

The Diocese of Exeter 1519-1641: a Study of Church Government in the Age of the Reformation

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And no doubt there can be more in a book than the author consciously puts there, which will help either to its profit or to its disadvantage.

(Thomas Hardy, *Jude the Obscure*, (1912 edn.), postscript)

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Abbreviations

<i>AASRP</i>	<i>Associated Architectural Societies Reports and Papers</i>
<i>AJ</i>	<i>Archaeological Journal</i>
<i>APC</i>	<i>Acts of the Privy Council of England</i> vii-xlvi, ed. J R Dasent (1893-1964)
<i>AR</i>	<i>Archiv fur Reformationsgeschichte</i>
<i>AgHR</i>	<i>Agricultural History Review</i>
<i>Al Cant</i>	J and J A Venn, <i>Alumni Cantabrigienses: a Biographical List of All Known Students...from the Earliest Times to 1900: Part I; Earliest Times to 1751</i> (4 vols., Cambridge, 1922-27)
<i>Al Ox</i>	J Foster, <i>Alumni Oxonienses: the Members of the University of Oxford 1500-1714</i> (4 vols., 1891)
<i>Ath Cant</i>	C H and T Cooper, <i>Athenae Cantabrigienses</i> (3 vols., Cambridge, 1858-1913)
<i>Ath Ox</i>	A a Wood, <i>Athenae Oxonienses: an Exact History of All the Writers and Bishops who have had their Education in the Most Ancient and Famous University of Oxford...to which are added the Fasti or Annals of the said University</i> , ed. P Bliss (4 vols., Oxford, 1813-20)
<i>BL</i>	British Library
<i>Bodl Lib</i>	Bodleian Library
<i>c.</i>	contra
<i>CCCC</i>	Corpus Christi College Cambridge
<i>CPR</i>	<i>Calendar of Patent Rolls 1547-1575</i> (14 vols., 1924-73)
<i>CRO</i>	Cornwall Record Office
<i>CSPD</i>	<i>Calendar of State Papers Domestic 1547-1660</i> , eds. R Lemon et al (47 vols., 1856-86)
<i>CUL</i>	Cambridge University Library
<i>DCNQ</i>	<i>Devon and Cornwall Notes and Queries</i>
<i>DCRS</i>	Devon and Cornwall Record Society
<i>DNB</i>	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i> , eds. S Lee and L Stephen (63 vols., 1885-1900)
<i>DHC</i>	Devon Heritage Centre
<i>EHR</i>	<i>English Historical Review</i>
<i>EcHR</i>	<i>Economic History Review</i>
<i>ECA</i>	Exeter Cathedral Archives
<i>Fasti</i>	see <i>Ath Ox</i>

fo(s)	folio(s)
HJ	<i>Historical Journal</i>
HLRO	House of Lords Record Office
HMC	<i>Historical Manuscripts Commission</i>
HR	<i>Historical Research</i> (formerly <i>Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research</i>)
ITL	Inner Temple Library
JBS	<i>Journal of British Studies</i>
JEH	<i>Journal of Ecclesiastical History</i>
JRH	<i>Journal of Religious History</i>
JRIC	<i>Journal of the Royal Institution of Cornwall</i>
JSA	<i>Journal of the Society of Archivists</i>
LA	Lincolnshire Archives
LJ	<i>Journals of the House of Lords 1547-1629</i> (3 vols.)
LP	<i>Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII</i> , arranged and catalogued by J Gairdner and R H Brodie (23 vols., in 38, 1862-1932)
LPL	Lambeth Palace Library
n	note
Neg.	Negotium
NDRO	North Devon Record Office
Off.	Office
P&P	<i>Past and Present</i>
PBA	<i>Proceedings of the British Academy</i>
p(p)	page(s)
Prom.	Promoted
PSANHS	<i>Proceedings of the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society</i>
Reg.	Register
RTDA	<i>Report and Transactions of the Devonshire Association For the Advancement of Science, Literature and Art</i>
Salis Cath Lib	Salisbury Cathedral Library
SCH	<i>Studies in Church History</i>
SCJ	<i>Sixteenth Century Journal</i>
SH	<i>Southern History</i>
TNA	The National Archives
TRHS	<i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society</i>
VCH	<i>Victoria County History</i>
vol(s).	volume(s)
WSHC	<i>Wiltshire and Swindon Historical Centre</i>
WSRO	<i>West Sussex Record Office</i>

Notes

Dates are in old style with the year taken as beginning on 1 January.

Place of publication of works cited in the footnotes is London unless otherwise stated.

Spelling and punctuation of quotations have been modernised.

Internet Version 2021

Since I wrote this thesis a number of record repositories have changed their names and locations. I have updated the text and footnotes to reflect these changes. I have also corrected a number of typographical errors, re-phrased several sentences and re-numbered the footnotes in one continuous sequence. Otherwise the thesis is as it was first presented 30 years ago.

Readers are welcome to use extracts for their own research purposes but in doing so I would ask them to respect the conventions of copyright. Thank you.

Acknowledgement

I am grateful for the help afforded me in the preparation of this thesis by my research supervisor, Dr J S Morrill of Selwyn College Cambridge.

Summary

This is not a detailed administrative study. I am concerned as much with ideas as actions. Indeed, in many respects this is a highly selective and tendentious compilation. It comes in the wake of the reaction to so-called revisionism and therefore has something to say about the origins of the seventeenth century civil war. It sides with those historians who see a certain inevitability about that crisis.¹

The thesis falls into three main sections. After a brief introductory chapter, there is an extended narrative account of the 'true' age of Reformation and its impact upon the workings of church government in the south-west. Little attempt is made to consider the popular response to religious and political change for an excellent study by Robert Whiting already exists.² Instead light is cast upon the character and deeds of the bishops and other key ecclesiastical personnel. To some extent old views are countered. Thus John Veysey emerges as a more attractive and resourceful diocesan than the standard accounts allow.³ He was a miniature Wolsey and thus replete with the virtues and vices of the cardinal. By no means devoid of skill, Veysey was overcome by the pace of change and his own advancing senility. His enforced disposal of the diocese's estates was a tragic conclusion to an overlong episcopate.

The turning point for Veysey came with the 1549 Prayer Book Rebellion. The revolt discredited his rule and paved the way for his retirement. Here evidence is advanced for thinking that the upper clergy of the diocese, and especially the stridently conservative cathedral canons, played a key role in fomenting the troubles. Their reward was to have Miles Coverdale foisted upon them.⁴ But the first protestant bishop of the diocese was no mere iconoclast. Turning to experienced advisers, Coverdale reorganised the structure of church government in the south-west and laid the foundations for the more notable revitalisation of the post-Reformation period.

¹ For the historiographical context see *Conflict in Early Stuart England: Studies in Religion and Politics 1603-1642*, eds. R Cust and A Hughes (1989), pp. 1-46.

² R Whiting, *The Blind Devotion of the People: Popular Religion and the English Reformation* (Cambridge, 1989).

³ See below, pp. 17-38.

⁴ See below, pp. 39-46.

The brevity of the reformer's rule coupled with the poverty of the episcopal finances inevitably produced many loose ends. Similar remarks can be made about the rule of his Marian successor, James Turberville.⁵ It is possible to agree with those recent commentators who have been prepared to see elements of creativity in the Marian reaction.⁶ Turberville was certainly an agent of Reginald Pole. He was a local man, who strove to bring stability to church government after the depredations of the 1540s and early 1550s. Yet the bishop's good intentions were more than offset by his colleagues' sterile concern with money and self-interest. The bickering of the cathedral canons and Pole's own pursuit of material recompense rather cast a shadow over the Marian interlude in the south-west.

Finally in the narrative chapter, some account is given of the establishment of the Elizabethan regime.⁷ Particular attention is paid to the organisation and conduct of the 1559 royal visitation. Settlement was the key concern of the government and thus only the most ardent conservatives were evicted from office. The aim was to avoid making martyrs and in the south-west this policy was largely successful. In the process, zeal was kept from dominating the scene. The Elizabethan Settlement was given a basis of support in the cathedral chapter and the threat of civil strife averted.

The second section of my thesis eschews the narrative for the analytical. The seven post-Reformation bishops of Exeter are each put under the microscope in a bid to discover a collective mentality.⁸ The topical, but difficult issue of moderation is debated.⁹ My main point is that Grindalianism and conformism shared a common heritage in the humanist reformation of the middle decades of the sixteenth century.¹⁰ Contrary to what is often argued, the gap separating progressive bishops from puritanism was much more substantial than that which distinguished them from disciplinarian ecclesiastics like Whitgift and Bancroft.¹¹ Consequently the ultra-conformist views advanced by William Laud had a legitimate pedigree which reached

⁵ See below, pp. 46-59.

⁶ See for example, R H Pogson, 'The Legacy of the Schism: Confusion, Continuity and Change in the Marian Clergy', in *The Mid-Tudor Polity c1540-1560*, eds. J Loach and R Tittler (1980), pp. 116-36.

⁷ See below, pp. 59-68.

⁸ I am defining the post-Reformation period as extending from the 1559 Elizabethan Settlement to the summoning of the Long Parliament in 1640. Thus Ralph Brownrigg who succeeded Joseph Hall as bishop in 1642 is excluded from this study.

⁹ P G Lake, *Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church* (Cambridge, 1982), *passim*.

¹⁰ See in particular the sketches of William Alley and John Woolton.

¹¹ N Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinism, the Rise of English Arminianism c1590-1640* (Oxford, 1987), provides a sophisticated statement of the widely accepted viewpoint.

back to the writings of key reformers such as Martin Bucer, Peter Martyr and even John Calvin. There was doctrinal change during the post-Reformation period, but it had nothing to do with Arminianism. What altered was the nature of Calvinism. Puritanism in the early decades of the seventeenth century was a substantially different entity to what it had been during the reign of Elizabeth 1. Ultimately the civil war was caused by puritan extremists, not by Laudians or anti-Calvinists.¹²

The third and final section of my thesis comes closest to administrative history. But even here, we are concerned more with broad issues than the minutiae of church government. The growing concentration of power upon the episcopal bureaucracy provides the section's subject-matter. It is commonly held that diocesan government was at its most sophisticated and pervasive during the later middle ages.¹³ I argue that the pressures imposed upon the Church as a consequence of the break with Rome did not lead to collapse. Certainly there was a temporary hiatus, but by the end of Elizabeth's reign new, more intimidating forms of centralisation were emerging in the south-west. The Exeter consistory came to deal in criminal as well as civil actions. Its apparitorial agents were everywhere in the diocese, searching out business for the court and its staff. Lesser jurisdictions within the see began to wither on the vine, as the flow of cases declined. Arguably, bishops were now more absolute within their territories than their later medieval predecessors had ever been. But there was a price to pay for this. Increasingly the bureaucracies began to take control. They were staffed by highly expert, but also highly materialistic lawyers. As business levels rose, so also did the prices charged for services rendered. The wealthy were targeted, for it was rightly perceived that they would pay most to gain their release from the toils of the spiritual courts. Yet this

¹² For further discussion see below, pp. 167-72. It will be clear that I neither agree fully with Nicholas Tyacke nor Peter White. I support Tyacke's Calvinist consensus. I follow White in his claim that Laud was not an Arminian. I disagree with Tyacke because he fails to distinguish between the 'old' and 'new' versions of Calvinism. I disagree with White because he maintains that the Church of England was not doctrinally Calvinist. For the Tyacke-White debate see P White, 'The Rise of Arminianism Reconsidered', *P&P*, 101 (1983), pp. 43-54; N Tyacke and P White, 'Debate: Arminianism Reconsidered', *P&P*, 115 (1987), pp. 201-29. See also PG Lake, 'Calvinism and the English Church 1570-1635', *P&P*, 114 (1987), pp. 32-76. Of the recent literature Jonathan Atkins' article ('Calvinish Bishops, Church Unity, and the Rise of Arminianism', *Albion*, 18 (1986), pp. 411-27) comes nearest to my standpoint in that it, too, posits a rift between puritans and progressive bishops in the post-Reformation Church. However, Atkins identifies Laud and Neile as doctrinal Arminians.

¹³ R L Storey, *Diocesan Administration in the Fifteenth Century* (St Anthony's Hall Publications, 16, 2nd edn., 1972); A H Thompson, *The English Clergy and their Organisation in the Later Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1947).

parasitic behaviour had a backlash effect: important segments of local society were alienated and puritans gained weighty allies in their campaign against the Laudian regime.

A concluding chapter attempts to put the foregoing into a wider context.

This dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration.

Chapter 1: The Ancient Diocese

On the eve of the Reformation, Exeter could look back upon almost five hundred years of unbroken history as a diocese. Founded in 1050 when the Anglo-Saxon sees of Crediton and Cornwall were merged by Bishop Leofric, Exeter embraced that portion of the south-west peninsula today occupied by the counties of Devon and Cornwall.¹⁴ Included within the diocese were the islands of Scilly and Lundy, though for reasons of remoteness or intransigence neither made much impact upon local ecclesiastical affairs.¹⁵ It was during the course of the sixteenth century that attempts were made to alter the external boundaries of the diocese. In 1539, as part of the plans associated with the act for the creation of new bishoprics, the re-establishment of a Cornish see was mooted with either Bodmin, Launceston or St Germans, the seat of the pre-Conquest diocese, serving as the cathedral city.¹⁶ Later, in Elizabeth's reign, a scheme was proposed to transfer the Channel Islands from the see of Winchester to Exeter.¹⁷ But neither plan was pursued with much vigour and it was left to a later reforming age to effect major boundary changes when the diocese of Truro was established in 1876.¹⁸

Thus, for over eight hundred years, Exeter embraced a land area of almost four thousand square miles. This made it the fourth largest diocese in the late medieval English Church surpassed only by the sees of York, Lincoln and Lichfield.¹⁹ Territorial losses sustained by the last two in 1541 improved Exeter's position to that of second in the post-Reformation Church.²⁰ Exeter contained a great many parishes. Contemporary estimates vary, but in the early modern period there seem to have been over five hundred and fifty benefices in the south-west, or roughly one for every seven square miles.²¹ This ratio was well above the national average and over twice that for East

¹⁴ R J Boggis, *History of the Diocese of Exeter* (Exeter, 1922), pp. 41-63. The parish of Thorncombe in Dorset was also part of the diocese; conversely Stockland in Devon was not: see Maps 1 and 2.

¹⁵ *Thesaurus Ecclesiasticus Provincialis, Or a Survey of the Diocese of Exeter* (Exeter, 1782), p. 2; J R Chanter, *Lundy Island: a Monograph Descriptive and Historical* (1877), p. 87.

¹⁶ A L Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall: a Portrait of a Society* (1969), p. 233.

¹⁷ A J Eaglestone, *The Channel Islands under Tudor Government, 1485-1642* (Cambridge, 1949), p. 10.

¹⁸ Boggis, *Diocese of Exeter*, p. 533.

¹⁹ P Hughes, *The Reformation in England* (3 vols., 1950-4), i. 32-3.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Thesaurus Ecclesiasticus Provincialis, passim*; DHC, Chanter 217-19; CCCC, Parker 97, fos. 156-83v.

Anglia: indeed, only in the north of England were larger parishes to be found.²² Exeter was also one of the most populous sees in the early modern period: perhaps as many as three hundred thousand souls were living within the diocese in 1600.²³ Moreover, at seventy-five persons per square mile, Exeter was the fourth most densely populated see behind London, Canterbury and Bath and Wells.²⁴

The south-west was a vigorous society in the early modern period. In common with other parts of the country, the region was subject to the dynamic forces of population increase and price inflation. Devon and Cornwall had escaped the worst of the later medieval recession.²⁵ Consequently, by the opening years of the sixteenth century, the two counties were among the three most swiftly prospering shires in the kingdom.²⁶ One example of this well-being was a resort to church-building and refurbishment on the eve of the Reformation.²⁷ Another was the development of those key industries – cloth-making, mining and fishing – for which the region later became famous. During the sixteenth century the towns of the south-west grew both in number and size. By the early years of the following century Devon and Cornwall boasted some sixty towns, over half of which were either incorporated or parliamentary boroughs.

Nonetheless, the south-west remained a predominantly rural society. Only a handful of towns exceeded two thousand inhabitants in 1600. As elsewhere, it was the gentry of the region who benefited most from the Tudor century. War, rebellion, religious change and the growing importance of parliament underlined the consequences of economic expansion by bringing Devon and Cornwall more fully within the focus of national concern.²⁸

Of course, most English shires underwent transformations of this kind in the early modern period and it may therefore be unwise to make too much of the phenomenon for the south-west. Nonetheless, it is worth stressing the

²² Hughes, *Reformation in England*, i. 32-3.

²³ This is a very approximate estimate based upon figures contained in W G Hoskins, *Devon* (Newton Abbot, 1972), p 172 and J Whetter, *Cornwall in the Seventeenth Century: an Economic Survey of Kernow* (Padstow, 1974), p. 9.

²⁴ Calculated from Hughes, *Reformation in England*, i. 32-3.

²⁵ W G Hoskins and H.P.R. Finberg, *Devonshire Studies* (1952), pp. 233-46.

²⁶ R S Schofield, 'The Geographical Distribution of Wealth in England 1334-1649', *EcHR*, 18 (1965), pp. 483-510, at p. 508. The other county was Middlesex.

²⁷ R Whiting, *The Blind Devotion of the People: Popular Religion and the English Reformation* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 86.

²⁸ Hoskins, *Devon*, pp. 108-13; Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall*, pp. 54-100; Whetter, *Seventeenth Century Cornwall*, pp. 8, 59-171.

vitality of secular society in Devon and Cornwall at a time when bishops of Exeter, in common with their colleagues elsewhere, were finding their existence especially careworn and precarious.²⁹ The break with Rome, and later the advent of puritanism, produced major attacks on episcopal authority. They also led to an increased role for bishops in the enforcement of successive state-imposed religious settlements. At Exeter, as no doubt elsewhere, these matters served to draw attention to the practicalities of church government.

Clearly episcopal rule in the south-west was no easy business. The most obvious difficulty was topographical. The thrust of the peninsula was westwards. At its greatest extent the see was some 140 miles long. John Grandisson, the most renowned of the late medieval bishops of Exeter, regarded a journey to Land's End as just that, a journey to the end of the world.³⁰ This impression owed much to the easterly position of the see's capital and to the series of granite outcrops – Dartmoor, Bodmin Moor, Hensbarrow, Carnmenellis and Penwith – which stretched from east to west down the centre of the two shires. With the most direct route to the far west thus closed to all but the hardiest of travellers, bishops of Exeter were faced with a choice of journeying along the lands of the northern or southern coastlines. Neither option was entirely satisfactory. The former involved negotiating high and sparsely populated lands whose generally poor quality soils were constantly beaten by the prevailing north-westerly winds of the Atlantic.³¹ The latter route was more commodious in terms of scenery and habitation – outside of east Devon, the South Hams and south-east Cornwall were the most populous areas of the see – but the way westward was punctuated at regular intervals by the region's 'great' rivers: the Exe, the Dart, the Tamar, the Fowey and the Fal.³²

Yet despite these difficulties, late medieval bishops and their administrations made frequent tours of Devon and Cornwall. The location of the many episcopal manors of the see reveals the course that these progresses took. Westwards along the southern route, pausing perhaps at Ashburton, Chudleigh, Bishopsteignton, West Teignmouth, Radway or Paignton, then on to St Germans and Cuddenbeak, before turning around to proceed back to

²⁹ See below, pp. 100-11.

³⁰ 'In cauda mundi' were his words: C Henderson, *Essays in Cornish History* (Oxford, 1935), p. 106.

³¹ J Kew, 'Regional Variations in the Devon Land Market 1536-1558', in *Exeter Papers in Economic History 2: the South-West and the Land*, eds. M A Havinden and C M King (Exeter, 1969), pp. 27-42, at p. 30.

³² *Ibid.*, p 35; Whetter, *Seventeenth Century Cornwall*, p. 10.

Exeter via the north coast estates of Cargoll, Pawton, Lawhitton, Bishop's Tawton, Bishop's Nympton, Crediton and Morchard Bishop.³³

In the early seventeenth century when bishops of Exeter had lost the majority of their manors, Joseph Hall succeeded in circumnavigating his diocese in approximately four weeks.³⁴ Things happened at a slower pace in the later middle ages, yet paradoxically diocesans were more mobile. Fourteenth and fifteenth century bishops of Exeter much preferred to reside upon their country estates away from the gloomy and windswept episcopal palace in the cathedral close. Routine tasks such as ordination and audience court work which in the post-Reformation period were normally performed at Exeter, were in that earlier age done 'on circuit' about the diocese.³⁵ Nonetheless, studying the itineraries of bishops can give a misleading impression about the nature of episcopal government in the later medieval period. Population growth in the century preceding the Black Death, and the greater demands accordingly placed upon ecclesiastical rule, had led to administrative formalisation. The emergence of a new class of episcopal servant, the officials, trained in civil and canon law, and the establishment of a central fixed tribunal for the diocese, the consistory court meeting in the chapel of St Edmund at the north-west end of the cathedral, marked the beginnings of a settled episcopal bureaucracy at Exeter. During the two centuries preceding the Reformation, bishops strove to make the most of this system.³⁶

The principal shortcoming was its immobility. Interest of efficiency demanded that the episcopal bureaucracy's voice be heard in all corners of the diocese. In large sees like Exeter this meant either administrative devolution or delegation. However, the latter was not a particularly realistic choice in the circumstances of the later middle ages. For underlying the desire to generalise episcopal authority throughout the diocese was the wish to frustrate the jurisdictional claims of the archdeacons of the see. This was a problem that virtually all English bishops had to face. Both they and their archdeacons exercised ordinary or spiritual jurisdiction. At first the archdeacons had been content to act as the loyal agents of episcopal rule. But the impetus given to domestic church government in the three centuries

³³ See Map 3.

