Prince Edward, who was barely a month old.⁴ It continued in the latter's possession throughout the years during which Huggate was the keeper of his wardrobe. There can be no doubt that Huggate would in some measure be concerned in the affairs of this important part of his master's estate. Shortly before 1319 the keeper of the castle and Honour of Knaresborough was Richard Damory,⁵ earlier named as steward of the Prince's

1. C.Fine Rolls, ii, p.63; C.Charter Rolls, iii, p.137.

2. C.Fine Rolls, ii, p.389.

3. See Sir Thomas Lawson-Tancred, Records of a Yorkshire Manor, passim. The Lawson-Tancreds of Aldborough, near Boroughbridge, are the present representatives of the family of Tankard.

4. Lawson-Tancred, op.cit, p.142. 'Roger' here is almost certainly an error in earlier transcription.

5. C.Fine Rolls, 1307-19, p.389.

household, who in that year joined Huggate and Robert de Mauley as keepers of the Honour of High Peak.¹ The point is that during these years John Tankard was bailiff of Boroughbridge² and resided at the manor house there. It is also worth noting, as indicating the status of the Tankards, that John's father was himself a former Steward of Knaresborough. Also interesting is the knowledge that Damory and others were witnesses of Edward II's charter to the town of Beverley, given at Knaresborough in 1323.³

(ii) This same John Tankard, mentioned above, married Margery Babthorpe of Babthorpe in the parish of Hemingborough. This alliance is interesting rather than significant, for Margery, so far as we can learn, was not an heiress - certainly not of any Babthorpe lands which matter here - and it is most unlikely that it had in itself anything to do with the appearance of the Tankard arms on the tomb at Beverley. The circumstances which brought about the marriage, if they were known, could be of some significance.

First it is to be noted that Babthorpe is but five miles from Bubwith where the Huggates had long-standing interests.⁴ Secondly, the Babthorpe family from an early date possessed lands at Middleton-on-the-Wold, a parish of the provostry six miles from Huggate itself, and also at Risby and Hunsley in the parish of Rowley, which bordered on the outskirts of Beverley to the south-west. The first of the Babthorpes, Ralph, was formerly called Hunsley, changing his name at the beginning of the thirteenth century.⁵

Without further evidence it would be a mistake to read much into what may well be a purely fortuitous circumstance, but at least this alliance represents an unusually distant sortie on the part

1. Lawson-Tancred, op.cit, p.168.

2. Poulson, Beverlac, p.97.

3. Lawson-Tancred, op.cit, p.171.

4. T. Burton, The History and Antiquities of the Parish of Hemingborough, pp.172 - 183.

5. Ibid, p.172.

of the Tankards, linking them with Huggate country at precisely the time when Nicholas de Huggate must have been involved in the affairs of the Honour of Knaresborough.¹

Mr. Harvey has tentatively suggested Dacre as the owner of these arms,² but this seems unlikely. It is true that junior branches and tenants differenced famous arms with the addition of an ordinary, but much more evidence than is at present available is required to explain the insertion of a chevron between the escallops of Dacre.³ Moreover, there is little in this period to connect a member of the family with Huggate, still less with Beverley, or for that matter with Gilbert de Grimsby.

If this is indeed the shield of Dacre, it most probably stands for Ranulph, Lord Dacre of Dacre, of Naworth in Cumberland, who was an almost exact contemporary of Huggate.⁴ Even so the links, so far as they can be discovered, are unsatisfactory:

(a) Dacre married Margaret de Multon, daughter of Thomas, Lord Multon of Gillesland, after having abducted her by night from Warwick Castle, sometime before 4 February, 1315/16. Margaret was the grand-daughter of Peter de Mauley III, and was born at Mulgrave Castle in 1300, and baptised in Lythe church.⁵ Huggate was rector of Lythe at the time of her marriage.⁶

1. It would be interesting to know whether Alice Ellerker, who married Nicholas, the son of John Tankard, belonged to the family which derived its name from Ellerker five miles from Hunsley, on the Humber, and which then lived in those parts. If so, it would greatly support all that has been said above. It is, however, probable that Alice was one of the Ellerkers (of the same family) who acquired an interest in Youlton in the parish of Alne, near Easingwold, following the death of William Roos in 1345. This is made more likely by the knowledge that Nicholas's brother married Arabella Roos of Youlton. (Lawson-Tancred, op.cit., p.171; V.C.H. Yorks., ii, p.89)
2. Harvey 'A Priest's Tomb at Beverley', Y.A.J., xxxvi, p.519.
3. The only other well known shield displaying a chevron between three escallops was that of de la Clite, seigneurs of Commynes on the Flanders border with France (J. Woodward and G. Burnett, A. Treatise on Heraldry, ii, p.440).
4. He died shortly before 20 April, 1339 (Complete Peerage, iv, pp.2-3).
5. Complete Peerage, iv, pp.2-3.
6. See above, p.A.67.