³⁴ DHC, Chanter 217-18; PR Basket D/87.

³⁵ *The Register of Thomas de Brantyngham 1370-1394*, ed. F C Hingeston-Randolph (2 vols, Exeter, 1901-6), ii. 751-877.

³⁶ C Morris, 'A Consistory Court in the Middle Ages', *JEH*, 14 (1963), pp. 150-9, at p. 151; *The Registers of Walter Bronescombe 1257-1280 and Peter Quivil 1280-1291*, ed. F C Hingeston-Randolph (Exeter, 1889), *passim*; ECA, D&C.4626/2/2.

following the Norman Conquest had led them to lay claim to the control of spiritual jurisdiction within their territories. Unless bishops made an effective challenge, their consistories would become little more than tribunals of appeal from the archidiaconal courts.³⁷

There were four archdeaconries in the diocese of Exeter: three in Devon (those of Barnstaple, Exeter and Totnes) and one for the whole of Cornwall. Exeter was the most senior post.³⁸ Cornwall presented the severest test of administrative skill. No records have survived for the pre-Reformation period, but almost certainly the courts of the archdeacons handled both criminal and civil matters. Mobility was their main asset. In the early seventeenth century a circuit of the archdeaconry of Cornwall was commenced every three to four weeks throughout the year. Each round took an average of six or seven days to complete with court sessions or 'chapters' being held at five or six venues. The court's registrar might easily find himself covering 1500 miles each year.³⁹

Similar patterns of activity can be discerned for the tribunals of the archdeacons of Barnstaple and Totnes.⁴⁰ Exeter, however, was much less mobile. The archdeaconry court transacted the bulk of its instance and office work in the church of St Mary Major opposite the cathedral, only leaving the city to conduct its biannual visitation in the spring and autumn.⁴¹ Presumably this reflected the proximity of the episcopal consistory court. Certainly distant Cornwall was not only the most mobile, but also the busiest, of the archdeaconry courts in the post-Reformation period. Exeter, meanwhile, seems to have had a generally meagre work-load.⁴²

The lesson was thus clear. To counter archidiaconal pretensions a regular episcopal presence in the localities was required. In the later middle ages, diocesans solved this problem by appointing commissioners – sometimes also referred to as correctors – who were obliged to traverse the regions of the see holding courts at frequent intervals and in various locations.⁴³ Two types of commissary can be found in the late medieval English Church: those whose field of jurisdiction embraced an entire diocese and those who area of

³⁷ C Morris, 'The Commissary of the Bishop of Lincoln', *JEH*, 10 (1959), pp. 50-65, at p. 51.

³⁸ *Thesaurus Provincialis*, p. 2.

³⁹ CRO, ARD/3, *passim*.

⁴⁰ NDRO, 1127.EA/AD 1; CC.152/BOX 151, Ball c. Hayman.

⁴¹ DHC, CC.151, Weekes c. Milforde and Harte c. Byckforde; DHC, AE/V/3.

⁴² For further comment, see below, pp. 223-44.

⁴³ D M Owen, 'Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction in England 1300-1550: the Records and their Interpretation', *SCH*, 11 (1975), pp. 199-221, at p 208.

authority was delimited by the boundaries of a given archdeaconry. Examples of the former were to be found in smaller-sized sees such as Bath and Wells, Canterbury and Hereford.⁴⁴ The latter operated in the large diocese of Lincoln, London and Norwich.⁴⁵ A study has been made of the commissary system at Lincoln. There the impetus for its development derived also from the reforming programme of the fourth Lateran Council which inspired a new determination among prelates to discharge their disciplinary duties. In addition, the development of English law had assigned to the Church the care of the estates of deceased persons. These were tasks which could best be discharged locally and to do so the office of episcopal sequestrator was enhanced to encompass powers of correction and probate. By the end of the fourteenth century the post of commissary had emerged in all but name.⁴⁶

A similar process can be observed at work in the south-west, though here the office of official of the bishop's peculiar jurisdiction proved to be the main point of growth for the commissary system. By the early years of the fourteenth century there were two officials of the bishop's peculiar jurisdiction in being: one for Cornwall and one for Devon. They possessed the power to determine civil and criminal causes arising within the peculiars.⁴⁷ Bishop Grandisson (1327-69) began the broadening of this authority to embrace the whole of each shire. The power to sequester the fruits of vacant benefices was also added at this time, but it was not until the early decades of the next century that the officials began to exercise a probate jurisdiction.⁴⁸ This, in fact, represented the fullest development of the commissary system in the south-west. From the 1420s onwards, the patents of authority issued to officials of the bishop's peculiar jurisdiction in Devon and Cornwall became stereotyped.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ R W Dunning, 'The Wells Consistory Court in the Fifteenth Century', *PSANHS*, 106 (1962), pp. 46-61, at pp. 48-9; B L Woodcock, *Medieval Ecclesiastical Courts in the Diocese of Canterbury* (Oxford, 1952), pp. 33-4; E L Lonsdale, 'The Episcopal Administration in the Diocese of Hereford 1400-circa 1535', Liverpool MA thesis (1957), p. 39.

⁴⁵ Morris, 'Commissary of the Bishop of Lincoln'; R M Wunderli, *London Church Courts and Society on the Eve of the Reformation* (Cambridge, Mass, 1981), p. 13; R A Houlbrooke, *Church Courts and the People during the English Reformation 1520-1570* (Oxford, 1979), pp. 278-81.

⁴⁶ Morris, 'Commissary of the Bishop of Lincoln', p. 52.

⁴⁷ *The Register of John de Grandisson 1327-1369*, ed. Rev. F.C. Hingeston-Randolph (3 vols., Exeter, 1894-9), ii. 777-9.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*; *The Register of Edmund Lacy 1420-1455, Part II: the Registrum Commune*, eds. C G Browne and O J Reichel (Exeter, 1915), pp. 530-1.

⁴⁹ DHC, Chanter 12(i), fos. 32v-3; Chanter 13, fo. 131; Chanter 15, fo. 80v.

In the absence of records, it is difficult to assess the impact of the commissary courts upon the south-west. We know that the patents of authority limited the officials' probate jurisdiction to the peculiar parishes, save for the wills and goods of deceased clergy.⁵⁰ But what of the courts' other duties? Here we can only speculate. Most probably their main concern was with disciplinary matters, though it seems likely that they also handled a fair number of civil actions.⁵¹ It was the latter which threatened the prosperity of the archdeaconry courts. But it may well be that the main sufferer was the Exeter consistory. Its workload seems to have been somewhat depressed during the later middle ages.⁵²

Certainly it would be unwise to view the establishment of the commissary system as a wholly provocative act on the part of bishops designed to erode their archdeacons' judicial and administrative capability. Diocesans might have welcomed such an outcome, but a more realistic aim, in the circumstances of the later middle ages, was the securing from the archdeacon of a recognition of the bishop's jurisdictional rights in the localities of his see.⁵³ This acceptance was invariably enshrined in a formal composition which in turn accorded *de iure* status to the archdeacon's claim to be an exerciser of spiritual jurisdiction in the regions of the diocese.⁵⁴ Greater unity was thus achieved for diocesan organisation. Symptomatic of this was the more frequent appointment of men as commissioners in the fifteenth century who were also officials of archidiaconal tribunals.⁵⁵ Equally indicative at Exeter was the use to which archdeacons were put as disseminators of episcopal mandates and as deputies for the accomplishment of numerous *ad hoc* tasks.⁵⁶ One facet of this was the linking role the

⁵⁰ *Register of Lacy*, eds. Browne and Reichel, pp. 530-1.

⁵¹ The work of the Exeter consistory court was almost entirely confined to instance business at the end of the later medieval period (DHC, Chanter 775-6). It is, perhaps, significant that officials peculiar at Exeter were granted the right to deal in instance cases from an early date, whereas the commissioners of the bishop of Lincoln were not so authorised until the fifteenth century (Morris, 'Commissary of the Bishop of Lincoln', p. 64). See also, Woodcock, *Medieval Ecclesiastical Courts*, pp. 33-4; Lonsdale, 'Episcopal Administration', p. 60; Wunderli, *London Church Courts*, p. 12.

⁵² DHC, Chanter 775-6. For further discussion, see below, p. 222 and Figure 1.

⁵³ Morris, 'Commissary of the Bishop of Lincoln', p. 52.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* For further comment, see below, pp. 237-44.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.; The Register of Edmund Lacy 1420-1455, Part I: the Register of Institutions*, ed. Rev. F.C. Hingeston-Randolph (Exeter, 1909), pp. 297, 359. It is a moot point whether one should conclude that 'the prime loyalty of such official-commissionaries was probably given to the archdeacon who had first placed them' (Houlbrooke, *Church Courts and the People*, p. 32). At Exeter, certainly, the matter is open to question. See below, p. 43.

⁵⁶ *Register of Lacy*, eds. Browne and Reichel, pp. 691, 748, 750, 752.

archdeacons performed between the bishop's administration and the smallest units of ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the south-west, the rural deaneries.

There were thirty-two rural deaneries in the diocese of Exeter, nine each in the archdeaconries of Exeter and Totnes and eight and six respectively in the archdeaconries of Cornwall and Barnstaple. Rural deans were elected annually. Every year a mandate was issued under the seal of the president of the consistory court requiring the four archdeacons to summon the rectors and vicars of each deanery of their respective jurisdictions to assemble in chapter shortly before Michaelmas in order to nominate one of their number as rural dean for the forthcoming year.⁵⁷ These elections were probably no more than a formality. A man was chosen to serve as rural dean less because of seniority, experience or ability, and more because of the benefice that he held.⁵⁸ Certain benefices became liable in turn and the incumbent of each automatically became liable for office.⁵⁹ Once the elections had been made, the archdeacon or his official sent a certificate listing the names of those who had been chosen to serve as deans to Exeter.⁶⁰ The archdeacon also instructed the new deans to appear before the president of the consistory court at the earliest opportunity to swear an oath of allegiance to the bishop and to pay a fee of admission to office.⁶¹

What duties did rural deans perform in the south-west in the later middle ages? Evidently their functions were never as overtly judicial as those of their colleagues in the sees of the northern province.⁶² The strength of the archidiaconal courts had ensured that the rural deans of Exeter did not acquire a jurisdiction over probate and disciplinary matters. Instead, as in the south in general, their activities were confined to the execution of citations, the forwarding of mandates and the carrying out of inquiries within their respective deaneries.⁶³ Little charisma attached to what in essence were apparitorial duties and it is not surprising to find that the honour of

⁵⁷ DHC, Chanter 1692/2. Ruri-decanal chapters were also convened at Exeter in the later middle ages to inquire into the right of presentation to livings (*Register of Lacy*, eds. Browne and Reichel, pp. 643-4). This practice had been discontinued by the early seventeenth century (DHC, Chanter 22, fos. 9v-11v, 19v-20v).

⁵⁸ I have modified Dr Dunning's conclusions which are based largely on Bath and Wells evidence (R.W. Dunning, 'Rural Deans in the Fifteenth Century', *H.R.*, 40 (1967), pp. 207-13, at pp. 208-9).

⁵⁹ *The Register of Edmund Stafford 1395-1419*, ed. F C Hingeston-Randolph (Exeter, 1886), pp. 244, 310. This may have changed in the post-Reformation period: see Appendix 5.

⁶⁰ DHC, Chanter 1692/1.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² Houlbrooke, *Church Courts and the People*, p. 34.

⁶³ *Register of Lacy*, eds. Browne and Reichel, pp. 679-80, 708.

office soon became a burden. In the early fourteenth century it was alleged that rural deans were employing 'men of no character' to do their work.⁶⁴ Later in the same century, it was found that the Michaelmas elections were not being held.⁶⁵ This helps to explain the method of choosing deans. A system involving a liability for office attached to benefices on a rota basis offered the most equitable means of supplying the deaneries.⁶⁶ Even so, by the post-Reformation period, rural deans had entirely given over their duties to consistory court apparitors. It was the latter who appeared at Exeter each Michaelmas, took the oath of allegiance on behalf of the elected ministers and performed the various tasks entrusted to the deans.⁶⁷

Finally in this chapter, something needs to be said about the various peculiar authorities active within the diocese of Exeter on the eve of the Reformation. There were six exempt jurisdictions in the see: those of the bishop, the dean, the dean and chapter, and the vicars choral of Exeter, the dean of St Buryan and the prebendary of Uffculme.⁶⁸ Together they comprised some seventy-two parishes and chapelries or roughly one tenth of the number of livings in Devon and Cornwall at the end of the middle ages. Each of the peculiars' controlling officers held courts to determine ecclesiastical causes arising within the bounds of their authority, proved the wills of parishioners and granted letters of administration upon the goods of the deceased. All six exempt jurisdictions were free from archidiaconal interference. But only two of the five non-episcopal peculiar authorities – the deanery of St Buryan and the prebend of Uffculme – enjoyed immunity from the ministrations of bishops of Exeter. This meant that they did not suffer triennial visitation, even as in the case of the Exeter dean and chapter by their own officers acting in the name of the diocesan.⁶⁹ Neither were they obliged to receive episcopal mandates, nor turn to the bishop for the granting of licences and the admission of clergy into livings.

Independence of this kind could well pose problems for diocesans. Wrongdoers might escape punishment by fleeing to these jurisdictions.

⁶⁴ *Register of Grandisson*, ed. Hingeston-Randolph, ii. 712-13.

⁶⁵ *Register of Brantyngham*, ed. Hingeston-Randolph, ii. 706.

⁶⁶ *The Register of Edmund Lacy 1420-1455*, ed. G.R. Dunstan (DCRS., 7, 10, 13, 16, 18, 1963-72), iii. 92, 303.

⁶⁷ DHC, Chanter 1692.

⁶⁸ *Parliamentary Papers* (20, 1828), p. 16; *Diocese of Salisbury: Guide to the Records*, comp. P. Stewart (Wiltshire County Council, 1973), p. 71. Uffculme only became a peculiar in 1543 when the parish was transferred to the jurisdiction of the Salisbury dean and chapter by act of parliament.

⁶⁹ DHC, Chanter 1449. The dean and chapter nominated three of their number from which the bishop selected two.

Routine judicial and administrative business might also be lost. Fortunately for bishops of Exeter, neither St Buryan, a royal free chapel, nor Uffculme, which was attached to the see of Salisbury, were particularly large or consequential authorities. Although populous parishes in the early modern period, both proved susceptible to penetration by the diocesan courts.⁷⁰ Certainly it seems unlikely that the tribunals of these peculiars were especially busy at any time in their history. On the evidence of the early seventeenth century, judicial activity at Uffculme was largely confined to the annual visitation. Regular court work was done at Salisbury where the peculiar's registrar resided.⁷¹ Much of the responsibility for administering the prebend devolved upon the vicar of Uffculme. He was normally chosen as commissary for the annual visitation.⁷² During the remainder of the year he acted as general dogsbody, sending wills and inventories to Salisbury for probate and registration and seeking the despatch of commissions of administration.⁷³ Distance combined with a reliance upon the local postal service meant that delays were inevitable.⁷⁴ Not surprisingly, inhabitants turned to nearby Exeter for the resolution of their disputes and for the granting of licences.⁷⁵

Matters at St Buryan can scarcely have been much different. The deanery's exempt status was of comparatively recent origin. Edward I and his two successors had forged a charter to establish St Buryan's standing as a royal free chapel, when in fact the deanery was no more than a rectory containing a college of secular priests.⁷⁶ By the reign of Edward IV, the absence of any oversight other than that of the crown had produced a sorry tale of peculation and disorder.⁷⁷ Further troubles came with the Reformation. The enforcement of the chantry acts exposed the dubious past of the deanery. With litigation ensuing as to the incumbency and status of St Buryan, there could be little hope of an effective exercise of spiritual jurisdiction in the post-Reformation period.⁷⁸ Probably the office of official peculiar had already become a sinecure by the time of the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* survey. James

⁷⁰ TNA, E.301/15, fos. 54v-5; *The Devon Muster Rolls for 1569*, eds. A.J. Howard and T.L. Stoate (Bristol, 1977), pp. 58-9.

⁷¹ WSHC, Prebendal Peculiar of Uffculme Papers.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ DHC, CC.2, folder II, definitive sentence, Mille c. Mille alias Dowdney; *The Marriage Licences of the Diocese of Exeter from the Bishops' Registers*, ed. J.L. Vivian (3 parts, Exeter, 1887-9), pp. 118-19.

⁷⁶ Henderson, *Cornish Essays*, p. 106; A.H. Thompson, 'Notes on Colleges of Secular Canons in England', *AJ*, 73 (1916), pp. 139-239, at p. 188.

⁷⁷ Henderson, *Cornish Essays*, p. 107.

⁷⁸ TNA, SP.12/99/57.

Gentill, the provost of Glasney College, held the post in 1535.⁷⁹ But he was too busy expropriating the wealth of Glasney to take an active role in the affairs of the deanery.⁸⁰

Late medieval bishops of Exeter were also fortunate with regard to the remaining non-episcopal peculiars. Some thirty-two parishes and chapelries were involved here, all bar one being under the control of the dean of the cathedral. The exception was the living of Woodbury which comprised the peculiar of the Exeter vicars-choral. Annual visitations were made, whilst a court for regular judicial work met in the cathedral at the long chest under north tower.⁸¹ Again, it is difficult to envisage a particularly active authority. In the early seventeenth century the official peculiar was chosen from amongst the vicars-choral or canons residentiary.⁸² Registrars, proctors and scribes were co-opted from the other church courts which operated at Exeter.⁸³

Worthy of greater attention was the peculiar jurisdiction of the Exeter dean and chapter. With exempt parishes scattered throughout the diocese a more busy administration could be expected. The unusual feature of the capitular peculiars was that they were corporately under the care of the dean and chapter.⁸⁴ Peculiar parishes were not attached to individual cathedral prebends, as for example at Salisbury.⁸⁵ This reflected the strong communal traditions of capitular life at Exeter. The twenty-four canonries of the cathedral lacked separate landed endowments. Revenues payable to the canons were distributed in the form of commons to those who resided in chapter.⁸⁶ This again made life easier for bishops of Exeter in terms of the number of individual jurisdictions within the see.

Furthermore, the authority of the dean of Exeter was much restricted. At Salisbury the dean of the cathedral exercised uninhibited jurisdiction over some forty parishes and enjoyed quasi-episcopal rights over a further thirty-eight, most of which were prebendal peculiars.⁸⁷ But at Exeter the dean had

⁷⁹ *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, eds. J. Caley and J. Hunter (6 vols., 1810-34), ii. 395.

⁸⁰ Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall*, p. 254.

⁸¹ DHC, Woodbury/PW1, pp. 156, 203, 222; CC.181/105.

⁸² DHC, Chanter 787a, sub 16 Apr. 1613, Scotte c. Archer; E.C.A., DC.5335.

⁸³ DHC, Woodbury/PW!, pp. 156, 171, 261, 367; E.C.A., DC.5334.

⁸⁴ ECA, D&C.2473.

⁸⁵ *Salisbury Diocesan Records*, comp. Stewart, p. 71.

⁸⁶ K Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals in the Middle Ages: a Constitutional Study with Special Reference to the Fourteenth Century* (Manchester, 1949), pp. 74, 245.

⁸⁷ *Salisbury Diocesan Records*, comp. Stewart, p. 71.

to make do with one personal peculiar, Braunton, which he visited annually.⁸⁸ Unfinished business would be dealt with at Exeter at the long chest under the cathedral's north tower.⁸⁹ The dean of Exeter was also much less powerful with regard to the capitular parishes. Traditionally, he occupied the post of official peculiar of that jurisdiction.⁹⁰ But he did not exercise any personal or independent authority over the exempt parishes. The dean's impotence here became apparent in the early seventeenth century when the Exeter chapter ousted him from the jurisdiction's officiality.⁹¹ At this time visitations of the capitular peculiars were made in the spring and autumn of each year, the latter occasion normally being reserved for the distant Cornish peculiars.⁹² Meanwhile, a regular court sat in the chapel of the Holy Ghost in Exeter Cathedral, meeting on average once a fortnight on Fridays throughout the legal year.⁹³ The court's instance business was on the wane in the early seventeenth century and it was to probate and disciplinary work that the tribunal looked for its *raison d'être*.⁹⁴

Exempt jurisdictions were usually hindrances to the effective exercise of episcopal authority.⁹⁵ It was, therefore, something of an irony that the largest single concentration of peculiar parishes and chapelries in the south-west should belong to the bishop of Exeter. Thirty-six livings were involved here, mainly in Cornwall. Like most exempt jurisdictions, the bishop's peculiars had gained their exempt status from being situated within or close to the estates of their ordinary. As was mentioned above, the episcopal manors played an important role in diocesan affairs in the south-west during the later middle ages.⁹⁶ The loss of these possessions thus came as a blow. Post-Reformation bishops of Exeter were forced back upon their palace in the cathedral close or the country livings which they held *in commendam*. Yet the event also served to enhance the administrative potential of the peculiars. The annual visitation of these parishes became an important point of growth for diocesan government at Exeter in the later sixteenth century. A new system of centralised authority was being forged out of the fabric of the later medieval Church.⁹⁷

⁸⁸ NDRO, Braunton/PW5, pp. 3, 13, 42, 48, 52, 58.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-12.

⁹⁰ ECA, D&C.4527.