(b) The same Ranulph de Dacre saw service in Gascony in 1324 - 25 when Huggate was king's receiver for Aquitaine and Gascony.¹

B. Magnates of the East Riding.

This group includes the arms of families which fall broadly into two categories: first, the great baronial houses with extensive estates in the vicinity of the provostry, whose shields were likely to feature on the tomb on account of their association with Huggate as provost - a dignity which made him their equal in terms of local influence. The other group consists of lesser families which centre for the most part in the area to the west of Beverley in which Huggate's own family had lived for many generations. Their shields are more likely to have been included on the grounds of family ties and obligations than are the others. However, the distinction between the two categories is never hard and fast, and is therefore not observed here, the shields being considered in order of their carving on the tomb.

No. 3. This is the topmost shield on the maniple, and the upper half of it is cut off as the maniple encircles the forearm of the effigy. The part shown displays a chevron, a bird in base. This alone is a most unusual charge, and Messrs. Collier and Lawrence are almost certainly justified in supposing that the complete shield would show a chevron between three birds.² This being so the arms represented here are very probably those of either:

KILNWICK - A chevron between three birds (tinctures uncertain) or
THWENG - Argent, a fess gules between three popinjays vert.

The former of these is obscure, and it is uncertain whether the family concerned is to be associated with Kilnwick near Pocklington (often called Kilnwick Percy), or Kilnwick ten miles north of Beverley. The arms appear only on a specimen of the seal of Thomas de Kilnwick (1314), though one Isabel de Kilnwick used a seal in 1310 bearing a fess between three birds.³ There was no

¹. Complete Peerage, loc.cit.

². C.V. Collier and H. Lawrence, "Ancient Heraldry in the Deanery of Harthill", in Y.A.J., xxvi, p.98.

³. C.T. Clay, "Some Yorkshire Armorial Seals", in Y.A.J., xxxvi, p.55.

known connection between Huggate and this family, but the close proximity of both Kilnwick's' to the provost's home and the scene of his activities makes this identification a possibility.

In spite of the variation in the Ordinary (an instance of which is seen in the two seals of Kilnwick) it is much more likely that here is represented the baronial house of Thweng of Kilton.

Originating from Thwing, near Bridlington, the lands of the Thweng fief in the East Riding included the manors of Thweng, Octonholme and Swathorpe. The second of these was held of the chapter of Beverley, and on 14 May, 1325, Sir William de Thweng, second parliamentary Baron de Thweng of Kilton, appeared in chapter at Beverley and did homage for it.¹

This William de Thweng succeeded his father, Marmaduke, in 1323 at the age of 47. He died in 1341, and was thus an almost exact contemporary of Huggate, who was provost for most of the time he presided at Kilton. He is notable as the avenger of the murder of Edward II - an exploit which, if the Meaux chronicler is correct in his account,² ought to have won him the regard of Huggate, who owed much to the late king. However, it is as the head of a baronial house with extensive possessions in and around the provostry that we should expect the arms of William de Thweng to feature with those of others similarly placed on the vestments of a late provost.

1. B.C.A., ii, p.65. For a full account of the Thwengs of Kilton see William M. I'anson, "Kilton Castle", in Y.A.J., xxii, pp.55 - 125. Most of their lands, which they held of the Percys, were, of course, in Cleveland. Octonholme, of which there is now no trace, was in the parish of Leven in the provostry.
2. Edward's murderer is here alleged to have been Sir Thomas Gourney who afterwards fled overseas, 'sed per dominum Willelmum de Thwenge, militem, longe lateque quaesitus captus est, et pro nimio dolore causa vindictae in ipsum exercendae, victui parcens mortuus est in mari, sed tamen mortuus in Angliam est reductus' (Chronica Monasterii de Melsa, ii, p.355).

No. 4 - MAULEY - Or, a bend sable¹

If this is indeed the tomb of Nicholas de Huggate we should certainly expect the arms of Mauley of Mulgrave to be included in the collection, for his connections with this powerful Yorkshire family were manifold.

Not only was Peter de Mauley V (d.1355) lord of Huggate, but in 1315 he presented Nicholas to the rectory of Lythe, the parish in which Mulgrave Castle is situated. The influence of the Mauleys in south-east Yorkshire arose from the marriage of Peter de Mauley to the heiress of Robert Turnham, through whom he claimed the whole of Fossard fee with its extensive estates to the west of Beverley.² The Huggate family almost certainly then became his tenants.

It is also to be noted that another member of the family, Robert de Mauley, was steward of Prince Edward's household when Huggate was keeper of his wardrobe, and that both men, with one other, were keepers of the honour of High Peak on their master's behalf.