⁹¹ See below, pp. 141-6.

⁹² ECA, D&C.7157/3, 9.

⁹³ ECA, D&C.7136/1; DC.7147.

⁹⁴ ECA, D&C.4516/9.

⁹⁵ See Bishop Alley's remarks below, p. 74.

⁹⁶ See above, pp. 3-4.

⁹⁷ See below, pp. 218-37.

Chapter 2: The Diocese of Exeter 1519-1560

The Reformation came quickly and suddenly upon the south-west. Within the space of thirty or forty years the institutions and paraphernalia of late medieval Roman Catholicism – the monasteries, chantries, liturgy, saint-cults, images, relics and pilgrimages – had all been swept away. In their place was left a void which Protestantism struggled to fill. The lack of a sizeable popular base for the early Reformation in the south-west meant that change had to come from above. It also meant that the imposition of Protestantism in Devon and Cornwall was an especially destructive, negative affair.⁹⁸ The execution in 1538 of Henry Courtenay, marquis of Exeter and leader of the dominant conservative faction in the region, opened the way for new men and new ideas.⁹⁹ Political and religious change were inextricably bound up together. The desire to claim the spoils of office could now be justified in terms of ideology. This made the Church, already morally weakened and compromised by the events of the 1530s, an obvious target for exploitation.

I

Recent studies of the dioceses of Chichester, Ely and Lincoln have argued that the early years of the sixteenth century were a time of improvement for episcopal government in England.¹⁰⁰ Exeter would seem to fit into this pattern, though the poor survival of records prevents a detailed analysis being undertaken. The closing years of the fifteenth century had seen a series of absentee bishops in charge. John Arundel broke this sequence when he became diocesan in 1502. But he died two years later and so the torch of reform passed to Hugh Oldham (1504-19).¹⁰¹

During Oldham's rule clerical recruitment was the highest it had been for two centuries: an average of sixty-five men a year was priested by the bishop and his suffragans.¹⁰² There was also a rise in the educational attainments of

⁹⁸ R Whiting, *The Blind Devotion of the People: Popular Religion and the English Reformation* (Cambridge, 1989), *passim*.

⁹⁹ G R Elton, *Reform and Reformation: England 1509-1558* (1977), pp. 279-80.

¹⁰⁰ S J Lander, 'The Diocese of Chichester 1508-1558: Episcopal Reform under Robert Sherburne and its Aftermath', Cambridge PhD thesis (1974); F M Heal, 'The Bishops of Ely and their Diocese during the Reformation Period c1515-1600', Cambridge PhD thesis (1972); M Bowker, *The Henrician Reformation: the Diocese of Lincoln under John Longland 1521-1547* (Cambridge, 1981).

¹⁰¹ G Oliver, *Lives of the Bishops of Exeter and a History of the Cathedral* (Exeter, 1861), pp. 116-17.

¹⁰² A A Mumford, *Hugh Oldham 1452(?)-1519* (1936), pp. 102-04.

clerics admitted to livings within the diocese. Oldham set an example for other patrons to follow: sixty per cent of his collations involved priests with degrees.¹⁰³ He also attempted to check the abuse of non-residence and encouraged the aged and the infirm amongst his clergy to retire by providing them with pensions.¹⁰⁴ In 1511, following a visitation of the cathedral, Oldham issued a revised set of statutes for the dean and chapter which urged the canons to follow the correct liturgical forms in their services and to avoid holding places of residence in other cathedral closes for this undermined the tradition of hospitality at Exeter.¹⁰⁵ The bishop also paid careful attention to the condition of the monasteries and collegiate churches of his diocese: Plympton, it was noted, was in a 'lamentable state of extravagance and debt'.¹⁰⁶ Even the officers of the consistory court failed to escape the new broom. They were not sufficiently diligent in their work. Causes were not being properly conducted.¹⁰⁷

Oldham was especially preoccupied with financial matters. The bulk of the bishop's revenues derived from the episcopal estates.¹⁰⁸ These, perhaps, were not in as good an order as they might have been. Certainly Bishop Redmayne (1498-1501) had allowed many of the choicest episcopal residences (including, incidentally, the bishop's palace at Exeter) to fall into decay and become uninhabitable. Timber and stones from these houses had been sold off. Over £2,000, a sum well in excess of the see's annual revenues, would be needed to carry out repairs.¹⁰⁹

Redmayne's neglect was symptomatic of the tendency for bishops at the close of the middle ages to become rentier landlords.¹¹⁰ Many of the local episcopal estates were large. Pawton, for example, embraced a number of parishes on both sides of the Camel estuary.¹¹¹ Crediton was noted for its

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ R J E Boggis, *History of the Diocese of Exeter* (Exeter, 1922), p. 327.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 326; Oliver, *Bishops of Exeter*, pp. 465-9.

¹⁰⁶ N Orme, *Education in the West of England, 1066-1548* (Exeter, 1976), pp. 98, 213; Boggis, *Diocese of Exeter*, p. 326.

¹⁰⁷ DHC, Chanter 13, fo. 151.

¹⁰⁸ See Table 1.

¹⁰⁹ H Tapley-Soper, 'Palaces of the Bishops of Exeter in the Fifteenth Century', *DCNQ*, 22 (1942-6), pp. 78-80. The neglect may have had something to do with Henry VII's desire that bishops put service to the state before care of their dioceses.

Redmayne had to purchase a licence from the crown to reside in the south-west (M M Condon, 'Ruling Elites in the Reign of Henry VII', in *Patronage, Pedigree and Power in Later Medieval England*, ed C Ross (Gloucester, 1979), pp. 109-42, at p. 111).

¹¹⁰ F Heal, *Of Prelates and Princes: a Study of the Economic and Social Position of the Tudor Episcopate* (Cambridge, 1980), p. 26.

¹¹¹ A L Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall: Portrait of a Society* (1969), p. 159.

fine parklands, whilst the manors of Bishop's Nympton and Bishop's Tawton situated among the north Devon uplands also boasted a substantial acreage.¹¹² Estates of this kind invariably contained numerous customary tenants who paid dues and rents to their lord in return for the privilege of cultivating small plots of land. The level of income realised by these payments was usually inflexible, as the amounts levied for rents and fines were governed by manorial custom. But the manorial demesne (upon which the bishop's residences were situated) was another matter. This land was under the immediate control of the lord and thus offered, at least in theory, an income which could be adapted and increased to meet new economic circumstances. During the High Middle Ages, bishops had generally engaged in the direct cultivation of their demesne using the produce to supply the needs of their households. But the onset of falling prices after the Black Death and the growing tendency towards absenteeism amongst diocesans, made it more convenient to cease direct cultivation and to surrender the demesne to farmers in return for money rents.¹¹³

Evidently this process was well under way at Exeter by the time of the Reformation. An important series of accounts which has survived for Oldham's episcopate, together with a stray receiver-general's roll for 1526-1527, reveal an extensive policy of demesne leasing.¹¹⁴ However, this policy was by no means uniformly or comprehensively applied. In the mid 1520s the manors of Bishop's Nympton, Bishop's Tawton and Bishopsteignton were still making payments in kind, as well as in cash, to the episcopal coffers.¹¹⁵ This suggests the retention of home farms on these estates, small parcels of barton land supplying at least a portion of the bishop's household needs.¹¹⁶ The practice, indeed, may have been more widespread, for on at least three Exeter manors – Penryn Foreign, Crediton and Mordard Bishop – demesne was being leased out in fragments to individuals rather than *en bloc* to one farmer.¹¹⁷

It may be that Oldham was here seeking to steer a shrewd middle course between the economic wisdom of demesne leasing and the foolhardiness of demising his entire stock of barton land, the iniquities of which were all too apparent to a later generation of bishops in the south-west. Assuredly the economic incentives to make good Redmayne's dilapidations were not strong,

¹¹² DHC, Chanter 15, fos. 111-12; W.1258/A.1/7; W.1258/Add.10/1.

¹¹³ Heal, *Of Prelates and Princes*, p. 26.

¹¹⁴ ECA, D&C.3690; DHC, Chanter 1072.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.* For the location of these and other episcopal manors, see Map 3.

¹¹⁶ Heal, *Of Prelates and Princes*, p. 32.

¹¹⁷ CRO, BPENR/353; DHC, W.1258/A.1/7.

but equally to fail to carry out the necessary repairs and to exchange one's lands for a fixed money income would be tantamount to putting all one's eggs into the same basket. Interestingly, Oldham did make good at least part of Redmayne's neglect: he bequeathed fourteen 'well-furnished' country houses to his successor, John Veysey.¹¹⁸ But at the same time he himself made use of only a small number of them. Interestingly, too, Oldham raised comparatively little from entry fines levied upon demesne leases, another indicator, perhaps, that the large-scale farmer had yet to make his mark in the south-west and that a reasonable proportion of barton land was still being kept in hand by the bishop.¹¹⁹

It is possible to gain some idea of Oldham's income and expenditure as diocesan.¹²⁰ The figures suggest that he improved his financial position substantially, though not spectacularly, during his episcopate.¹²¹ If the first and last six years of the accounts are compared, we find that total income had risen by an average of thirty-seven per cent. This was almost entirely due to an increase in the yield of the episcopal estates. Presumably, like his colleague Robert Sherburne at Chichester, Oldham was keeping a strict check upon his rights of lordship, saving repair costs by burdening his tenants and raising rents wherever possible.¹²² The result was a forty-three per cent rise in temporal revenues between the early and late years of his episcopate. By comparison, spiritual income at Exeter rose by only a meagre four per cent, a consistency which may well disguise important compositional changes in the workload of the bishop's courts.¹²³ Manifestly the recovery of diocesan finances at Exeter in the post-Reformation period was to owe much more to an enhanced yield from the see's spiritualities.¹²⁴

The shrewdness of Oldham is once again apparent in the spending of his revenues. Wisely the bishop allowed the level of household expenditure to be determined by his income. Only when the latter was high did he apportion more to his domestic needs.¹²⁵ Between the opening and final six

¹¹⁸ J Vowell alias Hooker, *A Catalog of the Bishops of Excester* (1584), no. 42.

¹¹⁹ Heal, *Of Prelates and Princes*, pp. 28-9, 59.

¹²⁰ See Table 1.

¹²¹ Dr Heal has examined Bishop Oldham's accounts (*Of Prelates and Princes*, pp. 61, 63). Whilst the figures she cites differ from mine, we are agreed as to the overall trends. The same comment applies to R N Swanson, 'Episcopal Income from Spiritualities in the Diocese of Exeter in the Early Sixteenth Century', *JEH*, 39 (1988), pp. 520-30.

¹²² Lander, 'Diocese of Chichester', pp. 103, 108.

¹²³ See below, pp. 223-44.

¹²⁴ See below, pp. 244-61.

¹²⁵ Heal, *Of Prelates and Princes*, p. 97.

years of his accounts, household expenditure at Exeter rose by an average of twenty-nine per cent. This enabled Oldham to increase his surplus by an average of forth-seven per cent over the course of his episcopate. The bishop helped his cause by using only a select few of his residences when in the south-west. With an average of £770 accruing to him during each of his last six years as bishop, Oldham was well-equipped to play the part of educational benefactor. He founded Manchester Grammar School and contributed substantial sums towards the founding of Brasenose and Corpus Christi Colleges at Oxford. Oldham was also able to act as a small-time financier, lending money to members of the nobility, to the clergy of his diocese and to some of his own servants.¹²⁶

It is unclear to what extent Oldham's episcopate should be regarded as representing the high-water mark of pre-Reformation diocesan government in the south-west. John Veysey, Oldham's successor, suffers in any comparison because of the misfortunes which befell him at the end of his long rule.¹²⁷ But Veysey's chief failing may have been that he lived for so long. He was over ninety when he died in 1554.¹²⁸ He had also been appointed Exeter late in life, when in fact he was nearing sixty.¹²⁹

Veysey was well familiar with the south-west. A former fellow of Magdalen College Oxford and a doctor of civil law, his career had begun in earnest when he was appointed vicar-general of Bishop Arundel of Coventry and Lichfield in 1498.¹³⁰ The following year he also became archdeacon of Chester. When Arundel was translated to Exeter in 1502, Veysey went with him being admitted archdeacon of Barnstaple and canon of Exeter.¹³¹ When Arundel died, Oldham was quick to acknowledge Veysey's worth by honouring him with preferments and office. Veysey served as vicar-general and official principal. He was collated to the cathedral precentorship in 1508.¹³² Twelve months later he became dean.¹³³ This was a royal appointment and indicated the direction that Veysey's career was now to take. Unlike Oldham, Veysey was a natural courtier. Moreover, he was a

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 69. For a reconstruction of Oldham's itinerary as bishop, see S Thompson, 'The Pastoral Work of the English and Welsh Bishops 1550-1558', Oxford DPhil thesis (1984), pp. 241-3.

¹²⁷ See below, pp. 26-9, 39.

¹²⁸ A B Emden, *A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to 1500* (3 vols., Oxford, 1963), iii. 1948.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, iii. 1947-8.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.* Veysey was a native of the diocese: see below, p. 19.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

¹³² *Ibid.*; DHC, Chanter 13, fo. 131.

¹³³ Emden, *Biographical Register*, iii. 1948.

close friend of Thomas Wolsey: the two had met as fellows at Magdalen.¹³⁴ As Wolsey's own career gathered momentum in the 1510s, so, too, did Veysey's.

Certainly Veysey's easy-going charm stood him in good stead with Henry VIII who sent him 'sundry times in embassages to foreign princes'.¹³⁵ A royal chaplaincy and the deaneries of Windsor and the Chapel Royal were rewards for services rendered.¹³⁶ So, too, was the see of Exeter. Veysey was also involved in Wolsey's administrative reforms. He was a member of the nascent Court of Requests, whilst in 1525 the cardinal secured his appointment as president of the Council in the Marches of Wales. This involved the custody of the young Princess Mary and marked the high-point of the bishop's career.¹³⁷ Veysey seems not to have incurred any of the jealousies or hostility that Wolsey managed to engender at court. He was deemed 'very well-learned and wise'.¹³⁸ Alexander Barclay published a Latin letter to him as a preface to his translation of Sallust's *Jurgurthine War*.¹³⁹ Sir Thomas More thought Veysey 'so good that it is a happiness to be able to please him'.¹⁴⁰

It was, therefore, not altogether surprising that Veysey was adjudged 'the most courtly of the bishops in the land'.¹⁴¹ But was there any substance to him? Was he in essence a man of modest administrative ability who rose to the top by sheet good luck? Certainly there was a strong survivalist streak in the bishop. In 1515 he supported the king against the Church on the issue of benefit of clergy.¹⁴² In 1532 he was one of only three bishops to accept unequivocally the royal demands embodied in the *Submission of the Clergy*.¹⁴³ To a large degree Veysey was a victim of his own success. Lured to court, his horizons had been broadened. All things seemed possible. He overstretched himself and was caught out by the unforeseeable, the break with Rome. He then began to panic.

¹³⁴ Boggis, *Diocese of Exeter*, p. 330.

¹³⁵ Hooker, *A Catalog*, no.42.

¹³⁶ Emden, *Biographical Register*, iii. 1948.

¹³⁷ J A Guy, 'Wolsey, the Council and the Council Courts', *EHR*, 91 (1976), pp. 481-505, at p. 497; P Williams, *The Council in the Marches of Wales under Elizabeth I* (Cardiff, 1958), p. 50.

¹³⁸ Hooker, *A Catalog*, no. 42.

¹³⁹ *DNB*, *sub nomine* John Veysey.

¹⁴⁰ Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall*, p. 143.

¹⁴¹ Hooker, *A Catalog*, no. 42.

¹⁴² A G Dickens, *The English Reformation* (1967), p. 136.

¹⁴³ J J Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII* (1972), p. 392.

During the 1520s, with Wolsey at the helm, it was possible to be both a bishop and a courtier. Certainly Veysey had begun his episcopate with good intentions, spending at least a part of each year in his diocese.¹⁴⁴ During 1519-20 he had personally conducted his primary visitation.¹⁴⁵ Later, in 1525, he had issued the vicars-choral with a new set of statutes.¹⁴⁶ But Veysey's appointment as president of the Council in the Marches of Wales diminished considerably the amount of time that he could spare for his diocese. Not that he let himself be confined to Ludlow, the council's headquarters. The bishop was much preoccupied at his native Sutton Coldfield.¹⁴⁷ He built a manor there and embarked upon an ambitious programme of public works for the town, which included the construction of a moot hall, prison, grammar school and market place.¹⁴⁸ The project was estimated to have cost him £1500 annually and a good deal of this must have come from the episcopal revenues.¹⁴⁹ The bishop was to a large extent trading off the labours of his predecessor, Oldham, and the diligence of his subordinates in the south-west. During the first fifteen years of Veysey's episcopate, clerical recruitment at Exeter continued at a high level with a yearly average of forty-eight men being priested.¹⁵⁰ Episcopal income seems to have risen slightly over the period, whilst the business of the consistory court definitely increased: in 1533 126 civil actions were commenced whereas between 1513 and 1518 the highest yearly total had been 107.¹⁵¹

But this was very much the lull before the storm. 1534 was the key year as far as Veysey was concerned. The full force of the Henrician supremacy was set against the Church. Veysey must have been especially worried because of his extensive financial commitments in the West Midlands. In good years the bishop's spiritual revenues, which included court and administrative fees, comprised as much as one fifth of his total annual income.¹⁵² The act for first fruits and tenths took from bishops the revenues they received from vacant benefices. Fees accruing from the appointment of heads of religious houses had dried up and were about to disappear altogether. There were the procurations paid by the monasteries at the time of episcopal visitation. Together these sources comprised about a quarter or a third of Veysey's

¹⁴⁴ Oliver, *Bishops of Exeter*, pp. 121-2.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶ ECA, D&C.7155/1, fos. 116-7v

¹⁴⁷ This probably explains the council's poor showing as a law enforcement agency in the later 1520s and early 1530s (Williams, *Council in the Marches of Wales*, p. 77).

¹⁴⁸ *DNB*, *sub nomine* John Veysey.

¹⁴⁹ Emden, *Biographical Register*, iii. 1948.

¹⁵⁰ DHC, Chanter 14, ordinations.

¹⁵¹ See Table 2; DHC, Chanter 776; Chanter 778.

¹⁵² See Table 1.

spiritual income.¹⁵³ Yet Cranmer's metropolitical visitation and the royal visitation twelve months later threatened to be even more injurious. Episcopal authority would have to be inhibited. Bishops would receive no revenues from their spiritualities for the duration of the inhibition. What was especially disturbing was the environment in which the visitations were to be conducted. Speculation was rife as to the future of episcopal government in England. Would ecclesiastical jurisdiction be severely curtailed or even abolished?¹⁵⁴

It was to clarify this matter that Veysey and a number of fellow bishops resisted the progress of the archbishop's visitation. Now that the hegemony of Rome had been overthrown, they wanted to know from whom or what episcopal authority derived.¹⁵⁵ The crown's answer was to issue the bishops with commissions which empowered them to exercise spiritual jurisdiction during royal pleasure.¹⁵⁶ To underline this point, the bishops were suspended from the exercise of their authority in the autumn of 1535 in order to allow the royal visitation to proceed.¹⁵⁷ Although the hiatus proved to be short-lived, the damage had already been done. Two years of uncertainty had dramatically shaken public confidence in the Church. Very probably the Exeter diocesan courts suffered a substantial contraction in their work-loads.¹⁵⁸ Manifestly, recruitment into the priesthood declined. During the period 1535-43 only sixty men received priest's orders at Exeter. No-one at all was ordained between 1544 and 1551.¹⁵⁹

Such a crisis of confidence in the local Church needed remedying by strong action. Yet it was the very nature of the problem that Veysey was unable to provide that leadership. For a start he was personally in bad odour with the crown. In 1534 he was sacked from the presidency of the Council in the Marches of Wales for his absenteeism and ineffectiveness.¹⁶⁰ Cromwell was now in charge; the court was no longer the pleasant place that it had seemed

¹⁵³ Bowker, *Henrician Reformation*, p. 80; *LP*, 9, no. 699; *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, eds. J Caley and J Hunter (6 vols., 1810-34), ii. 291.

¹⁵⁴ G R Elton, *Reform and Renewal: Thomas Cromwell and the Common Weal* (Cambridge, 1973), pp. 133-5.

¹⁵⁵ Bowker, *Henrician Reformation*, p. 73.

¹⁵⁶ R A Houlbrooke, *Church Courts and the People during the English Reformation 1520-1570* (Oxford, 1979), p. 13.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 14, 53.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 273-4; S J Lander, 'Church Courts and the Reformation in the Diocese of Chichester, 1500-58', in *Continuity and Change: Personnel and Administration of the Church in England 1500-1642*, eds. R O'Day and F Heal (Leicester, 1976), pp. 215-37, pp. 229-30.

¹⁵⁹ DHC, Chapter 14, ordinations. See also Figure 1.

¹⁶⁰ Emden, *Biographical Register*, iii. 1948.

in the 1520s. Power struggles were in train and Veysey understandably felt out of his depth. His only hope was to try to swim with the tide. But this involved him in matters for which he had little real sympathy. Thus we find him in 1537 anxiously reassuring Cromwell of his dependability. He had preached against the pope, he tells the secretary, and had instructed the cathedral canons to base their sermons on the *Bishop's Book*.¹⁶¹ The following year Veysey modelled his visitation articles on the first and second series of royal injunctions. Study of the new testament in both English and Latin was enjoined upon the clergy of the diocese. Every Sunday incumbents were to expound scripture in the vernacular. Priests with benefices worth over £20 per annum were to provide quarterly sermons. Assistant clergy were to instruct youths in the principal elements of the faith. 'Superstitious fantasies' such as pilgrimages and fastings were to be condemned.¹⁶²

But if this was an attempt to assert himself in the south-west, the effort was wasted. By the time of the visitation Veysey was no longer in sole charge of affairs at Exeter. In July 1537 Simon Heynes, a former president of Queens' College Cambridge and vice-chancellor of the university, was elected dean of the cathedral.¹⁶³ This was undoubtedly a provocative act on the part of the crown. Heynes was an ardent advocate of Protestantism. He was replacing Reginald Pole, who had been removed from the deanery from his opposition to the royal supremacy.¹⁶⁴ Pole, through force of circumstance, had long been absent from Exeter. Even so, his headship of the chapter house exemplified the strongly conservative sympathies of the canons. It was from the cathedral close that the intellectual opposition to Protestantism in the south-west came.¹⁶⁵ Veysey himself, with his extensive patronage rights in the close, seems to have been largely responsible for this strengthening of the chapter.¹⁶⁶ The bishop, it was later recalled, was 'a great favourer of learned men, and especially of divines, whom he preferred in his church above others'.¹⁶⁷ Veysey's actions illustrated the gap that was opening up between catholic and protestant reform.

Heynes' arrival at Exeter thus led to an immediate heightening of tension. The new dean evidently viewed the south-west as a 'dark corner'. 'This is a

¹⁶¹ Whiting, *Blind Devotion of the People*, p. 245.

¹⁶² Boggis, Diocese of Exeter, p. 333.

¹⁶³ *AI Cant.*, I. ii. 341; Oliver, *Bishops of Exeter*, p. 276.

¹⁶⁴ See below, pp. 47-8.

¹⁶⁵ Whiting, *Blind Devotion of the People*, pp. 51, 59. See also below, pp. 29-31.

¹⁶⁶ Bishops of Exeter could collate to all 24 prebends of the cathedral as well as to all the dignities of the cathedral with the exception of the deanery which was in the gift of the crown (*Thesaurus Ecclesiasticus Provincialis* (Exeter, 1782), pp. 2-3).

¹⁶⁷ Hooker, *A Catalog*, no. 42.

perilous country', he told Cromwell, 'for God's love let the king's grace look to it in time'.¹⁶⁸ Heynes decided to wrest control of the official Reformation in the south-west from Veysey. The Cromwellian campaign against religious images was already under way. Veysey himself had taken part in these proceedings when in August 1537 he had been commissioned along with Hugh and Richard Pollard (two close allies of Cromwell amongst the Devon gentry) to suppress religious shrines at Pilton near Barnstaple. The following year Cromwell issued his second set of injunctions. Images which were 'abused with pilgrimages or offerings' were to be demolished. Commissions were despatched for this purpose. Heynes was named on the commission for the diocese of Exeter. He set about his work with a will. Even remote shrines succumbed to his iconoclasm. Amongst the common people he was soon 'marvellous hated and maligned at'. It was testimony to the 'peculiarly potent respect' which the Henrician regime succeeded in achieving in the south-west during the 1530s that this resentment was not translated into rebellion.¹⁶⁹

Of course, the overthrow of the Courtenays and the arrival of John Russell, the distinguished soldier and diplomat, to preside over the newly-formed Council of the West, helped give credibility to Heynes' actions.¹⁷⁰ Nonetheless, the dean was far from having things all his own way. The canons of the cathedral were determined to rid themselves of their dean. They had already made their position clear. Upon Pole's deprivation they had promoted their candidate for the deanery, Thomas Brerewood, the archdeacon of Barnstaple.¹⁷¹ Heynes certainly did little to ingratiate himself with his fellow canons. He refused to pay caution money on entering office. He claimed jurisdiction over the chapter. He failed to provide wax for candles to burn before the cathedral high altar.¹⁷² It was probably at this time that Heynes proposed a radical scheme of reform for the cathedral, which amongst other things advocated the abolition of the dean and chapter and their replacement by a pastor and eleven preachers of the gospel appointed by the king and bishop respectively.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁸ J A Youings, *Early Tudor Exeter: the Founders of the County of the City* (Exeter, 1974), p. 5.

¹⁶⁹ R Whiting, 'Abominable Idols: Images and Image-Breaking under Henry VIII', *JEH*, 33 (1982), pp. 30-47, at pp. 40-3, 46.

¹⁷⁰ Elton, *Reform and Reformation*, pp. 279-80; Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall*, pp. 241-4.

¹⁷¹ *L&P*, 12(I), nos. 764, 835.

¹⁷² Boggis, *Diocese of Exeter*, p. 369.

¹⁷³ Oliver, *Bishops of Exeter*, pp. 477-83.

Fortunately for the beleaguered canons help was at hand. The six articles of 1539 ushered in a period of reaction. The crown was more receptive to complaints of radicalism. In 1541 the canons entered a formal protest against the sacramentarian leanings of their dean. Heynes was alleged to have committed wanton acts of destruction in the cathedral including the mutilation of statues, service books and Bishop Lacy's tomb. He had preached against holy bread and water and had extinguished the light which had burnt before the high altar for three centuries.¹⁷⁴ Eventually in 1543 Heynes' luck ran out and he was called before the privy council. He was imprisoned for three and a half months in the Fleet for 'lewd and seditious preaching'. The informants were Brerewood and Thomas Southern, the treasurer of the cathedral.¹⁷⁵

II

The religious reaction of Henry VIII's final years provided a welcome respite for Veysey. Although now in his eighties, the bishop continued to show a sporadic interest in the affairs of his diocese. In 1544 he produced a useful synopsis of the cathedral statutes.¹⁷⁶ Just prior to this he had instructed his officers not to levy entry fines or sell wood from the episcopal estates without first consulting him.¹⁷⁷ Meanwhile, the diocesan administration ground on. Well-qualified deputies conducted regular visitations, admitted priests into benefices and issued licences.¹⁷⁸ As before, in the 1520s, there was a semblance of normality. But it could not really disguise the patent loss of credibility that Veysey had suffered as bishop, not just because of the break with Rome, but also because of his dealings over the archdeaconry of Cornwall.

In October 1537, the bishop had collated Thomas Winter, Wolsey's illegitimate son, to the archdeaconry.¹⁷⁹ Veysey was probably repaying the friendship that the cardinal had earlier shown him. Unfortunately, the penurious Winter spoilt the gesture by farming out the archdeaconry to William Body, one of the gentleman ushers of the king's privy chamber.¹⁸⁰ Body's grant was to run for consecutive three-year periods lasting a total of

¹⁷⁴ ECA, D&C.3552, fo. 14v.

¹⁷⁵ F Rose-Troup, *The Western Rebellion of 1549* (1913), pp. 176-7.

¹⁷⁶ Oliver, *Bishops of Exeter*, pp. 471-6.

¹⁷⁷ DHC, W.1258/G2/27.

¹⁷⁸ D H Pill, 'The Administration of the Diocese of Exeter under Bishop Veysey', RTDA, 98 (1966), pp. 262-78, at pp. 263, 276-7; CRO, PD.322/1, fo. 9v; DHC, Chanter 15, fo. 113; Chanter 14, fos. 99v-141v.

¹⁷⁹ Oliver, *Bishops of Exeter*, p. 289.

¹⁸⁰ TNA, STAC.2, vol. 5, fo. 60; DHC, Chanter 1073.

thirty-five years.¹⁸¹ However, Body subsequently altered the terms of the lease to include the archdeacon's spiritual jurisdiction.¹⁸² Under current law a married layman could not exercise ecclesiastical authority.¹⁸³ Veysey was thus obliged to challenge the lease. He did so in December 1540 at the end of the first three-year term. Summoned before Brerewood, the bishop's chancellor, at Penryn, Winter was found guilty of a number of misdemeanours which Body was alleged to have committed in the archdeacon's name.¹⁸⁴ This was used as an excuse to nullify Body's lease.¹⁸⁵ Veysey then persuaded Winter to appoint John Harris, the bishop's commissary in Cornwall, to the post of archdeacon's official.¹⁸⁶ At the same time (April 1541), George Stapeldon, a member of Veysey's household, was made registrar of the archdeaconry.¹⁸⁷

Body was quick to respond. He procured a letter from the king to the bishop and the dean and chapter which confirmed his grant and asked them to confirm it with their seals.¹⁸⁸ Body then proceeded to hold the annual spring visitation of his archdeaconry. However, Harris saw this as an opportunity to test his newly-acquired authority.¹⁸⁹ An unseemly incident ensued when the two men and their followers clashed in the church of St Stephen-by-Launceston. Harris burst in upon Body as the latter was about to collect the procurations of the local clergy. When Body refused to heed Harris' warning to withdraw a fight developed. The courtier was unceremoniously dragged from the church, and the doors locked against him.¹⁹⁰

Litigation followed. Body successfully brought a charge of forcible entry and wilful obstruction against his assailants in Star Chamber.¹⁹¹ Veysey and Winter were thus forced to seek another means of ridding themselves of

¹⁸¹ TNA, STAC.2, vol. 5, fo 60.

¹⁸² TNA, STAC.2, vol. 10, fo. 247.

¹⁸³ R A Houlbrooke, 'The Decline of Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction under the Tudors', in *Continuity and Change*, eds. O'Day and Heal, pp. 239-57, at p. 249. An act of 1545 changed the situation. Possible the Body affair led to its passage. For Body's wife, see below, p. 44.

¹⁸⁴ TNA, C.1/File 950/37.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁶ DHC, Chanter 15, fo. 80v.

¹⁸⁷ TNA, STAC.2, vol. 5, fo. 60.

¹⁸⁸ *L&P*, 16, no. 522.

¹⁸⁹ TNA, STAC.2, vol. 5, fo. 60.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 5, fos. 60-6; STAC.2, vol. 10, fos. 244-56.

¹⁹¹ I have assumed that this was so given the following sequence of events which itself must be deemed conjectural due to the inadequacies of the documentation. It will be noted that I depart from the standard accounts of the Body affair at this point (Rose-Troup, *Western Rebellion*, pp. 57-69, 415-21; Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall*, pp. 149-51).

Body. It was decided that Winter should resign the archdeaconry in favour of John Pollard, one of the canons of the cathedral.¹⁹² Body's lease was valid only so long as Winter remained archdeacon. The courtier's reaction was swift. First, he initiated an action in Chancery against Veysey, Winter and Pollard's conspiracy.¹⁹³ Winter and Pollard were alleged to have persuaded Veysey and the dean and chapter not to confirm Body's lease even in the face of the king's letter of support. Secondly, Body brought a charge of praemunire against Veysey, Brerewood and John Crofte, the bishop's principal registrar. Veysey had collated Pollard to the vacant archdeaconry at the end of May 1543. This, Body alleged, was an infringement of his rights as patron of the living. Evidently Body believed that the wide-ranging nature of Winter's lease enabled him to regard subsequent archdeacons of Cornwall as his personal deputies. The courtier himself was the real archdeacon. If Pollard wanted to succeed Winter he would have to submit to Body's terms. These involved a renewal of the lease of the archdeaconry.

Body's daring counter-attack proved spectacularly successful. He gained a humiliating victory over Veysey and his officers. Brerewood and Crofte were found guilty of praemunire in the spring of 1544 and duly imprisoned. Body was awarded £3,000 damages.¹⁹⁴ He also gained a new lease of the archdeaconry of Cornwall from Pollard. Evidently Chancery had found in Body's favour. The new lease was to run for thirty-four years and Body was to pay a substantially reduced annual rent to Pollard and his successors. Most importantly, both Veysey and the Exeter dean and chapter were parties to the agreement.¹⁹⁵ However, this did not mean that the bishop had accepted defeat. Almost immediately he collated Pollard to the archdeaconry of Barnstaple.¹⁹⁶ Pollard can only have been thankful to leave Cornwall. The new lease he had been obliged to grant Body represented the final straw. Earlier he had had to compensate Winter for resigning the archdeaconry which included meeting the latter's debts.¹⁹⁷ But Veysey, too, was anxious that Pollard should depart. The vacancy would enable the bishop to contest the right of presentation to the archdeaconry.

Although Body's new lease had made a point of stressing that Veysey was 'the patron and collator' of the living, this did not preclude Body from acting

¹⁹² A B Emden, *A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford AD1501 to 1540* (Oxford, 1974), p. 456.

¹⁹³ TNA, C.1/File 950/37.

¹⁹⁴ Rose-Troup, *Western Rebellion*, pp. 67-8.

¹⁹⁵ DHC, Chanter 1073.

¹⁹⁶ DHC, Chanter 14, fo. 113.

¹⁹⁷ TNA, C.1/File 1124/27-9.

as *de facto* patron for the duration of his lease.¹⁹⁸ Presumably this had been established by the courtier's praemunire action. Thus when an appointment was at long last made to the archdeaconry in the autumn of 1545 by Veysey, it was stated in the episcopal register that the bishop had only intervened because of Body's negligence.¹⁹⁹ Veysey's choice for the archdeaconry was Hugh Weston, the rector of Lincoln College Oxford and a rising star in the ecclesiastical firmament.²⁰⁰ However, shortly afterwards Body advanced his own candidate, John Gerves.²⁰¹ Why Body failed to present within the period of six months allowed to patrons by ecclesiastical law is unclear.²⁰² Perhaps he had, but Veysey had rejected his original choice (as he was entitled to do) and not enough time remained in which to find a replacement. Whatever, at the end of 1545 two men were laying claim to the archdeaconry.

Unfortunately the records do no allow us to say which man triumphed.²⁰³ Nor do they cast much light upon the exercise of ecclesiastical authority in the archdeaconry following Body's murder at the hands of the Helston mob in 1548.²⁰⁴

Body's savage death reflected the changed environment of Edward VI's reign. Protestant advance was no longer a clandestine activity. The death of Henry VIII can only have been a blow for Veysey. Since the break with Rome, Henry had studiously resisted the temptation to reduce his bishops to the status of salaried government officials.²⁰⁵ No such restraint characterised the regime of the duke of Somerset. The protector lost no time in requiring the bishops to accept new commissions which made their offices tenable only at the pleasure of the crown and subject to their good behaviour.²⁰⁶ However, Somerset stopped short of a complete rationalisation of episcopal finances. Instead he and his successor, Northumberland, contented themselves with a selective campaign against the wealth of the bishops.²⁰⁷ Exeter was one of the chief sufferers from this strategy; only Lincoln and Bath and Wells fared worse.²⁰⁸ From a ranking of eighth richest diocese in 1535, the bishopric fell

¹⁹⁸ DHC, Chanter 1073. It is perhaps significant, in the light of Veysey's opposition to Body, that the lease explicitly described the bishop as patron.

¹⁹⁹ DHC, Chanter 14, fo. 118.

²⁰⁰ Emden, *Biographical Register 1501-40*, pp. 616-17.

²⁰¹ Rose-Troup, *Western Rebellion*, p. 418 and n.

²⁰² R O'Day, *The English Clergy: the Emergence and Consolidation of a Profession 1558-1642* (Leicester, 1979), p. 78.

²⁰³ See below, p. 28.

²⁰⁴ Rose-Troup, *Western Rebellion*, pp. 70-96. See also below, pp. 35-7.

²⁰⁵ F Heal, 'Henry VIII and the Wealth of the English Episcopate', *AR*, 66 (1975), pp. 274-99.

²⁰⁶ Dickens, *English Reformation*, p. 280.

²⁰⁷ Heal, *Of Prelates and Princes*, p. 129.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 131.

to sixteenth by the end of Edward's reign with its official income cut by over two-thirds (from £1567 to £500).²⁰⁹

Table 3 chronicles this decline. It will be noticed that the process of alienation in fact began under Henry VIII with an exchange involving the manor of Farringdon in Hampshire.²¹⁰ The king had been unable to resist the hunting lodges and town houses of his bishops. The exchange was used as a means of disguising Henry's avarice. Crown properties of similar value were granted to the bishops to compensate them for their losses. In practice the exchange was disadvantageous because invariably manors were surrendered in return for appropriated rectories which were harder to administer.²¹¹ Luckily, Exeter was not heavily exploited in this way and thus did not acquire the numerous impropriations that the sees of York and Canterbury were obliged to receive.²¹² Nonetheless, Veysey did come under increasing pressure to part with episcopal property during Henry's final years.²¹³ The bishop was prevailed upon by the crown to grant long-term leases of manors to courtiers and others of influence.²¹⁴ Further grants were made during the first two years of Edward's reign. But by then the process of alienation had begun. When the upheaval was finally over, Veysey found himself left with a mere nine properties (excluding the episcopal palace), virtually all of which were leased out for many years to come at terms which were highly advantageous to their tenants.²¹⁵ As Heylin later remarked, 'the bones of [the] see had been...clean picked'.²¹⁶

Why did Veysey acquiesce in the spoliation of his diocese? Undoubtedly self-interest played a prominent part in the bishop's thinking. The surrender of the Exeter temporalities almost certainly enhanced Veysey's own finances. It seems likely that the bishop sold the manors he alienated.²¹⁷ This, coupled with the entry fines which he presumably levied on the long-term leases he had granted, made the whole enterprise highly profitable for him and did

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 182; *CPR 1550-3*, p. 37.

²¹⁰ Henry subsequently granted Farringdon to Lord Chancellor Wriothesley (*L&P*, 20(1), no. 1081(24)).

²¹¹ Heal, *Of Prelates and Princes*, pp. 101-25.

²¹² *Ibid.*, p. 117; C Cross, 'The Economic Problems of the See of York: Decline and Recovery in the Sixteenth Century', *Land, Church and People: Essays presented to Professor H P R Finberg*, ed. J Thirsk (*AHR Supplement*, 1970), pp. 64-83.

²¹³ Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall*, pp. 292-3.

²¹⁴ See Table 4.

²¹⁵ See Map 4.

²¹⁶ Oliver, *Bishops of Exeter*, p. 132.

²¹⁷ TNA, SP.46/25, fo. 38.

much to sweeten the pill of expropriation. Veysey was nearing the end of his life. A windfall such as this was to be especially welcomed.

However, it is a moot point how far outside pressure was responsible for Veysey's rather mercenary conduct. The crucial turning point clearly came at the beginning of 1548 when the alienations began. It can be argued that until that moment Veysey was merely following a well-established practice in demising his estates for long periods of years.²¹⁸ It is tempting to see the twelve months that had elapsed since the beginning of Edward's reign as an opportunity afforded the bishop by the government to take stock of his situation. Veysey appears to have been troubled by the arrears of taxation he had incurred as collector of the clerical tenths and subsidies for Exeter.²¹⁹ During the 1540s heavy financial burdens were being placed upon the clergy by a needy crown.²²⁰ At the end of Henry VIII's reign, Veysey's tax debts stood at over £1600. Only Longland of Lincoln owed more.²²¹

In the end Veysey sought professional help. The business of tax collection was in practice supervised by deputies. Before the Reformation heads of religious houses had usually served as sub-collectors.²²² When after 1539 this was no longer possible Veysey had turned to his dean and chapter.²²³ But the arrangement soon proved unsatisfactory and so in 1548 the bishop sought the services of a local layman, William Strobridge of Ottery St Mary.²²⁴ Unfortunately, Strobridge was scarcely more competent than his predecessors. By the end of Edward's reign tax arrears from the diocese had risen to over £2300, making the see by far and away the crown's worst debtor.²²⁵ This was especially disturbing in view of the fact that Veysey had appointed Strobridge to the sub-collectorship for life and had thereafter made him receiver-general of the episcopal revenues.²²⁶ But Veysey's freedom to find a suitable deputy was probably much restricted. Strobridge was in fact a client of the duke of Somerset, being his 'general receiver' in Devon.²²⁷ Very likely Veysey was complying with the protector's wishes in employing him.

²¹⁸ Heal, *Of Prelates and Princes*, p. 187.

²¹⁹ Oliver, *Bishops of Exeter*, p. 130.

²²⁰ F Heal, 'Clerical Tax Collection under the Tudors: the Influence of the Reformation', in *Continuity and Change*, eds. O'Day and Heal, pp. 97-122, at p. 106.

²²¹ LPL, CMI/80.

²²² Heal, 'Clerical Tax Collection', p. 105

²²³ ECA, D&C.3551, fo. 136.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, fo. 241v.

²²⁵ TNA, SP.11/1/2.

²²⁶ ECA, D&C.3551, fos. 230v-1, 241v-3.

²²⁷ TNA, C.3/162/76.

Church government at Exeter had long been open to lay influence. The Courtenays had seen to that. They had gained an almost hereditary right to the chief stewardship of the bishopric.²²⁸ The post afforded them an excellent opportunity to enhance their prestige and influence over the region. Thomas Yard's lease of the manor of Peterhayes in 1525 was very probably acquired through the good offices of the Courtenays.²²⁹ When the marquis of Exeter fell, his 'successor', John Russell, lost no time in gaining possession of the stewardship.²³⁰ Russell was careful to ensure that his son, Francis, would be able to succeed him upon his death.²³¹ Later, for good measure, Russell got himself appointed to the stewardship of the Exeter chapter.²³²

Russell was evidently anxious to establish a special relationship with the local Church. During the final years of Henry VIII's reign he seems to have used his influence to win over former Courtenay supporters. In 1542 Russell successfully lobbied Veysey on behalf of Sir Thomas Dennys, whom Cromwell had once accused of 'hanging at the sleeves' of the Courtenays, for a lease of Crediton park.²³³ Certainly lay conservatives retained positions of responsibility and trust in the south-west throughout the 1540s. Their continued presence may have helped to lessen the impact of the troubles of 1549. Dennys, Yard and Anthony Harvey, a former surveyor of the marquis of Exeter's estates, acted as mediators between the rebels and the government during 'the commotion time'.²³⁴

But moderation was not enough to prevent the outbreak of the rebellion. Edward's reign gave radicalism its head. Conservatives and progressives were equally to blame for this heightening of tension. The first blows were struck at Marldon in March 1547 when Richard Crispin delivered a sermon which attacked protestant scripturalism.²³⁵ Crispin was a former chaplain of the marquis of Exeter and had been involved with the marchioness in the Nun of Kent affair.²³⁶ After the Courtenays' fall, Veysey had collated him to a

²²⁸ Heal, *Of Prelates and Princes*, p. 37; ECA, D&C.3551, fo. 107.