No. 6 - HASTINGS - Argent, a maunch sable

These tinctures, which are necessarily conjectural, would make this shield that of Ralph Hastings, lord of Allerston in the Vale of Pickering from 1322, who was constable of Pickering Castle and sheriff of the County of York at the time of Huggate's death.³

1. There seem to be few grounds and little reason for introducing the Scrope family into the East Riding in the early fourteenth century; though, in the absence of tinctures, this shield could be taken to represent the famous Azure, a bend or of Lord Scrope of Masham. With the Mauleys on the doorstep, as it were, some very strong evidence is required to make one look for an owner further afield.
2. At the same time Peter de Mauley adopted the Fossard arms, as displayed here. William Fossard is reputed to have borne Or, a bend sable in the reign of Richard I. As will be seen, the Hothams of Hutton Cranswick, Seton and Easthorpe, as subtenants of Mauley, bore the same arms, differencing them with three mullets argent on the bend.
3. If Mr. Harvey is right in believing the correct description to have been Or, a maunch gules this shield would stand for the first or second John Hastings, successive lords of Bergavenny. The first lord Hastings, a campaigner on the Border with Edward I, would suit the case for Gilbert de Grimsby well, but this identification would not necessarily damage Huggate's case, for the latter was active between c.1306 and 1313 (Hasting's last year) in the Welsh Marches and the diocese of Worcester.

It is as sheriff during the Provost's last years that Hastings might be expected to find representation on the tomb of one whose interests extended throughout the East Riding and beyond. It is true that his personal interests were not great in the immediate vicinity of Beverley,¹ but his status in the County provides sufficient explanation, and makes the introduction of the more remote branches of the Hastings descent, or the Conyers family, who also bore a maunch, seem both unnecessary and artificial.

No. 10 - HOTHAM - Or, on a bend sable three mulletts argent pierced gules. Any identification of this shield must be tentative, for the greater part of it is concealed by the right end of the priest's stole. Only a mullett in the dexter chief is shown, but Mr. Harvey is almost certainly correct in believing that the full shield would show two further mulletts in the bend.² If this were indeed the case, the above identification is beyond reasonable doubt.

Another branch of the Hotham family, that centred on Bonby, and also local to Beverley, bore quite different arms, viz. Barry of eight, argent and azure, on a canton a cornish chough. The close proximity of the two families has caused great confusion, not least in the realms of heraldry, dating as far back as the sixteenth century.³

1. His arms, however, feature on the tomb of Sir John de Sutton, 2nd Lord Sutton, in the church of Sutton-on-Hull, and on that of a knight of the Meaux or Melsa family (of rather later date) at Aldborough (See H. Lawrence & C.V. Collier, "Ancient Heraldry in the Deanery of Holderness", in Y.A.J., xxvi, p.242; A.S. Harvey, "Notes on two Heraldic Tombs", Y.A.J., xl, pp.462 - 477; Y.A.J., xxvi, p.231).
2. A.S. Harvey, op.cit., p.519.
3. For the most likely and authoritative explanation of the derivation of the two branches of the Hothams and their arms see Philip Saltmarsh, "The Origin of Heraldry", in E.Y.R.S., xxiv, pp.1 - 10, and "The History of the Hothams", *passim*.
As we have seen, the Hutton Cranswick Hothams adopted the arms of Mauley, differencing them with three mulletts argent in the bend. In 1220 Robert de Hotham also did homage for lands held of the Estoutvilles, who owned a small barony around Hessle, Swanland and Cottingham, and whose arms were Barry of twelve, argent and gules. Nevertheless, the Mauleys were his principal overlords, and it is Saltmarsh's contention that he deputed a younger brother to serve under Estoutville, and that the latter was the founder of the Bonby Hothams who adopted their lord's arms, adding a canton for difference, and changing the alternate bars from gules to azure. The celebrated John de Hotham, bishop of Ely (1316 - 37) and chancellor of England (1318 - 20), bore these arms, and

The Hothams in question here held two knights fees of de Mauley in Hutton Cranswick, Seton and Easthorpe. It was this branch which acquired the manor of Scarborough in the northern part of the provostry, and, building a castle there, established the knightly family which has always been associated with that place down the centuries.¹

A glance at a map of Beverley and district is almost sufficient in itself to establish a connection between the bearers of these arms and Nicholas de Huggate. Not only were they among the chief landed families in the provostry, but outside it their interests must have brought them into constant contact with the Provost's family, sharing as they did the same countryside.²

Note 3 continued from previous page:

cannot therefore be represented on our tomb, though he must have been well acquainted with Huggate, who was his contemporary.

1. The fact that the Hothams of Scarborough in more recent years have borne the arms of the Bonby family is misleading, for it arose from a mistake, made in 1592, by the then Garter King of Arms, who derived their descent from John de Hotham, bishop of Ely.
2. Something may be said here of the personal side of Huggate's activities and of his family. Although they were not to be compared in status with the owners of the shields on the tomb, the relatives of the Provost came of a long established Wolds family, belonging, it would seem, to that prosperous yeoman class with which the East Riding had long abounded. A century earlier they can be seen to have had interests as far afield as Bubwith on the lower reaches of the Derwent. There, apart from owning land at Harlthorpe in that parish, they appear to have formed a family tie with one Oliver de Gunby, a man of substance who also held lands at Huggate: apparently his wife, Petronilla, was the daughter of Geoffrey and Maud de Huggate. (Yorkshire Fines, 1218 - 31, p.82; E.Y.C., ii, No. 1263; xii, Nos. 4, 16, 17, 54, 67). To the east, places in which the family of Huggate possessed interests included Garton-on-the-Wolds (E.Y.C., x, Nos. 97, 98), and Great Driffield (C.C.R., 1333 - 37, p.191), where the Hothams were also in evidence. The suggestion in the Provost's will that he had interests in Thixendale in the Wolds is supported by a charter of the late twelfth century showing his forebears holding lands there (B.C.A., ii, p.125; E.Y.C., x, No.113). Altogether no less than nine men of the Huggate family occur in charters of the period c.1190 - 1230.