²²⁹ For evidence that Yard may have been a member of the Courtenay circle, see J A Youings, 'The South-Western Rebellion of 1549', *SH*, 1 (1979), pp. 99-122, at p. 111.

²³⁰ ECA, D&C.3551, fos. 132v-3.

²³¹ *Ibid.*

²³² *Ibid.*, fo. 165.

²³³ Oliver, *Bishops of Exeter*, pp. 130-1; Youings, 'South-Western Rebellion', p. 116; ECA, D&C.3551, fo. 220.

²³⁴ Youings, 'South-Western Rebellion', pp. 106, 111.

²³⁵ Rose-Troup, *Western Rebellion*, p. 105.

²³⁶ Youings, 'South-Western Rebellion', p. 116.

canonry in Exeter Cathedral.²³⁷ Crispin's sermon was calculated to antagonise local protestants. He cannot, therefore, have been very surprised when one month later, Philip Nichols, a young Devon layman, published a treatise which contradicted his assertions.²³⁸

Nichols dedicated his work to Sir Peter Carew of Mohun's Ottery. Carew was also the patron of Simon Heynes and William Alley, who later became the first Elizabethan bishop of Exeter.²³⁹ In 1549 Carew was entrusted by the government with the task of pacifying the rebels of the south-west. But his heavy-handed methods merely intensified the crisis and brought him a rebuke from the privy council.²⁴⁰ Crispin's provocative behaviour was probably a panic measure on his part. Even though Edward's reign was barely two months old, Crispin was well aware of the likely course that religious events would soon take. Now that he had shown his hand, there was no turning back. Accordingly, he responded to Nichols' treatise.

Crispin was not alone in his attack on Protestantism in 1547. Another member of the Exeter chapter house, John Moreman, also delivered a controversial sermon in the early months of Edward's reign.²⁴¹ As vicar of Menheniot, Moreman had been one of the first incumbents of the diocese to teach his parishioners the Lord's Prayer, the Creed and the Ten Commandments in English.²⁴² However, despite this enlightened approach to religious instruction, Moreman was implacably opposed to Henry VIII's divorce.²⁴³ Under Mary he seems to have been earmarked for high preferment, perhaps the deanery of Exeter or even the bishopric itself.²⁴⁴ But death robbed him of his just reward.²⁴⁵

Moreman was collated to his cathedral canonry in 1544.²⁴⁶ Both he and Crispin, therefore, gave a new cutting edge to the opposition to Heynes' rule as dean. Not that opposition was lacking in strength. At the beginning of Edward's reign there were thirteen resident canons at Exeter, including Heynes, out of a possible twenty-four.²⁴⁷ The dean was probably not entirely

²³⁷ DHC, Chanter 14, fo. 104.

²³⁸ Rose-Troup, *Western Rebellion*, p. 106.

²³⁹ See below, pp. 69-78.

²⁴⁰ Youings, 'South-Western Rebellion', pp. 110-111,

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

²⁴² Rose-Troup, *Western Rebellion*, p. 108.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 109; Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall*, p. 152. See also below, p. 48.

²⁴⁵ Rose-Troup, *Western Rebellion*, p. 109.

²⁴⁶ DHC, Chanter 14, fo. 113.

²⁴⁷ ECA, D&C.3707, fo. 38v.

isolated in the chapter house. John Pollard, whom we have already met, and George Carew, the archdeacon of Totnes and uncle of Sir Peter Carew, were sympathetic to the cause of reform, though they were by no means zealots.²⁴⁸ Of the remaining ten canons, the hard-core opposition to Heynes was led by Crispin, William Leveson, the cathedral chancellor and Veysey's nephew, Thomas Southern, John Holwyll and Thomas Wyse.²⁴⁹ However, numerical superiority was no longer a guarantee of success. In the autumn of 1547 the government authorised a royal visitation of the Church.²⁵⁰ Heynes was the only local member of the four-man commission appointed to visit the diocese of Exeter.²⁵¹ The dean now had a golden opportunity to revenge the recent indignities he had suffered at the hands of the chapter. Crispin and Moreman were arrested, questioned and sent to the Tower for their recent sermons. Crispin died there in the autumn of 1551, whilst Moreman was not released until Mary's accession.²⁵²

Heynes now set about reforming the Exeter chapter. The royal visitors of 1547 issued a special set of injunctions for the cathedral.²⁵³ Heynes was almost certainly its author. Although much less radical than the reforms he had earlier proposed, the injunctions nonetheless threatened the canons.²⁵⁴ In the first place Heynes sought to regain control over the officiality of the capitular peculiar jurisdiction. By custom the post was his.²⁵⁵ But recently the canons had begun to appoint their own officials without reference to the dean.²⁵⁶ Heynes had contested the matter since his arrival at Exeter.²⁵⁷ Now he acted by removing George Weaver and intruding John Roche alias Bartlet, his own vicar-choral, into the office.²⁵⁸ Heynes also reasserted his authority as dean over the city of Exeter. Normally the archdeacon of Exeter was the local ordinary. But when the archdeacon did not reside in chapter, the city fell under the jurisdiction of the dean.²⁵⁹ This was of especial relevance in 1547 because the present archdeacon, Adam Traves, had been absent from

²⁴⁸ See above, n. 95 and below, p. 64.

²⁴⁹ Rose-Troup, *Western Rebellion*, pp. 172, 175, n. 1.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

²⁵¹ ECA, D&C.3674, p. 35. The commission was headed by William May, the dean of St Paul's.

²⁵² Rose-Troup, *Western Rebellion*, pp. 108-9.

²⁵³ ECA, D&C.3674, pp. 50-9 (*recte* 60).

²⁵⁴ See above, p. 23.

²⁵⁵ ECA, D&C.3674, p. 57 (*recte* 58).

²⁵⁶ ECA, D&C.3551, fos. 67v-8.

²⁵⁷ Boggis, *Diocese of Exeter*, p. 369.

²⁵⁸ *Churchwardens' Accounts of Ashburton, 1479-1580*, ed. A Hanham (DCRS, new series, 15, 1970), p. 114; ECA, D&C.7135/6; N Orme, *The Minor Clergy of Exeter Cathedral 1300-1548* (Exeter, 1980), p. 48.

²⁵⁹ ECA, D&C.3674, p. 57 (*recte* 58).

the cathedral close for six years.²⁶⁰ Moreover, Traves was a sworn enemy of Heynes.²⁶¹

The injunctions also weakened the chapter's hold over the minor clergy of the cathedral. In the middle ages it had been customary for each canon to appoint a vicar-choral to serve him in the choir of the cathedral.²⁶² This practice was now ended. Henceforth, the vicars-choral themselves would be responsible for selecting their members.²⁶³ Candidates were to be examined for their 'honest conversation, competent learning...good voices and cunning in music'.²⁶⁴ The early years of the fifteenth century had seen the vicars-choral establish themselves as an autonomous body complete with their own statutes, hall of residence and charter of incorporation.²⁶⁵ This had not been wholly successful chiefly because of the lack of candidates seeking to become vicars-choral. Not since before the Black Death had there been a full complement of twenty-four priests at Exeter.²⁶⁶ This had probably enabled the canons to persist in their old ways.

The injunctions of 1547 cut the ground from under the feet of the chapter, firstly by reducing the number of vicars-choral to twenty (the real size of the collegiate body in the later middle ages) and secondly by stipulating that twelve of the twenty places should be occupied by laymen, thus overcoming the problem of a shortage of priests.²⁶⁷ Further injunctions transferred the responsibility for feeding the cathedral choristers from the chapter to the vicars-choral and abolished the twelve secondaries replacing them by twelve scholars of grammar chosen by preference from amongst the choristers whose voices had broken.²⁶⁸ As it was not unusual for vicars-choral to be

²⁶⁰ Oliver, *Bishops of Exeter*, p. 286; ECA, D&C.3707, fo. 35v. Traves was aged and suffered from poor health.

²⁶¹ Rose-Troup, *Western Rebellion*, p. 175, n. 1.

²⁶² Orme, *Minor Clergy*, p. xiv.

²⁶³ ECA, D&C.3674, p. 52. The injunction is reticent about the way in which vicars choral were chosen. Although the injunction does not mention this, it was evidently agreed practice that when a vacancy arose amongst the vicars, the chapter would nominate two candidates for the vicars choral to examine and choose from (J F Chanter, *The Custos and College of the Vicars Choral of the Choir of the Cathedral Church of St Peter, Exeter*, 1933), p. 4). Possibly the reticence was deliberate. See below, pp. 147-8.

²⁶⁴ ECA, D&C.3674, p. 52.

²⁶⁵ Chanter, *Custos and College*, pp. 9-12.

²⁶⁶ Orme, *Minor Clergy*, p. xiv.

²⁶⁷ ECA, D&C.3674, p. 51.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 56-7.

recruited from the ranks of the secondaries, better educated candidates would only serve to enhance the autonomy of the collegiate body.²⁶⁹

Heynes' attack upon the Exeter chapter was quickly followed by an attack on the cathedral's wealth. As with the bishopric, the onslaught began in earnest in early 1548. The chapter was vulnerable from two quarters: from members of the laity seeking grants of the canons' manors and inappropriate rectories and from the commissioners enforcing the newly-approved chantries act. No lands or revenues were lost as a result of the former attack. Long-term leases combined with reserved rents proved a satisfactory means of trenching upon the chapter's wealth.²⁷⁰ At least eight manors and two inappropriate rectories are known to have been farmed out in this way.²⁷¹ One fifth and probably much more of the canons' annual income was effectively frozen for the next eighty to a hundred years.²⁷² Possibly the lessees might have wished to turn their grants into alienations, but had been discouraged by the chapter's resistance. Certainly Somerset was denied an exchange involving the manor of Staverton. Despite Heynes' active intervention on his behalf, the duke was forced to accept a ninety-nine year lease of the property.²⁷³

The chantries act was more immediately destructive for the inhabitants of the cathedral close. Part of Heynes' achievement from the preceding year was no undone. The vicars-choral suffered the confiscation of inappropriate rectories, tenements and parcels of land amounting to two-thirds of their annual income.²⁷⁴ Only the sheaf of Woodbury and Woodbury manor itself remained untouched. It was a sign of the vicars' financial hardship that the latter was leased out for seventy-five years at the end of 1548.²⁷⁵ The entry fine which was levied provided welcome if short-lived relief. Yet it did not prevent a further reduction in the vicars' numbers at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign.²⁷⁶

²⁶⁹ N Orme, 'Education and Learning at a Medieval English Cathedral: Exeter 1380-1548', *JEH*, 32 (1981), pp. 265-83, at p. 279.

²⁷⁰ Bodl Lib, Rawlinson D.1138, fos. 1-16.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*; *CPR 1549-51*, p. 305: TNA, REQ.2/149/79. The total was probably more, but no record of the grants was made in the chapter act books.

²⁷² *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, eds. Caley and Hunter, ii. 292-5.

²⁷³ ECA, D&C.3498/109, 114; *CPR 1549-51*, p. 305. Heynes was also busy at this time writing letters to the canons about the granting of the episcopal estates: any leases or alienations made by Veysey had to be confirmed by the chapter's seal (ECA, D&C.3498/100, 108, 111).

²⁷⁴ Chanter, *Custos and College*, pp. 17-19. The vicars' annual income was roughly £214.

²⁷⁵ TNA, C.3/318/48.

²⁷⁶ See below, p. 142.

Another casualty of the chantries act was the eighteen annuellers of chantry priests attached to the cathedral.²⁷⁷ They were pensioned off at about the same time that Somerset wrote to the chapter requesting a lease of the annuellers' house for a client.²⁷⁸ Thirteen chantries and fifty-six obits were founded in the cathedral.²⁷⁹ They were sustained by various lands and rents which yielded over £150 annually. Certain of these properties belonged to the chapter, namely those which sustained the thirteen perpetual chantries.²⁸⁰ There was thus a strong temptation to cling to these lands and rents especially when they included three manors and eight inappropriate rectories.²⁸¹ To lose them to the crown would deprive the chapter of not only the rents paid by the tenants to whom the properties had been leased, but also the entry fines which would be levied at the commencement of each tenancy. The canons thus set about concealing the properties from the chantry commissioners. They achieved this by alleging that the monies which had formerly been paid to the annuellers were in fact pensions payable into the common fund of the chapter. As the canons had been responsible for distributing the salaries of the annuellers, the manoeuvre required little in the way of invention. Not until 1577 was the deceit uncovered.²⁸²

It is important to grasp the full significance of the attack upon the Exeter chapter's wealth. The twenty-four canonries of the cathedral lacked separate landed endowments.²⁸³ Revenues payable to the canons were distributed in the form of commons to those who resided in chapter. Thus any diminution in the chapter's income would not only affect all twenty-four canons; it would also necessitate a reduction in the number of canons who could reside in chapter at any one time. In the early sixteenth century, the average number of residentiaries at Exeter was fourteen.²⁸⁴ In the light of the events of Edward's reign, it became clear that the chapter's revenues could no longer support so many. A maximum number of residentiaries needed to be

²⁷⁷ Orme, *Minor Clergy*, p. xv.

²⁷⁸ N Orme, 'The Dissolution of the Chantries in Devon, 1546-8', *RTDA*, 111 (1979), pp. 75-123, at p. 82; ECA, D&C.3498/112.

²⁷⁹ Orme, 'Dissolution of the Chantries', p. 106.

²⁸⁰ Oliver, *Bishops of Exeter*, pp. 488-93.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*

²⁸² TNA, SP.12/114/53.

²⁸³ K Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals in the Middle Ages: a Constitutional Study with Special Reference to the Fourteenth Century* (Manchester, 1949), pp. 74, 245.

²⁸⁴ ECA, D&C.3707, fos. 18-38v.

imposed. This was eventually done by Bishop Alley in 1561 when he set the limit at nine.²⁸⁵

In the longer term, the financial troubles of the mid-century worked to the chapter's advantage. What emerged by the end of the century was a much stronger chapter. The nine canons residentiary gained much bigger slices of the capitular revenues, especially as it became fashionable for tenants of church estates to seek the renewal of their leases well before the date of expiry, thereby enabling entry fines to be levied with greater frequency.²⁸⁶ Furthermore, 'the nine' gained important patronage rights with regard to the filling of vacant places of residence. With many more canons than canons residentiary, the competition for entrance not surprisingly grew.²⁸⁷

However, in the shorter term the outlook for the Exeter chapter was a good deal less rosy. The prospect of fewer resident canons and the accompanying competition for places could only weaken the chapter's ability to resist the advance of Protestantism. Faction-fighting was to be a feature of capitular life at Exeter throughout the post-Reformation period.²⁸⁸ Above all, the attack on the chapter's wealth fostered in the canons a siege mentality. In their eyes, the Reformation was a conspiracy engineered by greedy courtiers and gentry. This attitude of mind can best explain the key events of 1548 and 1549.

In the spring of the former year William Body was murdered at Helston. This was the prelude to a sizeable uprising in western Cornwall which the local gentry managed to suppress only with difficulty. Body died at the hands of the mob, but he was almost certainly not the victim of a popular religious rebellion.²⁸⁹ It is true that he was in bad odour with the local inhabitants. At the end of the preceding year he had unnecessarily stirred passions by summoning the churchwardens of the rural deanery of Penwith to assemble before him.²⁹⁰ This order came hard on the heels of the royal visitation, the injunctions of which had demanded the removal of superstitious or 'abused' images from all churches.²⁹¹ Evidently parishioners had begun to sell off church goods fearing (mistakenly) their expropriation by the crown. Veysey

²⁸⁵ DHC, Chanter 1115.

²⁸⁶ Bodl Lib, Rawlinson D.1138, fos. 1-16. See also below, pp. 201-2.

²⁸⁷ See below, pp. 205-8.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁹ B L Beer, *Rebellion and Riot: Popular Disorder in England during the Reign of Edward VI* (Kent State, Ohio, 1982), p. 47.

²⁹⁰ APC 1547-50, p. 535.

²⁹¹ ECA, D&C.3674, p. 4.

had been deputed by the privy council to put a stop to this.²⁹² Body was the bishop's local agent. But he should have conducted an inspection of each church rather than convened a visitation. He did the latter because it was the easier thing to do.²⁹³ But it only confirmed the people's fears. A 'tumult' ensued. To ease tensions, the privy council had Body committed to ward for a week and bound over to appear before them. Two or three of the leading insurgents were also detained.²⁹⁴

Body's indiscretion gave his enemies an advantage. His was an especially prominent example of lay encroachment in the south-west. Not only was he a courtier exercising spiritual jurisdiction; he was also a protégé of Cromwell. These things weighed heavily against him when he began his spring visitation of the archdeaconry of Cornwall in 1548. The chantry commissioners were already at work in the county.²⁹⁵ This, coupled with the issue of a proclamation ordering the removal of all images from churches, once again created an atmosphere of unrest.²⁹⁶ There was thus some excuse for Martin Geffrey, a chantry priest from St Keverne, venting his anger by inciting his neighbours to march to Helston and murder Body.²⁹⁷

But bigger issues were at stake than Geffrey's job. By the terms of the chantries act both the hospital of St John at Helston and the collegiate church of Glasney at nearby Penryn were to be dissolved. Body's lease of the archdeaconry also included the advowsons of the hospital and a prebend at Glasney, both of which were customarily annexed to the archdeaconry.²⁹⁸ By coincidence, the prior of St John was John Harris, Veysey's commissary in Cornwall, who also occupied a prebend at Glasney.²⁹⁹ Harris cannot have been on good terms with Body, especially after one of Body's local supporters, Matthew Broke the rector of St Tudy was made a prebend of Glasney in 1547.³⁰⁰ With the dissolution looming, Body most probably sought to gain recompense for the loss of the two advowsons. Perhaps he was even tempted by the prospect of purchasing the lands and possessions

²⁹² Rose-Troup, *Western Rebellion*, p. 73.

²⁹³ APC 1547-50, pp. 535-6.

²⁹⁴ Rose-Troup, *Western Rebellion*, pp. 51-5.

²⁹⁵ Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall*, p. 253.

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 257.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.* Geffrey's status at St Keverne is not absolutely clear. In 1540 he was serving as a chantry priest at St Just-in-Roseland (TNA, E.344/19/15). Possibly he succeeded Robert Rawe to the vicarage of St Keverne, but as the latter was only instituted in 1547 this seems unlikely. See Rose-Troup, *Western Rebellion*, p. 76, n. 2.

²⁹⁸ DHC, Chanter 1073.

²⁹⁹ See above, p. 24; Rose-Troup, *Western Rebellion*, p. 72.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 418, n. 1; DHC, Chanter 14, fo. 124v.

of the hospital and college.³⁰¹ This would undoubtedly have antagonised local opinion. Moves were being made by 'certain gentlemen of [the] county' to prevent the sale of Glasney College and instead to have the collegiate church converted into a parish church.³⁰² The numerous pardons granted after the ending of the disturbance may well reflect the government's acceptance that Body was the victim of a conspiracy organised by members of the Cornish gentry and clergy.³⁰³

The desire to frustrate lay greed was also to the fore in the troubles of the following year. The Prayer Book rebellion was one of three major protest movements in the mid-Tudor period.³⁰⁴ In common with the others it sought to combine a number of conflicting viewpoints. The rebellion probably began as a popular uprising. Opposition to Somerset's religious programme was strong. So, too, was the dislike of the new taxes being levied on sheep and the sale of woollen cloth. There were also complaints about the parish clergy: it was implied that their concern to exact fees had led to the withholding of baptism and burial services.³⁰⁵ However, the final version of the rebels' manifesto ignored these complaints as it did also the economic grievances. By now conservative clergy had taken control of the movement. Their influence was especially apparent in the demands that the bible and all books of scripture in English should be called in and that laymen should be excluded from communicating except at Easter and then only in one kind. The manifesto also sought to restore (in part) abbey and chantry lands to the Church and dealt a blow at certain (possibly protestant) gentry by imposing a limit on the number of servants they could employ.³⁰⁶

The last article has always appeared ambiguous. It may well reflect the element of class antagonism which was undoubtedly present in the mid-Tudor protest movements.³⁰⁷ But it could equally reflect the growing influence of the cathedral canons upon the course of the rebellion. Certainly there are grounds for believing that the final manifesto contained not one but two clerical viewpoints. On the one hand, there were the more general sacerdotal demands which concentrated upon the organisation of parochial worship and which perhaps mirrored the thoughts of the clergy who

³⁰¹ See below, p. 44.

³⁰² Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall*, p. 255.

³⁰³ Beer, *Rebellion and Riot*, p. 48.

³⁰⁴ The Pilgrimage of Grace and Kett's Rebellion were the others. For the concept of protest movements, see P. Williams, *The Tudor Regime* (Oxford, 1979), p. 313.

³⁰⁵ A Fletcher, *Tudor Rebellions* (1983), pp. 48-9.

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

participated in the rebellion. On the other hand, there were more specific grievances which seemed to emanate from higher up the social ladder. These were the articles which sought the re-enactment of the Henrician six articles, the release of Crispin and Moreman and the appointment of Reginald Pole to the king's council. The first had been campaigned for by Stephen Gardiner and had already gained an airing in the south-west in the disturbances following Body's murder.³⁰⁸ The last two were very much demands that the cathedral canons might have been expected to make. It is true that the canons took no active part in the events of 1549 other than to allow their servants to keep watch and ward to help prevent Exeter falling to the rebels.³⁰⁹ But the canons would want to tread carefully in case things went against them. And in any case their views could be made known by other means.

Robert Welsh, who may have been the leader of the rebellion and may also have been responsible for drafting the rebels' final manifesto, held the living of St Thomas just outside the walls of Exeter.³¹⁰ As a Cornishman from Penryn, Welsh was well-placed to act as a co-ordinator of the uprising, binding together the forces from his own county and Devon.³¹¹ Yet he was also well-positioned to receive covert encouragement and guidance from the Exeter chapter. Moreover, as we have already seen with Crispin and Moreman, not all of the inhabitants of the cathedral close could contain themselves.³¹² In June 1549, the very month in which the rebellion began, John Blaxton, the sub-dean of the cathedral, was busy fanning the flames of discontent using his office of episcopal commissary for Devon to spread 'seditious words' about the government's religious policy.³¹³ Certainly by viewing the later stages of the revolt as a clerical reaction orchestrated by the cathedral canons, we can more readily explain the otherwise puzzling absence of any demand for the release of the marquis of Exeter's son from the Tower.³¹⁴ Evidently, the uprising was not a pro-Courtenay affair. This may well have been why former Courtenay stalwarts like Dennys and Harvey adopted a moderate, compromising stance during the troubles.³¹⁵ The rebels probably had little to thank the Courtenays for as the region's major

³⁰⁸ Youings, 'South-Western Rebellion', p. 104; Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall*, p. 258.

³⁰⁹ Rose-Troup, *Western Rebellion*, p. 177.

³¹⁰ Youings, 'South-Western Rebellion', p. 121.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*

³¹² See above, pp. 29-31.

³¹³ DHC, Chanter 14, fo. 124v; Chanter 15, fos. 84v-5; Rose-Troup, *Western Rebellion*, p. 165.

³¹⁴ Youings, 'South-Western Rebellion', p. 117.

³¹⁵ See above, p. 29.

landowners, whilst the canons could only view the marquis' son in the light of the tradition of lay interference in matters spiritual in the south-west.

III

The events of the summer of 1549 led inexorably to Veysey's downfall. The bishop was 'in some part' made the scapegoat for the rebellion.³¹⁶ The bishop was 'in some part' made the scapegoat for the rebellion. Absent at Sutton Coldfield when the troubles began, Veysey's only gesture had been the rather absurd one of offering to help suppress the Norfolk uprising.³¹⁷ The bishop had been remorselessly sucked into the whirlpool of Somerset's regime. Far from strengthening his position, the spoliation of his see had fostered a violent backlash which discredited his rule. After Somerset's overthrow, it could only be a matter of time before Veysey himself would have to go. The mounting tax arrears, again a legacy of the bishop's association with Somerset, only underlined the need for change.

Northumberland's government was much more purposeful in its dealings. Protestantism advanced more swiftly.³¹⁸ Carew's acquisition of the caputular manors of Thorverton and Staverton from the disgraced Somerset underlined the point.³¹⁹ The final nine episcopal estates to be alienated from the see were distributed to the victors of 1549: Bedford, Speke, Dudley and Herbert.³²⁰ The stage was being set for Veysey's departure: Latimer preached against the bishop's negligence and continued non-residence in 1550.³²¹ Northumberland decided to ease matters by granting Veysey a pensioned retirement. By the terms of his resignation in August 1551, Veysey was allowed to keep for the remainder of his life the annuities which he had been granted by the grateful recipients of lordships alienated from the see. He was also permitted to enjoy the arrears that were outstanding from the taxes of the clergy of the diocese and from the rents of those episcopal estates which had been farmed out.³²²

This was undoubtedly a generous settlement. It seemingly puts the lie to the suggestion made later under Mary that Veysey had been forced into

³¹⁶ Hooker, *A Catalog*, no. 42

³¹⁷ Emden, *Biographical Register*, iii. 1948.

³¹⁸ Elton, *Reform and Reformation*, pp. 353-75.

³¹⁹ ECA, D&C.3498/115.

³²⁰ See Table 3. Sir William Herbert gained possession of Paignton from Speke in 1551 (ECA, D&C.3498/116).

³²¹ Boggis, *Diocese of Exeter*, p. 331.

³²² *CPR 1550-3*, pp. 36-7.

resignation 'pro corporis metu'.³²³ Significantly, Northumberland did not resort to the weapon of deprivation to remove the bishops he might well have done.³²⁴ Probably Bedford played a major part in the negotiations leading up to Veysey's departure. The earl had a vested interest in doing so because the new diocesan, Miles Coverdale, was almost certainly his client.³²⁵ Coverdale had been sent to Cornwall by the privy council as an itinerant preacher in June 1549.³²⁶ He was subsequently attached to the force assembled under Bedford's command to suppress the Prayer Book rebellion.³²⁷ Presumably it was at this stage that he came into the reckoning as a potential replacement for Veysey. It would be typical of Bedford's style that the change from conservatism to progressivism in church government at Exeter should be accomplished with the minimum of fuss. Bedford remembered Veysey as a loyal servant of Henry VIII. It would not be too difficult, given what had recently befallen the bishop, to convince him that he had done his duty and should now make honourable way for a much younger man who would be more able to confront the challenges of the times.³²⁸

The problems facing Coverdale at Exeter were indeed pressing. The new bishop would have to promote the cause of Protestantism on what was little more than a shoe-string budget. At a time when popular fervour for Catholicism in the south-west was declining (thanks mainly to the ravages of the Henrician and early Edwardian Reformations), it was a matter for regret that the opportunity to introduce religious reform into the region should be lost for want of resources, both human and material. As was invariably the case elsewhere, there was a great shortage of protestant preachers in the south-west during Edward's reign.³²⁹ With hardly anyone coming forward to enter the ministry during Coverdale's episcopate (only five men were priested in the two years of the bishop's rule), this shortage was not likely to be overcome quickly.³³⁰ Popular confidence in the local Church needed to be restored. This meant achieving some degree of stability in ecclesiastical government. But stability was not easily reconciled with protestant advance. Indeed, as has already been amply emphasised, the Reformation cast a big shadow over the future of spiritual jurisdiction in England.³³¹ Would substantial organisational changes be made? Under Northumberland, major

³²³ *CPR 1553-4*, p. 66.

³²⁴ Heal, *Of Prelates and Princes*, pp. 138-50.

³²⁵ Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall*, p. 266.

³²⁶ Rose-Troup, *Western Rebellion*, p. 138.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 158.

³²⁸ *CPR 1550-3*, p. 36.

³²⁹ Whiting, *Blind Devotion of the People*, pp. 246-8.

³³⁰ DHC, Chanter 16, unfold.

³³¹ See above, pp. 19-21.

reforms of the ecclesiastical law were being planned.³³² Furthermore, Coverdale had been appointed to Exeter by royal letters patent. He appeared little more than a superior kind of government official. His much depleted revenues only reinforced this impression.

Coverdale entered upon Exeter on the day that Veysey resigned from the diocese. To ease the new bishop's financial plight, the crown exonerated him from paying the see's first fruits and tenths to the Exchequer.³³³ The opportunity was also taken to reduce the official annual valuation of the bishopric from £1567 to £500.³³⁴ Without these concessions it would have been impossible for Coverdale and his successors to remain solvent. Even with them the outlook was decidedly bleak. The main difficulty was that there was so little room in which to manoeuvre. Coverdale's temporal revenues were now firmly set for the foreseeable future, whilst he could not really hope to raise the yield of his spiritual revenues at a time when ecclesiastical jurisdiction had lost much of its popular appeal. Meanwhile, the new bishop was obliged to pay the fees and pensions of the numerous officers attached to the episcopal entourage, notably the chief steward of the bishop's estates, the receiver and the auditor of the episcopal revenues and the bishop's attorney.³³⁵ These outgoings served to diminish Coverdale's annual income by almost £80.³³⁶ Moreover, there was nothing the new bishop could do to rid himself of this burden as he discovered when he sought to oust John Wylcockes, the keeper of the episcopal palace and gaol, from office. Like his colleagues, Wylcockes had been appointed for life. By exhibiting his patent of office, he effectively ended Coverdale's resistance.³³⁷

Against this depressing background, it is surprising to find that Coverdale was a 'great keeper of hospitality'.³³⁸ For this we rely upon the reminiscences of John Hooker, chamberlain and chronicler of Exeter and a committed protestant who seems to have been especially close to the reformer. The standard of hospitality provided, however, cannot have been particularly high. Unlike his predecessor, Coverdale was a theologian. As bishop 'he preached continually upon every holy day, and did read most commonly twice in the week, in some one church or other within this city'.³³⁹

³³² Dickens, *English Reformation*, pp. 344-5.

³³³ *CPR 1550-3*, p. 37.

³³⁴ *Ibid.*

³³⁵ *Ibid.*

³³⁶ *Ibid.*

³³⁷ TNA. REQ.2/14/75.

³³⁸ Hooker, *A Catalog*, no. 43.

³³⁹ *Ibid.*

Hooker found Coverdale a very paragon of rectitude: 'void of pride, full of humility, abhorring covetousness, and enemy to all wickedness, and wicked men'.³⁴⁰ The bishop's wife was 'a most sober, chaste, and godly matron; his house and household, another church, in which was exercised all godliness and virtue'.³⁴¹

This virginal existence, however, failed to compensate for Coverdale's lack of experience with regard to the workings of ecclesiastical government. The bishop badly needed a trustworthy deputy to whom he could consign the everyday running of the diocese. Coverdale was determined to pick only a protestant. This explains Thomas Herle's appointment as chancellor in September 1551.³⁴² As a local minister, Herle's task was to act as a stop-gap until a more suitable candidate could be found at Oxford where Hooker was currently making enquiries.³⁴³ Towards the end of 1552 Robert Weston 'doctor of civil law and afterwards Lord Chancellor of Ireland' was lured to the south-west on the promise of all the fees of the bishop's ecclesiastical jurisdiction together with a £40 yearly pension and bed and board in the episcopal palace for himself and his family.³⁴⁴

Weston was the first lay chancellor of the diocese. According to Hooker, he was as 'diligent and severe in doing of his office, without reproach of being affectionated or corrupted' as Coverdale himself.³⁴⁵ More important from our point of view were the terms of his and Herle's authority. Coverdale's determination to distance himself from conservatives in his rule at Exeter led him to break with previous administrative practices.³⁴⁶ For the first time in the south-west, a full-time occupant of the combined posts of vicar-general, official principal and chancellor had been appointed. During the fourteenth century these offices had been regarded as separate. The chancellor was responsible for the bishop's audience court.³⁴⁷ The official principal as chief

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*

³⁴² DHC, Chanter 16, fos. 1-2v; CCCC, Parker 97, fo. 171v.

³⁴³ Emden, *Biographical Register 1501-40*, p. 282.

³⁴⁴ DHC, Chanter 16, fo. 7v; Emden, *Biographical Register 1501-40*, p. 618; Hooker, *A Catalog*, no. 43.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁶ D J Cawthorn, 'The Administration of the Diocese of Exeter in the Fourteenth Century: I', *RTDA*, 87 (1955), pp. 130-64. The following account greatly simplifies a complex process of change. For a broader discussion of administrative change in the diocese of Exeter during the late medieval/early modern period, see below, pp. 218-44.

³⁴⁷ *The Register of John de Grandisson 1327-1369*, ed. F C Hingeston-Randolph (3 vols., Exeter, 1894-9), ii. 662.

judge of the diocese presided over the bishop's consistory.³⁴⁸ The vicar-general conducted visitations of the see, admitted clerics to livings and issued licences.³⁴⁹ The first two posts were full-time appointments, though their occupants held office only during the bishop's pleasure.³⁵⁰ The last position was filled only when the bishop was absent from the see, 'in remotis'.³⁵¹ The vicar-general was thus the bishop's *alter ego*, exercising the diocesan's gracious jurisdiction, save for the duty of ordination which was delegated to suffragans bishops.³⁵²

At Exeter, by the middle years of the fifteenth century, a number of modifications had been made to this structure. The chief one was the amalgamation of the offices of chancellor and vicar-general with the chancellor performing the duties of vicar-general when so required.³⁵³ The same man also doubled as official principal.³⁵⁴ But this post had become little more than a sinecure. During the course of the previous century the office of president of the consistory court had emerged. Although supposedly the deputy of the official principal, the president soon became the *de facto* chief judge of the see.³⁵⁵ Occupants of the office also served as official peculiar or bishop's commissary for the county of Devon.³⁵⁶ What the patent issued by Coverdale to Herle signified was the demise of the post of president and the reassertion of the practical importance of the official principal. It also marked the uniting of the office of official peculiar with that of official principal, the abandonment of the post of episcopal commissary for Cornwall and the establishment of a full-time vicar-generalship functioning independently of the bishop. Thus, where there had latterly been three jurisperiti assisting the diocesan, namely a chancellor/vicar-general, a consistory president and a commissary for Cornwall, there was now just one.

The appointment of Herle and Weston set the pattern for the future. Although Veysey's second term as bishop brought a relapse into old habits, his Marian successor, Turberville, was content to follow Coverdale's lead.³⁵⁷

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, ii. 634-5.

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, ii. 635.

³⁵⁰ *The Register of Thomas de Brantyngham 1370-1394*, ed. F C Hingeston-Randolph (2 vols., Exeter, 1901-6), i. 140.

³⁵¹ *Register of Grandisson*, ed. Hingeston-Randolph, i. 345.

³⁵² A H Thompson, *The English Clergy and their Organisation in the Later Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1947), pp. 46-56.

³⁵³ DHC, Chanter 12(ii), fos. 1-2.

³⁵⁴ DHC, Chanter 12(i), fos. 1-2.

³⁵⁵ *Register of Grandisson*, ed Hingeston-Randolph, ii. 686.

³⁵⁶ *Register of Brantyngham*, ed Hingeston-Randolph, i. 139.

³⁵⁷ DHC, Chanter 16, fos. 15-16; Chanter 17, *sub 16 Mar. 1553-4*; Chanter 18, fos. 1-2v.

The only other development of note in this direction came in 1595 when the patent of office of diocesan chancellor (as the judicial and administrative supremo became known) was converted from a temporary into a life-grant.³⁵⁸ Compared with many other sees, the establishment of an all-embracing chancellorship at Exeter was a late development. Ironically, it was accomplished by a protestant-led administration and was the produce of adverse circumstances stemming from the changes of the Reformation. In the longer term Coverdale's action, which presupposed a restructuring of episcopal government in the south-west, was to prove an expansive gesture.³⁵⁹ But in the short-term its aim was much more modest: to keep the administration afloat. Depressed levels of judicial activity and the beleaguered nature of Coverdale's position at Exeter could be used to justify a reduced episcopal presence in the localities of the see.

Nonetheless, it would be wrong to assume that Coverdale, or those around him were innocent of the wider implications of their deeds. The ending of the commissary system in the south-west necessarily enhanced the jurisdictional importance of the archdeacons. This was especially true with regard to Cornwall, administratively the most important of the four archdeaconries. It was now more essential than ever that bishops of Exeter secure the appointment of adjutants who were supportive of episcopal authority. In the normal course of events this need could be met at least in part by the diocesan's customary right of presentation to the four archdeaconries. However, as we have seen, there were problems with the archdeaconry of Cornwall.³⁶⁰ Body had acquired the advowsons. At his death control over the archdeaconry passed to his widow, Anne.³⁶¹ This was an unsatisfactory state of affairs to say the least and Veysey sought to remedy it. The outcome seems to have been a compromise. Early in 1551 the Court of Augmentations decreed that Anne and her new husband, John Tusser, an official of the duchy of Cornwall, should be recompensed for the now dissolved prebend of Glasney College. They should also receive the synodals and procurations accruing from inappropriate rectories lately attached to the Cornish monasteries of Tywardreath, Bodmin and Launceston. However, no mention was made of any right to the farm and advowson of the archdeaconry.³⁶²

³⁵⁸ DHC, Chanter 784, *sub 8* Dec. 1595.

³⁵⁹ See below, pp. 218-37.

³⁶⁰ See above, pp. 23-6.

³⁶¹ Rose-Troup, *Western Rebellion*, p. 418.

³⁶² *Ibid.*, pp. 418, 420-1.

Evidently Tusser was unimpressed by the court's decision. He used the opportunity of Veysey's resignation to reassert his position. Coverdale was soon calling for help from his friends on the privy council. Tusser was alleged to have interrupted Coverdale 'in the execution of his office of bishop within the said county of Cornwall'.³⁶³ Tusser was summoned before the council early in 1552 and warned not to 'intermeddle with any part of the archdeaconry.....without further licence'.³⁶⁴ He had 'very ungodly and unlawfully used the office of the same', which presumably meant that he had exercised spiritual jurisdiction.³⁶⁵ Although Tusser gave bonds to observe this order, it was not long before he was once again in trouble. In May 1552 Rowland Taylor was appointed to the archdeaconry by the crown, probably at Coverdale's behest.³⁶⁶ The archdeaconry was said to be 'now vacant and at the king's disposition *hac vice*'.³⁶⁷ Provocatively, Taylor was granted the archdeaconry for life and also the revenues which the Court of Augmentations had earlier conceded to the Tussers.³⁶⁸ Tusser retaliated and was imprisoned by the council for 'certain slanderous reports which he ha[d] raised upon' Taylor.³⁶⁹ Nonetheless, Tusser had the last word. Taylor's martyrdom under Mary enabled him to regain control over the advowson of the archdeaconry. The next three archdeacons were all instituted at the Tusser's behest.³⁷⁰ The Tussers also resumed possession of Body's lease, passing it on to Bishop Bradbridge's brother-in-law, Thomas Marston, at some stage prior to 1574.³⁷¹

According to Hooker, the common people 'whose old bottles would receive no new wine, could not brook, nor digest [Coverdale] for no other cause, but because he was a preacher of the gospel, an enemy to papistry and a married man'.³⁷² Coverdale's problem in the south-west was essentially one of support not leadership. His desire that the business of diocesan

³⁶³ APC 1550-2, p. 419. The incident may have taken place at the time of Coverdale's primary visitation.

³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 494.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁶ CPR 1550-3, p. 320.

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁹ APC 1552-3, pp. 131, 167.

³⁷⁰ DHC, Chanter 16, fo. 29; *Sede Vacante Institutions, Canterbury*, ed. C E Woodruff (Kent Archaeological Society, 8, 1923), p. 36; DHC, Chanter 18, fo. 84.

³⁷¹ DHC, Chanter 20, fo. 18v. Marston was a London merchant. Tusser had property in the city (*Abstracts of Inquisitions Post Mortem for the City of London returned into the Court of Chancery during the Tudor Period, Part IV, 19-45 Elizabeth 1577-1603*, ed. E A Fry (British Record Society, 36, 1908), p. 162; CPR 1553-4, p. 370; and see below p. 86).

³⁷² Hooker, *A Catalog*, no.43.

administration 'be done in all uprightness, justice, and equity', revealed him to be no insensitive iconoclast.³⁷³ Reform would best be achieved gradually within a traditionalist environment. This was to look forward to the programme of moderate episcopacy of Elizabeth's reign.³⁷⁴ By then, of course, conservatism had received a jolt from the backlash of the Marian reaction. No such advantage accrued to Protestantism under Edward VI. The new faith still had to prove itself. Unfortunately, Coverdale, Heynes, West, Taylor and a handful of preachers amongst the diocesan clergy were no match for the conservatives of the cathedral close and episcopal bureaucracy.³⁷⁵ The bishop, as we have seen, did his best to make the city of Exeter into a protestant preaching centre.³⁷⁶ But this was only achieved in the face of stiff opposition from the canons. William Alley needed Sir Peter Carew and his brother Sir Gawen to act as bodyguards when he delivered his sermons in the cathedral.³⁷⁷ Heynes, too, was glad of the Carews' protection.³⁷⁸ Coverdale, meanwhile, had to withstand a series of 'false suggestions,...open railings,...false libels...[and] secret backbitings' which culminated in attempts on his life 'by impoisoning' at Totnes and Bodmin.³⁷⁹ But, rejoices Hooker, 'by the providence of God, the snares were broken and he delivered'.³⁸⁰

IV

Edward VI's death in July 1553 brought all this to an end. When the news reached Exeter, Coverdale was in the midst of one of his sermons. His congregation quickly dispersed, save for 'a few godly men', thereby demonstrating the precarious nature of protestantism's hold in the south-west.³⁸¹ At the end of August, Coverdale was summoned before the Marian privy council together with Hooper of Gloucester.³⁸² But unlike the latter he was allowed to remain free, merely being ordered to await the council's deliberations.³⁸³ Meanwhile, on 28 September, Veysey was restored to Exeter by royal letters patent.³⁸⁴ There was to be no formal deprivation for

³⁷³ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁴ P Collinson, 'Episcopacy and Reform in England in the Later Sixteenth Century', *SCH*, 3 (1966), pp. 91-125.

³⁷⁵ Whiting, *Blind Devotion of the People*, p. 247.

³⁷⁶ See above, p. 41.