In Nicholas de Huggate's lifetime there are hints of other connections still further afield, but here many questions are raised which cannot be satisfactorily answered. Who, for instance was Nicholas de Malton de Huggate, a clerk of the Provost, who succeeded him as master of St. Nicholas' Hospital, York, following his resignation in 1318, and to whom he granted the sacristy

Note 2 continued from previous page:

in 1321/22 (B.C.A., ii, p.2)? Was he a kinsman, and does this imply a family connection at Malton, to the north across the Wolds? How did Huggate come to acquire the livings of Benningworth and Scartho, near Grimsby, across the Humber, so early in his career? Could this preferment imply a link with the Benningworth family, for a time patrons of the former benefice, who are known to have held considerable property at Anlaby on the north bank as early as the reign of Henry I? (William Farrer, Honours and Knights' Fees, ii, pp.278-282).

The only member of Huggate's immediate family of whom we have certain knowledge is his sister, Alice. Judging from her unique position in his will - she was easily the chief beneficiary, and was entrusted with disbursing lesser bequests among poor relations - she was probably the only other child of their parents. (B.C.A., ii, p.124; Y.D., ix, p.14). There is good reason for believing that she married John de Wilton, a man of substance in Beverley (Y.D., ix, pp.15-16; B.C.A., ii, pp.lx-lxi; Yorkshire Chantry Surveys, ii, p.548n). The identity of the parents is a matter for conjecture only, but it is possible that the father of Nicholas and Alice was Nicholas, the son of Nicholas and Ellen de Huggate, who disputed possession of land in 'Brunneby' (Presumably Burnby, near Pocklington) with Robert Salvin in 1296 (Yorkshire Fines, 1272-1300, p.115). Two other Huggates - Simon and William, brothers of Great Driffield - borrowed the large sum of £132 10s 0d from the Provost, who was probably their cousin, in 1333 (C.C.R., 1333-37, p.191).

It would be tedious to enumerate all of the clerical relatives whom Nicholas de Huggate was instrumental in introducing to minor offices in the Minster and the Provostry. Notable among them was William de Huggate to whom the Provost granted the rectory of North Dalton in the provostry sometime before March 1335/6 (Y.D., ix, pp.84-86). First appearing as Nicholas' proctor at Beverley in 1321-22, he was a prebendary of Southwell by 1348 (le Neve - Hardy, iii, p.117), and of Lincoln, by royal grant, from 1343 (le Neve, Lincoln, pp.46, 70, 44). He failed to secure permanent possession of the Thweng rectory of Warton in Lancashire in 1344 (C.P.R., 1343-46, pp.252, 317). Another William de Huggate, belonging to the previous generation, was prior of the Gilbertine house of Chicksands in the County of Bedford in 1309 (V.C.H., Bedford, i, p.393). Doubtless he had entered the Order at Watton Priory, close to Huggate, a house with which his family is known to have had connections in years gone by. (E.Y.C., xii, No.54).

Finally, mention must be made of Nicholas de Huggate's money-lending activities, in which he followed on a smaller scale the practice of his friend and patron, Archbishop Melton. Huggate's large loan to the Huggates of Driffield has already been mentioned. His first recorded loan was made as early as 1317. The Calendar of Close Rolls alone records loans amounting to £240 between 1328 and 1336, and his debtors, nearly all men of the East Riding, included Peter de Mauley, who had 60 marks, and one of the Talbots who in 1332 owed £13. (C.C.R., 1327-30, p.316; 1330-33, p.618; 1333-37, pp.185, 191, 719). That he was able to advance such sums is readily explained when it is remembered that his annual income from all sources cannot have been much short of £400, and may well have been more.

No. 11 - WAKE - Or, two bars gules in chief three torteaux.

Centred on Baynards Castle and the lordship of Cottingham to the south of Beverley, the barony of Wake bordered upon the provostry and chapter lands from the west and south. It would be strange indeed if the arms of this great family were omitted from the collection on the Beverley tomb.

The person here represented is almost certainly Thomas, 2nd Lord Wake, who inherited the barony from his father in 1300 at the tender age of two.¹ For many years his extensive estates were held in ward, and for the latter part of his minority the custodian was Queen Isabella. In view of Huggate's closeness to her in the royal service, and his known capacity for this type of administration, it is possible that he was in some way connected with the exercise of the wardship. This is purely conjectural, however, and it may well be coincidence that it was during these years that Huggate gained his place in the Beverley Chapter nearby.

Be this as it may, there is no need to look further for grounds for the Wake shield appearing here than the fact that the young Thomas was among the Provost's most powerful neighbours with wide interests inside and outside the provostry. Thomas Wake was forty years of age at the time of Huggate's death, and for the past twenty years had been married to Blanche, daughter of Henry, Earl of Lancaster.