³⁷⁷ J Maclean, *The Life and Times of Sir Peter Carew* (1857), pp. 111-12.

³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁹ Hooker, *A Catalog*, no. 43.

³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁸¹ Whiting, *Blind Devotion of the People*, p. 255.

³⁸² *APC* 1552-4, p. 337.

³⁸³ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁴ *CPR* 1553-4, p. 66.

Coverdale. The Marian authorities preferred to regard him as an illegal intruder whose rule was quickly to be forgotten. Nonetheless, the reformer suffered a spell of imprisonment before being allowed to retreat into exile in the spring of 1555.³⁸⁵

Veysey's restoration was something of an anti-climax. He seems only to have taken a small interest in the affairs of his diocese during the brief period of his second term. Staying long enough at Exeter to set the Marian reaction in train, Veysey then retired to Sutton Coldfield where he died on 23 October 1554.³⁸⁶ The burden of establishing the new religious settlement in the south-west thus fell upon the bishop's deputies, notably John Blaxton and Thomas Southern.³⁸⁷ The main task confronting them was deprivation of the see's married clergy. This was ordered by the royal injunctions of March 1554.³⁸⁸ The evictions began the following month and continued until Veysey's death.³⁸⁹ Approximately seventy clerics (fifteen per cent of the see's beneficed priests at this date) were affected. Some ninety livings gained new incumbents.³⁹⁰ As was the case elsewhere, about a third of those clerics who had been deprived found other benefices in the south-west under Mary.³⁹¹ Ostensibly, these were the priests whose wives had died or who had agreed to renounce their spouses: the royal injunctions allowed such men to be rehabilitated upon performance of a penance.³⁹² Ironically, the new livings which they acquired were invariably those from which married clergy had been ejected.³⁹³

Veysey's death came at an awkward moment for Mary's government. Both the see and deanery of Exeter were now vacant, the latter having been effectively so since May 1554 when James Haddon, the Edwardian successor to Simon Heynes, went into voluntary exile.³⁹⁴ In the event neither position

³⁸⁵ Le Neve, *Fasti*, i. 378; C H Garrett, *The Marian Exiles: a Study in the Origins of Elizabethan Puritanism* (Cambridge, 1938), p. 132. Coverdale went to Denmark, after Christian III had interceded on his behalf. Coverdale's sister-in-law was married to the Scots reformer, John Macalpine, who was on good terms with the Danish king (Dickens, *English Reformation*, p. 186).

³⁸⁶ Hooker, A Catalog, no. 44; Emden, *Biographical Register*, iii. 1948.

³⁸⁷ DHC, Chanter 16, fos. 15-16; see above, pp. 22, 38.

³⁸⁸ *The Reformation in England to the Accession of Elizabeth I*, eds. A G Dickens and D Carr (1967), pp. 145-8.

³⁸⁹ DHC, Chanter 16, fos. 15v-31v.

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.*; Chanter 17, unfold.

³⁹¹ eg DHC, Chanter 16, fos. 18v-19, 26, 28v; Chanter 18, fo. 3.

³⁹² *Reformation in England*, eds. Dickens and Carr, pp. 146-7. See below, n. 443.

³⁹³ eg DHC, Chanter 16, fos. 17, 25v.

³⁹⁴ Garrett, *Marian Exiles*, p. 169. Heynes had died in 1552. Haddon, the brother of Walter Haddon the president of Magdalen College Oxford, had been nominated to the

was filled until the early months of 1555. James Turberville was nominated bishop in March whilst Thomas Reynolds was elected dean in February.³⁹⁵ The initial intention of the government had been to appoint John Moreman to the deanery.³⁹⁶ Very probably he was to succeed to the bishopric upon Veysey's death. But Moreman himself died at the beginning of August 1554.³⁹⁷ Not only did this deprive Mary of a loyal servant in the south-west; it also passed the initiative in choosing Veysey and Haddon's successors to Reginald Pole, who at the time of the bishop's demise was preparing to return to England from his continental exile.

Pole arrived in London on 24 November 1554, just two days after the passage of the bill repealing his attainder by Henry VIII.³⁹⁸ As we noted earlier, the cardinal had been ousted from the deanery of Exeter in 1537.³⁹⁹ Unusually, Pole had been evicted not for any regular ecclesiastical offence, but because he had accepted the offices of cardinal and legate and had thus set himself in opposition to the royal supremacy. The anticipated reunion with Rome, which Pole was shortly to oversee, therefore provided the cardinal with an opportunity to stake a claim to the Exeter deanery.

However, there was a deeper matter to consider. Pole's attainder, though not passed until 1539, identified the cardinal as dean of Exeter.⁴⁰⁰ This was a significant oversight in the context of the 1554 act of repeal because the latter returned to Pole all the lands and good which he had held (or was thought to have held) in 1539. It was thus possible for the cardinal to resume possession of estates which had been kept from him for the past fifteen years, including, apparently, the deanery of Exeter. The act of repeal, by virtue of its passage, made Pole dean. Furthermore, it enabled doubt to be cast upon the legality of Heynes and Haddon's occupation of the deanery. The wording of the repeal was sufficiently vague to suggest that all the grants of lands and goods which had been made out of Pole's confiscated possessions were void.⁴⁰¹ If this interpretation were to prevail, then Heynes

deanery in the spring of 1553. However, he was not installed until three days after Edward's death. Haddon was thus a lame duck dean. He never entered into residence at Exeter (*AI Cant*, I. ii. 341; Garrett, *Marian Exiles*, p. 169; ECA, D&C.3551, fos. 295-6; D&C.3707, fo. 42).

³⁹⁵ *CPR 1554-5*, p. 11; Emden, *Biographical Register 1501-40*, p. 479.

³⁹⁶ Rose-Troup, *Western Rebellion*, p. 109; see above, p. 30.

³⁹⁷ ECA, D&C.3707, fo. 42.

³⁹⁸ D M Loades, *The Reign of Mary Tudor: Politics, Government, and Religion in England 1553-1558* (1979), p. 85.

³⁹⁹ See above, p. 21.

⁴⁰⁰ HLRO, Original Acts, 27 Eliz I, no. 33.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*

and Haddon could be regarded like Coverdale as intruders into the local ecclesiastical hierarchy and their proceedings declared void. The validity of Veysey's alienations and leases made during the 1540s would thus be threatened as both episcopal and capitular grants had to be authenticated by the dean and chapter's seal.

Here, then, was a way of restoring the see of Exeter's finances. Without it the beneficiaries of Henry VIII and Edward VI's largesse were fireproof. The alienations had taken place under Veysey and not Coverdale. Therefore, the re-establishment of a Roman Catholic episcopate could not be accompanied by a resumption of lost lands as was attempted in a number of other sees.⁴⁰² Evidently some of the purchasers of episcopal estates were alive to the possibility that they might one day be deprived of their gains. In 1551 Sir Andrew Dudley, Richard Duke (who received the manors of Bishopsteignton, Radway and West Teignmouth from Dudley), Thomas Bridges and Sir William Herbert secured a judgement in the Court of King's Bench confirming them in their possessions.⁴⁰³ At the beginning of July 1553, shortly before Edward's death, the King's Bench verdict was officially acknowledged by the Exeter dean and chapter.⁴⁰⁴ Not that this deterred Thomas Reynolds from testing the validity of the common law judgement subsequent to the repeal of Pole's attainder. The new dean was later alleged to have 'pretended title to all such possessions of the said deanery as were granted, leased or conveyed' during the time of Heynes and Haddon's incumbencies.⁴⁰⁵ In theory this merely threatened the ninety-nine year lease of the manor of Braunton Dean which Heynes had made to his brother, Joseph, in 1550.⁴⁰⁶ But a favourable verdict would have inevitably cast doubt upon the probity of all other grants of episcopal and capitular property made between 1537 and 1553.

It is difficult to believe that Reynolds embarked upon so contentious a matter without Pole's support. The cardinal had a vested interest in the restoration of ecclesiastical finances. Indeed, financial recovery was to become the mainstay of his policy for the Marian Church.⁴⁰⁷ Moreover, Pole must have been aware of the act of repeal's implications. He himself chose not to re-enter upon the deanery. But in order to enable Reynolds to fill the office the

⁴⁰² G Alexander, 'Bishop Bonner and the Parliament of 1559', *HR*, 56 (1983), pp. 164-79.

⁴⁰³ ECA, D&C.3551, fos. 286-94.

⁴⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁵ HLRO, Original Acts, 27 Eliz I, no. 33.

⁴⁰⁶ ECA, D&C.3551, fo. 278.

⁴⁰⁷ R H Pogson, 'Revival and Reform in Mary Tudor's Church: a Question of Money', *JEH*, 25 (1974), pp. 249-65.

cardinal had to resign the dignity.⁴⁰⁸ At the least, therefore, Pole must have believed that Heynes and Haddon were intruders. It is also difficult to escape the conclusion that Reynolds and Turberville were appointed specifically to defend the Church's interests in the south-west. Both men held theological degrees; both were loyal and dependable Roman Catholics; both were comparative unknowns.⁴⁰⁹ These characteristics suited admirably the type of hierarchy that the cardinal was seeking to construct: one well able to withstand adversity and one also which would present a united front to the world.⁴¹⁰ It is clearly significant that both the deanery and bishopric of Exeter were filled shortly after Pole had established himself in the country. We know that the cardinal was very reluctant to accept the loss of the monastic lands.⁴¹¹ It may be, therefore, that he was prepared to adopt an aggressive stance when the chance of recovering other ecclesiastical properties arose. Reynolds and Turberville could be his local agents.⁴¹²

Needless to say, Pole's strategy was doomed to failure. The absence of any judicial record of Reynolds' suit suggests that the plan lacked widespread support and may not even have managed to get off the ground. Pole's case rested upon a hastily drafted act of parliament. (The bill repealing his attainder had been rushed through the Commons and Lords in the space of five days so as to become law by the time he reached London).⁴¹³ Moreover, Mary and her council could ill afford the opposition that this matter would provoke amongst leading members of the laity.⁴¹⁴ Nonetheless, an atmosphere of uncertainty persisted throughout the queen's reign regarding the act of repeal and the legality of Veysey and Heynes' alienations. Elizabeth's first parliament attempted to clear up the confusion by denying the retrospective efficacy of the 1554 legislation and by emphasising the validity of Pole's attainder up to the date of its repeal.⁴¹⁵ Even so, it needed

⁴⁰⁸ *CPR 1554-5*, p. 225.

⁴⁰⁹ Emden, *Biographical Register 1501-40*, pp. 479, 579. See also below, p. 55.

⁴¹⁰ R H Pogson, 'The Legacy of the Schism: Confusion, Continuity and Change in the Marian Clergy', in *The Mid-Tudor Polity 1540-1560*, eds. J Loach and R Tittler (1980), pp. 116-36, at pp. 123-7.

⁴¹¹ Heal, *Of Prelates and Princes*, pp. 155, 158.

⁴¹² Turberville was quick to assert his rights as bishop; he prosecuted John Eliot for denying him access to the manor house of Cuddenbeak (TNA, C.1/File 1478/60).

⁴¹³ Loades, *Reign of Mary Tudor*, p. 85.

⁴¹⁴ For the sensitivity of the elites on materialistic issues, see J Loach, 'Conservatism and Consent in Parliament, 1547-59', in *Mid-Tudor Polity*, eds. Loach and Tittler, pp. 9-28.

⁴¹⁵ J Strype, *Annals of the Reformation and Establishment of Religion* (4 vols., in 7, Oxford, 1824), I. ii. 456-7.

a private act of parliament, secured by Bishop Woolton in 1585, to put the issue finally beyond doubt.⁴¹⁶

Despite this reversal, the outlook for Turberville as bishop of Exeter was not all gloom. The Marian government did make some attempt to ease his financial situation. The valuable manor of Crediton was returned to the see in 1556.⁴¹⁷ This property had come to the crown by means of an exchange with its original recipient, Lord Darcy of Chiche.⁴¹⁸ However, in returning the manor to Exeter, Mary attached a number of strings. Crediton was to be treated as a fee farm of the crown and no bishop was to demise the lordship for a term longer than his life-time without royal licence.⁴¹⁹ This was clearly an attempt to prevent a repetition of Veysey's last years. Nor could bishops of Exeter hope to make much profit from the restored manor. Turberville and his successors were to pay the crown an annual rent of £146 which left a mere £3 8s 2d (£3.41) to go into the episcopal coffers each year.⁴²⁰ Only entry fines would make the return of Crediton worthwhile and their scope was lessened by the restrictions placed upon the bishop's freedom to lease.⁴²¹

Mary's guarded approach to helping Turberville also extended to giving him custody of the see's temporalities before he had been fully admitted to Exeter.⁴²² Thus although six months elapsed between Turberville's election and his consecration in September 1555, a delay presumably caused by the wish to secure a papal bull of provision, the bishop-elect was still able to enjoy the revenues from the see's estates which had accrued since the time of Veysey's death.⁴²³ Turberville was also allowed to present to livings in the diocese normally in the bishop's gift which had fallen vacant during this fallow period.⁴²⁴

The new bishop was obliged to work hard for these favours. For the first six months of his episcopate, Turberville stayed in London attending Mary's third

⁴¹⁶ HLRO, Original Acts, 27 Eliz I, no. 33.

⁴¹⁷ *CPR 1555-7*, p. 276.

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.* Darcy had also exchanged the manor of Morchard Bishop with the crown. Mary sold this property to George Syddenham of Cleeve in Somerset and Henry Becher, a London haberdasher in June 1554 (*CPR 1553-4*, pp. 334-5).

⁴¹⁹ *CPR 1555-7*, p. 276.

⁴²⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴²¹ The £40 annuity that Darcy had agreed to pay bishops of Exeter when he purchased Crediton and Morchard Bishop was annulled in 1557 (ECA, D&C.3551, fos. 303-4; see Table 3).

⁴²² *CPR 1554-5*, p. 13.

⁴²³ Emden, *Biographical Register 1501-40*, p. 579.

⁴²⁴ *CPR 1554-5*, p. 13.

parliament and Pole's legatine synod.⁴²⁵ Only when the synod was adjourned early in 1556 was the bishop allowed to make his entry into his diocese.⁴²⁶ He went armed with a commission whose membership included prominent local laymen, to repress 'heresies and false rumours' and almost immediately in March commenced a visitation of the south-west in the cardinal's name.⁴²⁷ The first step in Pole's plan for the economic recovery of the Marian Church was the gathering of information about its financial plight.⁴²⁸ Almost certainly this was the chief objective of Turberville's visitation. The condition of parish churches would need to be inquired after: was their fabric intact and did they have the necessary ornaments to perform catholic rituals? Then there was the vexed issue of impropriated livings, a subject very close to Pole's heart. Information was required on those clergy of the diocese subsisting upon meagre stipends. The following year Pole sent Turberville a detailed questionnaire seeking knowledge of the value of benefices, the names and numbers of parishes without resident priests, the wealth of parishioners and their capacity to help in restoration and the parishioners' opinions of the needs of their churches.⁴²⁹ On top of these directives, Turberville was responsible for the gathering of the clerical tenths of his diocese and their distribution to the pensioned ex-religious and chantrists and to the see's impoverished incumbents.⁴³⁰

No formal record has survived of Turberville's findings from his visitation and inquiries. But we can probably assume that the bishop's outburst to his dean and chapter that all was in ruin within his diocese represented his own appraisal of the situation.⁴³¹ Clearly the Edwardian commissioners for chantries and church goods had brought substantial disruption to religious life in the parishes of the south-west. Lands and liturgical gear had been confiscated by the authorities or concealed by the inhabitants.⁴³² In both cases fraud and incompetence threatened to frustrate attempts at recovery.⁴³³ Even the Exeter dean and chapter was still retrieving ornaments

⁴²⁵ LJ, i. 493-512; D Wilkins, *Concilia Magnae Britanniae et Hiberniae* (4 vols., 1737), iv. 131.

⁴²⁶ *Ibid.*, iv. 142.

⁴²⁷ *Ibid.*, iv. 140-2; DHC, Chanter 18, fo. 5v.

⁴²⁸ Pogson, 'Revival and Reform', *passim*.

⁴²⁹ Wilkins, *Concilia*, iv. 149-50.

⁴³⁰ Heal, 'Clerical Tax Collection', in *Continuity and Change*, eds. O'Day and Heal, p. 111.

⁴³¹ H Reynolds, *A Short History of the Ancient Diocese of Exeter* (Exeter, 1895), p. 187.

⁴³² H J Hanham, 'The Suppression of the Chantries in Ashburton', *RTDA*, 99 (1967), pp. 111-37.

⁴³³ TNA, C.3/113-88.

and vestments in 1556 that had once belonged to the cathedral.⁴³⁴ Equally depressing from Turberville's point of view was the problem of impropriated livings. The bishop is known to have taken a keen interest in the matter. He intervened to support the corporation of Totnes' plea to the crown as the impropriator to enhance the local vicar's stipend and recommended that the benefice should be served by a resident rector in receipt of both great and small tithes.⁴³⁵ At Broad Clyst Turberville commenced an action in the Court of Chancery when information on the leasing of the rectory proved inadequate.⁴³⁶

All this was done in the knowledge that Pole's relief measures were barely adequate. Until the ranks of the ex-religious and former chantry priests in receipt of pensions and annuities had been drastically thinned by death, only meagre surpluses from the clerical tenths of the diocese could be channelled back to needy incumbents.⁴³⁷ Pole subsequently released from the payment of tenths all benefices with less than twenty marks income and later still halved all taxation of a tenth on the clergy.⁴³⁸ But as the government gave with one hand, so it took with the other. Financial needs dictated that subsidies be levied on both cleric and layman alike, and though the poorest benefices were exempted from payment, the tax nonetheless represented an unwelcome burden at a time of disarray amongst the clergy of the diocese.⁴³⁹ Throughout the course of Mary's reign disease and deprivation ate away at the stock of resident priests. In the five years 1554-58, some 310 admissions to benefices were made at Exeter.⁴⁴⁰ Relatively few of these resulted from exchange or resignation. At the same time the Church in the south-west palpably failed to attract new blood. Coverdale had only managed to ordain ten individuals to the diaconate or priesthood during his episcopate.⁴⁴¹ The situation showed no sign of improvement under Mary. Veysey admitted three men to the diaconate and priesthood in 1554, whilst Turberville's own ordinations did not begin until March 1556/7 and came to a halt in September of the following year by which time a mere eleven individuals had been made deacon or priest.⁴⁴²

⁴³⁴ ECA, D&C.3552, fo. 75.

⁴³⁵ BL, Additional Charters 24705.

⁴³⁶ TNA, C.1/File 1478/61.

⁴³⁷ Heal, *Of Prelates and Princes*, p. 159.

⁴³⁸ Pogson, 'Revival and Reform', p. 261.

⁴³⁹ Heal, *Of Prelates and Princes*, p. 159.

⁴⁴⁰ DHC, Chanter 16, fos. 15-31v; Chanter 18, fos. 3-43v.

⁴⁴¹ DHC, Chanter 16, fos. 12v-13.

⁴⁴² Ibid., fos. 32v-3; Chanter 18, fos. 86-7v. However, in Lancashire, a bastion of conservatism, the numbers seeing ordination rose dramatically during Mary's reign

The significance of this shortfall in recruitment lay not in the danger which it posed to the successful re-establishment of Roman Catholicism in the south-west, but in the problem of religious apathy amongst the region's populace which it disclosed. Recent events, not least the crushing of the Prayer Book rebellion and the abolition of the chantries, had bred up a scepticism at the popular level.⁴⁴³ There was now open hostility towards things religious and for the first time anti-clericalism became a significant force in the diocese.⁴⁴⁴ It is a moot point whether Turberville was aware of the seriousness of this problem. He would, of course, be appreciated of the need to restore 'the beauty of holiness' of religious life, to bring back high altars, rood-lofts and images into the parish churches of his diocese. Yet he may have been deceived by the complaisance that was shown by parishioners in this respect, as he may also have been lulled into a false sense of security by the absence of protestant resistance in the south-west. At the outset of Mary's reign, the leading supporters of the Edwardian regime had fled abroad.⁴⁴⁵ Those who had been left behind had either gone into hiding or had conformed as a result of threats of imprisonment and persecution 'by the cruel justices' of the region.⁴⁴⁶ The diocese in fact produced only one martyr, and that the somewhat pathetic figure of Agnes Prest, whom Foxe himself described as a 'silly woman'.⁴⁴⁷

Doubtless the eagerness of the local magistrates to take the lead in rooting out heresy suited the 'gentle and courteous' Turberville whom even Hooker conceded was 'nothing cruel nor bloody' in his advocacy of Roman Catholicism⁴⁴⁸. Yet persecution was no substitute for spiritual fervour.⁴⁴⁹ The obedience that was shown to Turberville's rule lacked conviction.

(C Haigh, *Reformation and Resistance in Tudor Lancashire* (Cambridge, 1975), pp. 200-1).

⁴⁴³ The growth of popular scepticism is a major theme of Whiting, *Blind Devotion of the People*.

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 122-43. See also C Haigh, 'Anticlericalism and the English Reformation', *History*, 68 (1983), pp. 391-407, which argues that anticlericalism was the product and not the cause of the Reformation.

⁴⁴⁵ Garrett, *Marian Exiles*, *passim*. A large proportion of the refugees in Miss Garrett's register came from the south-west.

⁴⁴⁶ R Whiting, 'The Reformation in the South West (upto 1570)', Exeter PhD thesis (1977), p. 76.

⁴⁴⁷ J Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, eds. S R Cattley and G Townsend (8 vols., 1842-9), viii. 497-503.