No. 13 - PERCY - Or, a lion rampant azure.

Here again, if the tomb is accepted as being that of Nicholas de Huggate, little explanation is required to justify the representation of the Percys among the arms on his vestments. The Percys had been lords of Leconfield in the Provostry from the twelfth century,² following the marriage of Henry, 6th Lord Percy with Isabel de Brus who brought him the manor. Until the family became established at Alnwick, Leconfield was a favourite home of the Percys, and

1. For an account of the Cottingham lordship and the Wake succession see A.S. Harvey, "Cottingham Church and Its Heraldry", in Y.A.J., xl, pp.265-297.
2. Although it was within the boundary of the provostry, the advowson of the church of Leconfield was held by the Percys from the end of the twelfth century, the rectors being admitted by the provost on their presentation.

throughout the middle ages they remained, with Hotham, Wake, Mauley and Roos, the principal lay landowners in and around the Provostry. Perhaps it was because Leconfield was but three miles from Beverley that the Percys maintained a closer association with the Minster than any of the others. Not a few of their dead were buried in the church, and the so called Percy Tomb on the north side of the High Altar is a perfect memorial, not only to Lady Idonea, but to the many generations of her family who doubtless worshipped there.¹

No. 18 - ROOS OF HAMLAKE - Gules, three water bougets argent.

The identity of this shield presents no problems. Associated chiefly with Helmsley and Belvoir, the illustrious house of Roos of Hamlake retained wide interests in the East Riding, especially in the district around the village of Roos in Holderness from which it originated.

Among the vast estates inherited by William, 3rd Lord Roos, in 1315 were the manors of Aldborough, Benwick, Colden and Marfleet, all in Holderness, as well as the lordship of Roos itself which comprised 46 carucates.²

It would be possible to show Roos interests established, to a lesser extent, to the west of the provostry also, that is, in Huggate country - at Market Weighton, ten miles south of Huggate, for instance, where the family inherited a part of the manor from the Trussebuts.³ There is no need in this instance, however, to show a connection with Nicholas de Huggate apart from his provostship, for Roos of Hamlake was to the east of the provostry what Percy was to the west and north, and Wake to the south. The inclusion of this shield in the series on the Beverley tomb is easier to explain than would be its omission.

1. In the absence of tinctures it would normally be possible to attribute the lion rampant to numerous families. Brus and Fauconberg both bore this charge, and both had East Riding interests. Robert de Pickering, dean of York, prebendary of Beverley for many years and rector of Huggate till 1318, was a member of the Brus family, while Lord Fauconberg had estates at Rise in the provostry. Neither identification is nearly as satisfactory as Percy.
2. Poulson, Holderness, i, p.47.
3. E.Y.C., x, p.29.

No. 19 - FERRIBY - Argent, a chevron between three boars' heads coupé azure,
or

SALVAIN OF THORPE SALVIN - Argent, a chevron between three boars' heads coupé gules.

Neither of these arms satisfies completely the charge on the tomb, where the ordinary is a fess, not a chevron, but such variations in family usage were legitimate and by no means uncommon. Of the two Ferriby is more likely to be the correct identification. This well known clerical family, which claimed kinship with Archbishops Melton and Thoresby,¹ had close links with Nicholas de Huggate throughout his career.

Unfortunately, our knowledge of the family is limited to the highly placed clerks which it continued to produce throughout the fourteenth century. The place of the Ferribys in the East Riding is obscure. Evidently they were not an especially ancient house, for few if any of its members feature in the early charters of the district. Nor do their arms appear in an early context, but are now found largely in the quarterings of later families, notably Haldenby of Haldenby,² which itself is impaled in a Crompton shield at Cherry Burton.³ It is doubtless the arms of Ferriby which are impaled on the chalice at Middleton-on-the-Wolds.⁴ North Ferriby, their place of origin, is almost joined to Melton, on the banks of the Humber, and their emergence was almost certainly associated with the rising fortunes of the future Archbishop Melton, whose sister probably married a Ferriby.

Nicholas de Huggate's career in the royal service brought him into close contact with Richard de Ferriby in particular, for besides being almost exact contemporaries, both were employed for many years in the same sector of administration. By 1312 Ferriby was a clerk

1. See below, p.A.95.

2. Visitations of the North (S.S.), iv, p.50.

3. C.V. Collier and H. Lawrence, "Ancient Heraldry in the Deanery of Harthill", Y.A.J., xxvi, p.110.

4. ibid., p.140.

of the wardrobe controller, doubtless having been introduced to this work by William Melton, who, having been a clerk of the wardrobe for many years, was shortly to become keeper. In 1320 he was promoted cofferer, becoming controller in 1332. Two years later he, too, was appointed keeper.¹ In 1329, however, Ferriby, was described as a clerk of the queen's household, but we are not told whether the queen was Isabella or Philippa.²

Ferriby's preferments make it abundantly clear that he and Huggate were closely associated, so much so that, mindful of the part played by family ties in the promotion to benefices, one might well conclude that they were related. Not only did Huggate resign his rectories of Lythe and Benningworth in Ferriby's favour in 1320,³ but in 1329 he sponsored his request for a provision to a prebend in St. Paul's, London. In 1332/3 Ferriby succeeded Robert de Pickering in the Prebend of St. Peter and St. Paul in Beverley, having held an expectative provision for seven years.⁴ He held this until his death in 1349, and was therefore a junior member of the chapter when Huggate died in 1338.

Another member of the family, William de Ferriby, was rector of Huggate at this time. Shortly before June, 1331, Huggate as provost exercised his patronage of the chancellorship of Beverley in his favour. He soon relinquished this, however, being preferred to higher things as his career developed in the service of the Archbishop.⁵

Although the Ferribys had a strong claim to be represented on the tomb of Huggate it is just possible that it is the family of Salvain of Thorpe Salvin which is represented here. Thorpe Salvin

1. J.H. Johnson, in The English Government at Work, i, p.242.

2. C.P.L., ii, p.293.

3. C.P.L., ii, p.202.

4. See below p.A.158.

5. See below p.A.254.

was a member of the Honour of Tickhill, and these Salvains are to be distinguished from their namesakes of Thorpe-le-Street, near Market Weighton, who bore argent on a chief sable two mullets or, and whose connection with them is obscure.¹

Sometime before 23 November, 1275, Ralph Salvain iii of Thorpe Salvin married Margery one of four sisters and coheirs of Nicholas, son of Sir Anketin Malore, and as a result acquired lands in Mowthorpe, Wiganthorpe and Terrington all about six miles east of Malton in the Bulmer Wapentake. More to the point, he received a substantial interest in North Dalton, the neighbouring parish to Huggate to the south-east. Immediately to the south of these lands was the border of the Provostry, and we know that the chapter of Beverley also held lands in North Dalton.² Furthermore, the fact that Tickhill, like Knaresborough, was held by the Queen, could have brought the Salvains in contact with Huggate. It has already been noted that the Augustinians of Tickhill were remembered by him in his will.³

All things considered, however, this identification of the shield seems improbable.

UNIDENTIFIED ARMS

No. 2 - A bend between two roses

In Etton church to the west of Beverley is the recumbent effigy of a lady with three shields, two of which are charged with the arms a chevron between three roses. These have been tentatively attributed to the family of Rose⁴ which is on record as possessing lands at South Dalton, a parish of the provostry hard by, at the end of the thirteenth century.⁵ If this family is to be distinguished from better known one of Rosel, which bore arms

1. E.Y.C., xii, pp.xi - xii.

2. ibid, pp.97 - 102.

3. B.C.A., ii, p.125.

4. Lawrence and Collier, "Ancient Heraldry in the Deanery of Harthill", Y.A.J., xxvi, p.115.

5. "Yorkshire Deeds", in Y.A.J., xvi, p.91.

argent, a chevron azure between three roses gules, we know little else about it.

For many years the Rosels held the manor of Newton, near Guisborough¹ but marriage added this to the estates of the Boynton family about the time of Provost Huggate's death - a fact which probably explains the presence of the Rosel arms in Burton Agnes church where the Boyntons held sway.² The same arms were also in Howden church,³ but, since the name of Rosel was known in this district as early as the twelfth century, they probably here represent another branch of the family.⁴

It is possible, of course, that these arms are those of Huggate himself. Sharing, as they do, a place on the amice of the effigy with the arms of England this might be thought a natural conclusion. The bend could well be the bend sable of the de Mauleys who as lords of Huggate were almost certainly overlords of the Provost's family. It was common practice for a subtenant to adopt the arms of his lord differencing them with a suitable charge. Whether the rose was likely to derive from the arms described above at Etton, nine miles from Huggate is, of course, anybody's guess, but the repetition of the rose motif on the tomb itself could be significant.

No. 7 - A bend engrailed cotised with a crescent in the sinister chief point. No arms resembling these survive in the East Riding. In a later context they could be assumed to stand for Fortescue, viz. Azure, bend engrailed argent plain cotised or. The Fortescues, however, were centred around Modbury in south Devon, and no stretch of the imagination can bring them north in this period.

1. V.C.H., Yorks., ii, p.274.
2. Lawrence and Collier, "Ancient Heraldry in the Deanery of Dickering", Y.A.J., xxv, p.75.
3. According to Glover's Visitation of 1584. Lawrence and Collier, "Ancient Heraldry in the Deanery of Harthill", Y.A.J., xxvi, p.121.
4. E.Y.C., xii, p.88.

Nevertheless they were not altogether beyond the reach of Huggate, though there is no real evidence to show a connection. In his earlier career Huggate appears to have seen service in the Worcester diocese under Bishop Walter Reynolds, himself a former provost of Beverley. He was ordained subdeacon by Reynolds in 1308/9¹, and in 1313, as we have noted, he was lessee of the town of Newenham in the same diocese.² In 1323 he was seeking, unsuccessfully, as it turned out, a prebend in Wells.³ So far as we know, however, he had no interests in the Exeter diocese, and the most we can show is that Huggate was reasonably well acquainted with the South-West.

No. 15 - A fess between three inverted chevrons.

Fitzwalter (Or, a fess between two chevrons gules) and de Insula or de Lisle (Or, a fess and two chevrons sable) have been suggested⁴ as possible bearers of this shield. The discrepancies in the charges in both cases are too great to allow confidence in either identification. Richard de Insula, the son of John de Insula, a baron of the exchequer and a royal justice, was precentor of Beverley from 1305/6 till his death in 1325.⁵ In 1305 his father presented him to the rectory of Hotham,⁶ and the fact that he was able to do this may imply some landed connection with the district which is no longer obvious.⁷ Whether Richard and John belonged to the de Lisles of Rougemont of Harewood is uncertain, but the former's activities in the diocese of Durham suggest that they did not, but rather to that clerical family which rendered notable service to Robert de Insula, their kinsman, and his successor Anthony Bek.⁸

1. Reg. Walter Reynolds (W.H.S.) p.103.

2. Ibid, p.177.

3. Reg. Drokenesford, p.223.

4. A.S. Harvey, op.cit., p.518

5. See below, pp. A.244 - 245.

6. Reg. Greenfield, i, p.8 and n; iii, p.134. From these references it will be seen that Insula was perpetually absent from Beverley.

7. The advowson of this benefice was normally exercised by the Hotham family.

8. See Records of Antony Bek, ed. C.M.Fraser, *passim*.

Apart from the shields, the birds embroidered on the apparel of the alb of the effigy are obviously meant to have some significance. As has already been mentioned Mr. Harvey is almost certainly right in believing them to be Cornish choughs representing St. Thomas Beckett,¹ who was a former provost of Beverley. Whilst it was natural that one of his successors should take sufficient pride in his greatly venerated predecessor to put his emblem on his own tomb, it is difficult to appreciate any reason for Grimsby, the precentor, doing so.

Finally, it is just possible that the rose-diaper work on the orphreys maniple and amice have a significance. There stands out in each rose device a cross which could be taken for an artistic representation of the cross patonce of Archbishop Melton, whose arms were Azure, a cross patonce argent.² This suggestion is prompted by the appearance of a very similar composition, representing his arms, at the top of the fifth light of the third window of the vestibule to the Chapter House of York Minster, viz. azure, a cross patonce argent, voided and surmounted by another of the first, between four cinquefoils or.³

It has already been noted how much Huggate owed to Melton, who almost certainly introduced him to the royal household, and who remained his life long friend and patron. Whilst it would be most unusual for a priest to display his bishop's coat on a shield in this context, it would not be surprising under these circumstances to find some reference to him on such a tomb.⁴

1. Harvey, op.cit., p.507. The arms of Beckett were Argent, three Cornish choughs proper.
2. W.K.R. Bedford, The Blazon of Episcopacy, p.111.
3. John Browne, Arms on the Glass in York Minster, p.28.
4. Exactly the same motif is repeated on the vestments of the effigy of a priest, obviously from the same workshop, in Welwick church in the provostry. This is thought to be the effigy of William de la Mare, who succeeded Huggate in the provostship and who was certainly a kinsman of Archbishop Melton. Since, however, he did not die until 1360, this identification of the tomb must remain in doubt.

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Abbreviations

CYS = The Canterbury and York Society; JEH - The Journal of Ecclesiastical History; RS - Rolls Series; SS - Surtees Society Publications; TRHS - The Transactions of the Royal Historical Society; YAJ - The Yorkshire Archaeological Journal; YAS - The Yorkshire Archaeological Society.

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Beverley : Humberside County Records Office.

The Provost's Book¹.

The chief relevant entries omitted from Memorials of Beverley Minster, ii (SS 108, 1903) are

fos. 28b - 37b Rental of the Provostry outside the Town of Beverley.

fos. 113b - 116 Agreement between Provost John de Barningham and the executor of Provost Robert Rolleston regarding goods of the Provostry to be released to incoming Provosts.1451.

London : British Library.

Lansdowne MSS. Among the numerous unpublished MSS relating to Beverley² the following are of special importance in identifying early canons, vicars, etc. 194, 195, 200, 395, 400, 406, 408, 546 - containing local charters c.1150 - 1235, witnessed by clergy of the Collegiate Church.

372 - contains agreement between Provost Barningham and the executor of Provost Rolleston. 1451.

378, 381, 599 - contain rolls relating to residence in the fifteenth century.

Stowe MS 502 - contains local charter witnessed by Beverley clergy c.1150.

Oxford : Bodleian Library.

MS University College 82 - contains, among other Beverley documents (a) Statutes of the Vicars approved in Chapter, 15 November, 1462, (b) Ordinances of Archbishop Thomas Arundel, 28 July, 1391, (c) Rental of the Vicars in and beyond the Town of Beverley.

York : Borthwick Institute of Historical Research.

The Registers of the Archbishops of York, from William Melton (R.I.10) (part published, see below) to Edward Lee (R.I.28), and Sede Vacante Register (R.I.5).³

1. Recently transferred from Beverley Minster.
2. Many of the most significant Lansdowne MSS relating to the Minster feature in E.Y.C., i - xii, B.C.A, ii, etc.
3. The inclusion here of the Registers of the Archbishops of York in no way implies a systematic use of them, but only occasional reference.

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THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE THIRIES OF ST JOHN

As indicated in the Valor Ecclesiasticus & other Sources

PROVOST

ST ANDREW'S PREBEND

ST JAMES'

ST MARTIN'S

ST MARY'S

ST MICHAEL'S

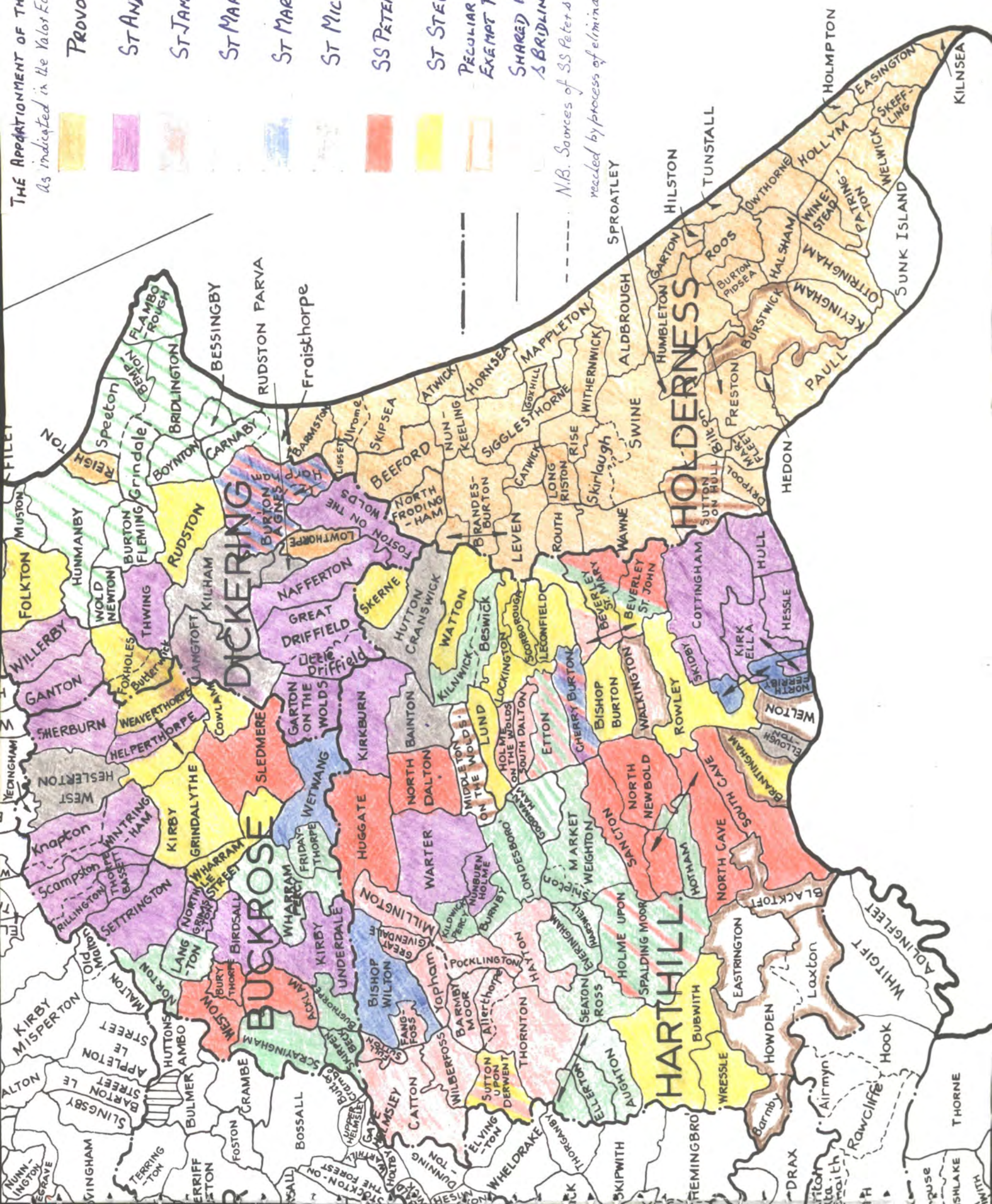
SS PETER & PAUL'S

ST STEPHEN'S

PECULIAR OF HOWDEN &
EXEMPT PARISH OF BURSTUICK

SHARED BY ST MARTIN'S PREBEND
& BRIDLINGTON PRIORY

N.B. Sources of SS Peter & Paul's P., a part of St Michael's
recalled by process of elimination: therefore tentative.



THE PROVOSTRY OF BEVERLEY & ITS ESTATES

The Peculiar of Beverley

Manors of the Provostry

Parish Churches of the Provostry

Chapels in the patronage of the Provost

Other Chief centres of Estates

Boundary of the East Riding