⁴⁴⁸ Hooker, *A Catalog*, no. 45.

⁴⁴⁹ Half of those priests who were evicted in 1554 and who subsequently gained new benefices continued to consort with their former wives despite persecution by local justices (DHC, Chanter 16, fos. 15v-31v; Chanter 18, fos. 3-43; CCCC, Parker 97, fos. 156-83v; Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall*, p. 310).

Parishioners did restore the paraphernalia of catholic worship, but they did so begrudgingly.⁴⁵⁰ Gone was the enthusiasm for financing local religious life which had been so evident in the south-west on the eve of the break with Rome.⁴⁵¹ The Marian Church failed 'to perceive that changed circumstances had made necessary a new spirit and new methods'.⁴⁵² Pole was 'too confident of the lasting conservatism and traditional obedience of the English people' and 'based his hopes on a continuity which was no longer possible'.⁴⁵³ It might be argued in mitigation that a period of economic recovery was a necessary first step towards the attainment of a new spirit of allegiance. But this argument perhaps has more relevance to areas of the country like Lancashire or Essex where enthusiasm for the Marian regime was strong or where a substantial base of popular heresy existed which demanded a policy of repression from the government.⁴⁵⁴ In the south-west neither of these situations obtained. It was, therefore, less excusable that Turberville and his colleagues in the local ecclesiastical hierarchy should be so preoccupied with the affairs of church government. That they bore eloquent testimony to the potency of Pole's leadership.

It was earlier suggested that Turberville and Reynolds were cast in the mould which the cardinal had made for the Marian higher clergy.⁴⁵⁵ It was thus appropriate that they should also be local men. Turberville was the younger son of a Dorsetshire squire whose cousins lived in east Devon.⁴⁵⁶ Reynolds was born at Pinhoe just outside of Exeter.⁴⁵⁷ Both gained high preferment in the Church from a sheltered or specialist background. Turberville had progressed from a fellowship at New College Oxford to canonries in Chichester and Winchester Cathedrals.⁴⁵⁸ Reynolds, the warden of Merton College Oxford, held a number of preferments in the south-west including a prebend in Exeter Cathedral. At the very end of Mary's reign he was nominated to the see of Hereford.⁴⁵⁹ It was perhaps Turberville and Reynolds' lack of experience of ecclesiastical government coupled with (in Reynolds' case) an elitist outlook which made them especially vulnerable to

⁴⁵⁰ Whiting, *Blind Devotion of the People*, pp. 205-6.

⁴⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 155-67.

⁴⁵² R Houlbrooke, 'Mid-Tudor Polity', *JEH*, 32 (1981), pp. 503-8, at p. 506.

⁴⁵³ Pogson, 'Legacy of the Schism', p. 136.

⁴⁵⁴ Haigh, *Tudor Lancashire*, pp. 178-94; J Oxley, *The Reformation in Essex to the Death of Mary* (Manchester, 1965), pp. 179-237.

⁴⁵⁵ See above, p. 50.

⁴⁵⁶ Emden, *Biographical Register 1501-40*, p. 579; J L Vivian, *The Visitations of the County of Devon, comprising the Heralds' Visitations of 1531, 1564 and 1620* (Exeter, 1895), p. 740.

⁴⁵⁷ Emden, *Biographical Register 1501-40*, p. 479.

⁴⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 579.

⁴⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 479.

the pressure that a determined man like Pole could exert upon his local deputies.⁴⁶⁰ The sheer weight of the cardinal's demands deprived his suffragans in the south-west of the opportunity for independent initiative, whilst at the same time created amongst them an atmosphere of introspection regarding the administrative and personal problems which they were obliged to face.

In November 1556 Pole appointed Reynolds vice-chancellor of Oxford University.⁴⁶¹ The dean was most reluctant to accept, so he told his chapter, because the post would very likely incur him a financial loss and would also decay his 'little learning' through the need to deal with 'brabbling matters as daily will be occurrent there'.⁴⁶² Reynolds enlisted the support of Lord Chancellor Heath who promised to do the best he could, but it quickly became apparent that Pole, who held the chancellorship of the university, was not to be denied.⁴⁶³ Reynolds reported to the Exeter chapter that the cardinal had moved him three times earnestly to accept, and had warned him of the queen's annoyance should he persist in his defiance. 'I was driven to relent much to my grief, namely for that I was wholly bent with the assistance of the chapter to have framed our own church to better order'.⁴⁶⁴

Meanwhile, Pole had sent Reynolds' dispensation for non-residence to Turberville. Understandably, the Exeter chapter was upset by the cardinal's forcing tactics. It wrote back to Reynolds expressing 'no little grief and hindrance for the time considering the great and weighty affairs of this church which now out of hand requireth a speedy redress'.⁴⁶⁵ The canons implored their dean to get Turberville to write to Pole asking for Reynolds' discharge from the vice-chancellorship.⁴⁶⁶

Turberville seems to have turned a deaf ear to this request, for at the beginning of the following month, January 1556/7, Reynolds was obliged to renew his suit.⁴⁶⁷ But if Turberville was hoping to avoid involvement in the affair he was mistaken. At the end of January a new source of difficulty arose. Reynolds was now at odds with his chapter. The latter was claiming that the dean's dispensation for non-residence did not entitle him to the daily

⁴⁶⁰ See below for Reynolds' elitism.

⁴⁶¹ LPL, Reg Pole, fo. 22v.

⁴⁶² ECA, D&C.3552, fos. 77v-8v.

⁴⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, fo. 79.

⁴⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, fos. 79v-80v.

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, fo. 81.

⁴⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, fo. 82.

distribution of money which canons of Exeter received when in residence.⁴⁶⁸ (Presumably the chapter was anxious to save money at a time of financial hardship).⁴⁶⁹ Reynolds declined to agree and sought the advice of learned men in Oxford.⁴⁷⁰ This was the prelude to six months of argument. The chapter wrote letters to Turberville and Pole outlining its position. Examples from past time on the daily distributions in the dean's absence were culled from the chapter's register book alongside the correspondence of the dispute. By the early summer, Reynolds had obtained the backing of Henry Cole, the dean of St Paul's, and Turberville had been obliged to give a ruling on the matter.⁴⁷¹ Peace was only restored when Pole backed down and allowed Reynolds to be replaced as vice-chancellor of Oxford by Thomas White at the end of the year.⁴⁷²

Nonetheless, much valuable time had been wasted in a dispute which had only served to sour relations between the cardinal and his local agents. Pole had shown great insensitivity to local ecclesiastical opinion, whilst Reynolds and his colleagues had been unwilling to look much beyond the confines of their cathedral close. Only one item of positive good came out of the affair. Reynolds was able to find three preachers at Oxford suitable for the Lenten sermons planned by the Exeter canons in 1557.⁴⁷³ They were all local men. One was beneficed in the diocese. Another had lately been the master of the high school in Exeter.⁴⁷⁴ Able preachers were in short supply, though sermons were in fact being delivered in a number of country parishes in the south-west during Mary's reign.⁴⁷⁵ These were modest but important beginnings. Similar signs of hope were to be found in the condition of the diocesan clergy as a whole. Despite the difficulties facing the clerical profession in the south-west, the failure to attract recruits did not lead immediately to vacant benefices nor, perhaps, to a drastic decline in the standards of the ministry. The full impact of the shortfall in ordinands was to be felt in Elizabeth's reign. In the mid 1550s curates, ex-religious and chantry priests filled the gaps left by the deceased and the deprived whilst, importantly from the point of view of the future, 'new blood' incumbents were being recruited from the universities.⁴⁷⁶

⁴⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, fos. 86v-8.

⁴⁶⁹ See above, p. 33.

⁴⁷⁰ ECA, D&C.3552, fos. 86v-8.

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid.*, fos. 88v-120.

⁴⁷² LPL, Reg Pole, fo. 28v.

⁴⁷³ ECA, D&C.3552, fo. 82.

⁴⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷⁵ Whiting, *Blind Devotion of the People*, pp. 70-1.

⁴⁷⁶ See Figure 2. I hope to examine the issue of clerical recruitment in the south-west in detail elsewhere.

Nor were things quite as bad in the cathedral close as Reynolds and his chapter made out. With the departure of Coverdale and Haddon (and the deprivation of Carew and Pollard), the conservatives were once again in charge.⁴⁷⁷ They celebrated by resuming control over the capital peculiar jurisdiction, in the process ousting John Roche alias Bartlett from the officiality and restoring George Weaver.⁴⁷⁸ Earlier the canons had appointed James Bassett chief steward of their estates.⁴⁷⁹ Bassett was a Devonian. He was also Bishop Stephen Gardiner's trusted servant and the confidant of Edward Courtenay, the exiled earl of Devon.⁴⁸⁰ The former connection was the one that mattered. It symbolised the strong clerical base to the canons' conservatism. It also kept alive the ideals of 1549. Turberville and Gardiner were old acquaintances. (Gardiner had been Turberville's diocesan at Winchester).⁴⁸¹ Possibly the lord chancellor had played a part in Turberville's nomination for Exeter.

Meanwhile, the hand of lay friendship was extended to help the vicars-choral. Edmund Sture, the brother of Philip Sture who had taken a lease of the manor of Woodbury from the vicars during Edward VI's reign, granted the custos and college the use of some 250 acres of land in the suburbs of Exeter.⁴⁸² There was even cause for rejoicing amongst the officers of the episcopal administration. The business of the consistory court was recovering.⁴⁸³ The uncertainties of the age – political, social and economic as well as religious – were conducive to litigation as indeed they were to an enhanced trade in grants of probate and letters of administration. The money that these activities generated in fees made the wheels of diocesan government turn round. Indeed, Turberville himself would be a beneficiary.

Does this therefore mean that had the Marian regime enjoyed a longer life-span a more lasting revival of Roman Catholicism amongst the populace of the south-west might have been achieved? The eighty years of settled existence granted to the post-Reformation Church proved invaluable in enabling it to establish strong roots at the lowest levels of society and it is at least possible to imagine a Marian Church of similar antiquity enjoying similar deep-seated and widespread support. Pole's strategy only appears short-

⁴⁷⁷ DHC, Chanter 16, fo. 23v; ECA, D&C.3707, fo. 42.

⁴⁷⁸ ECA, D&C.3552, fo. 72; see above, pp. 31-2.

⁴⁷⁹ ECA, D&C.3551, fo. 298v.

⁴⁸⁰ Youings, 'South-Western Rebellion', p. 117.

⁴⁸¹ Emden, *Biographical Register 1501-40*, p. 579.

⁴⁸² See above, p. 33; Vivian, *Visitations of Devon*, p. 725; *CPR 1553-4*, p. 193.

⁴⁸³ DHC, Chanter 855, *passim*.

sighted because of the brevity of his period of power. Eighty years of Marianism might well have seen a change from restoration to revivalism even with the cardinal at the helm.

But the chief problem facing the Marian government was not one of time, nor perhaps ultimately one of policy. The real difficulty concerned the political legitimacy or credibility of the regime. One strong test of allegiance to a Church is the willingness of members of the laity to enter into its fold. We have seen that the number of ordinands at Exeter during the 1550s was meagre in the extreme.⁴⁸⁴ The 1540s had scarcely been much better. Yet immediately we cross into Elizabeth's reign we find substantial numbers of new recruits entering the Church. By the early 1570s, levels of entry were being achieved which matched those under Bishop Oldham.⁴⁸⁵

This willingness to join the Elizabethan Church had very little to do with religious commitment, though it probably reflected in some measure an improved economic climate. But of much greater consequence was the stability which Elizabeth's accession was felt to herald after a generation of reversals. A principal reason for the success of the last Tudor's reign, beyond her longevity, was the vest interest which so many had in that success. The break with Rome had greatly strengthened the fabric of the Tudor state. People now looked instinctively to the crown for leadership. Administratively, economically and politically, the realm was one. Protestantism helped cement that unity, binding centre and locality together in an ideology of loyalty and self-interest. As a result, Catholicism with its strong overtones of clericalism increasingly appeared as a foreign dispensation. This was why Mary's marriage with Philip of Spain, which from her point of view had much to commend it, was publicly so disastrous. The break with Rome had made England free and protestantism symbolised that freedom. Marianism was doomed to failure unless it could gain the moral high ground. It was difficult to see how this could be achieved even over a span of eighty years.

V

Mary died on 17 November 1558. The following day Turberville leased out the manor of Crediton to his nephew, Nicholas, for a term of twelve years.⁴⁸⁶ This was probably as much as the bishop could hope to do to benefit his

⁴⁸⁴ See above, p. 20.

⁴⁸⁵ DHC, Chanter 19, fos. 88-93; Chanter 20, fos. 37-46v; Chanter 50, unfold.

⁴⁸⁶ ECA, D&C.3552, fos. 135v-6.

family and to frustrate his protestant successor. In any event, Nicholas had already had cause to be grateful to his uncle. Turberville had appointed him collector of the clerical tenths and subsidies for the diocese, an office which afforded its occupant an excellent opportunity for profit.⁴⁸⁷ The leasing of Crediton was one of the bishop's last acts in the south-west. In January he travelled up to London to attend the first parliament of the new reign where he joined his fellow bishops in resisting the re-establishment of the royal supremacy and Protestantism.⁴⁸⁸ Refusing the oath of supremacy in May, Turberville was deprived from office on 18 August following.⁴⁸⁹ He was subsequently imprisoned in the Tower until September 1563, when he was placed in the custody of Grindal, the bishop of London.⁴⁹⁰ Early in 1565 the privy council discharged Turberville from Grindal's custody on the condition that he give bonds to remain in London and to present himself before Grindal whenever summoned.⁴⁹¹ In the event Turberville spent the last years of his life in rural surroundings on the manor of Gaulden at Tolland in Somerset.⁴⁹² He died towards the end of 1570, though administration of his estate was not granted until 1667.⁴⁹³

Barely six weeks after Turberville's deprivation, the agents of the new regime were hard at work in the south-west. Unease over the future had been apparent at Exeter since the beginning of 1559. With both Turberville and Reynolds absent in London (the latter was attending Convocation) and with their numbers thinned by death, the conservatives in the close were prepared to wait upon events.⁴⁹⁴ Leadership now devolved upon William Leveson, the cathedral chancellor, and John Blaxton.⁴⁹⁵ In an attempt to distance himself from the new regime, Blaxton relinquished his post of diocesan chancellor.⁴⁹⁶ He was replaced by George Verney.⁴⁹⁷ Possibly it was he who attempted to mount a visitation of the diocese at the end of March.⁴⁹⁸ This, however, was the final act of the outgoing administration.

⁴⁸⁷ ECA, D&C.3552, fos. 135v-6.

⁴⁸⁸ *LJ*, i. 544; N L Jones, *Faith by Statute: Parliament and the Settlement of Religion, 1559* (1982), *passim*.

⁴⁸⁹ TNA, SP.46/13/230.

⁴⁹⁰ E Chisholm Batten, 'Gaulden', *PSANHS*, 23 (1877), pp. 70-87, at p. 80; H P R Finberg, *West-Country Historical Studies* (Newton Abbot, 1969), p. 197, n. 3.

⁴⁹¹ *APC 1558-70*, p. 190.

⁴⁹² Batten, 'Gaulden', pp. 72-3.

⁴⁹³ G E Phillips, *The Extinction of the Ancient Hierarchy* (1905), p. 358; Finberg, *Historical Studies*, p. 197, n. 3.

⁴⁹⁴ *LJ*, i. 544; Wilkins, *Concilia*, iv. 150; ECA, D&C.3707, fos. 43v-4v.

⁴⁹⁵ See above, pp. 38, 47.

⁴⁹⁶ DHC, Chantter 18, fo. 45v.

⁴⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, fo. 407.

⁴⁹⁸ DHC, Chantter 18, fo. 45v.

Verney's tenure of office proved to be brief, cut short by the announcement of a royal visitation of the south-west. Preparations for this were well-advanced by the beginning of June.⁴⁹⁹ But although the local ecclesiastical authorities were inhibited from exercising their jurisdiction on the twenty-fourth of that month, it was not until late September that the visitors reached the diocese and established themselves at Exeter, choosing for their lodgings the dean's house in the cathedral close now empty by virtue of Reynolds' deprivation and imprisonment in London.⁵⁰⁰

The first session of the visitation was held in the Exeter chapter house.⁵⁰¹ Sir Peter Carew, Sir Arthur Champernowne, Sir John Chichester and Sir John St Leger, four leading Devonian protestants, represented the queen together with John Jewel, shortly to become bishop of Salisbury, and Henry Parry and William Lovelace, both of whom were lawyers.⁵⁰² Very probably William Alley was also in attendance to preach a sermon to the assembled congregation.⁵⁰³ The following year he would step into Turberville's shoes and his appointment as preacher to the visitors commissioned to tour the dioceses of Salisbury, Gloucester, Bristol, Wells and Exeter was no doubt made with an eye to his future potential as a bishop.⁵⁰⁴ The powers of the visitors were wide. Apart from obtaining subscriptions to the royal supremacy, the prayer book and injunctions, they were to grant probate of wills and letters of administration. They were also to deal with ecclesiastical causes arising in the diocese; to receive and process the presentments of churchwardens; to admit suitable candidates to vacant benefices; to examine the clergy's letters of ordination and institution and remove unsuitable incumbents; to licence preachers' to review the cases of persons imprisoned for matters of religion; and to restore those ministers deprived from their benefices by Mary.⁵⁰⁵

The formal record of the visitation has long since disappeared. But it is probable that greatest attention was given to administering the oath of supremacy to the clergy of the diocese and to resolving cases of disputed

⁴⁹⁹ H Gee, *The Elizabethan Clergy, 1558-1564* (1898), p. 44.

⁵⁰⁰ C G Bayne, 'The Visitation of the Province of Canterbury, 1559', *EHR*, 28 (1913), pp. 636-77, at p. 638; ECA, D&C.3552, fo. 137; W J Harte, *Gleanings from John Hooker's Commonplace Book* (Exeter, nd), pp. 15-16; Emden, *Biographical Register 1501-40*, p. 479.

⁵⁰¹ ECA, D&C.3552, fo. 137; Bayne, 'Province of Canterbury', p. 642.

⁵⁰² *Ibid.*

⁵⁰³ TNA, SP.12/4/34. See below, p. 70.

⁵⁰⁴ TNA, SP.12/4/34.

⁵⁰⁵ Gee, *Elizabethan Clergy*, pp. 45, 89-93.

possession of benefices arising from the Marian deprivations.⁵⁰⁶ The visitors made a circuit of the see stopping at Barnstaple, Bodmin and Totnes before returning to Exeter.⁵⁰⁷ At each of these centres the clergy and churchwardens of the corresponding archdeaconries appeared, the former bringing their letters of ordination and institution, the latter their presentments and inventories of church goods.⁵⁰⁸ The second session at Exeter was most probably devoted to the affairs of the cathedral: the corporation's statutes had to be exhibited and special injunctions were presented to the canons and minor clergy of the close.⁵⁰⁹ The burden of this work was undertaken by Jewel and Parry, though at each of the visitation centres they would have had the support of members of the local gentry who had been named as royal commissioners: Sir John Chichester and Sir John Pollard in north Devon, Sir Richard Edgecumbe and Reginald Mohun in Cornwall, Sir Arthur Champernowne in south Devon.⁵¹⁰

The royal visitors took a little under four weeks to complete their circuit of the diocese. By mid October they had departed the south-west though this was not in fact the end of the visitation.⁵¹¹ Sub-commissioners had been appointed to oversee the despatch of unfinished administrative and judicial business. Sir John Chichester was one of these, as were the mayors of Exeter and Bodmin.⁵¹² They were, for example, to ensure that John Dagle, the vicar of Bodmin, made a recantation.⁵¹³ Chichester was issued with 'certain blank licences' with which to license preachers. The deputies may also have observed that penances imposed by the visitors were properly performed.⁵¹⁴ Matters arising from the royal visitation were still being dealt with in mid-December when Jewel, Mohun and James Lord Mountjoy wrote to the canons of Exeter commanding them to take certain order with regard to cathedral services.⁵¹⁵ However, within a week of this letter being sent, the writ terminating the commissioners' authority was issued and Jewel and his

⁵⁰⁶ At least twenty-three clerics who lost their livings in 1554 because they were married are known to have regained their parishes (DHC, Chanter 16, fos. 15v-31v; Chanter 18, fo. 45v; CCCC, Parker 97, fos. 156-83v; Bayne, 'Province of Canterbury', p. 665).

⁵⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 638.

⁵⁰⁸ Gee, *Elizabethan Clergy*, p. 76.

⁵⁰⁹ ECA, D&C.3552, fos. 137-42v.

⁵¹⁰ *Ibid.*, fo. 142v; Bayne, 'Province of Canterbury', p. 669; TNA, SP.12/4/34.

⁵¹¹ Bayne, 'Province of Canterbury', pp. 642-3.

⁵¹² *Ibid.*, p. 642.

⁵¹³ See below, p. 63.

⁵¹⁴ Bayne, 'Province of Canterbury', pp. 642-3.

⁵¹⁵ ECA, D&C.3552, fos. 145v-6.

colleagues were obliged to yield up their records to the Court of High Commission.⁵¹⁶

The purpose of the royal visitation was not to conduct a wholesale purge of Romanist elements in the Church.⁵¹⁷ In the first place this was impracticable given the problem of clerical recruitment.⁵¹⁸ In the second it ran counter to the government's aim of securing a smooth transition from Marian catholicism to Elizabethan protestantism: the fewer the martyrs the better, especially amongst the higher clergy. The 1559 visitation was thus in large measure an exercise in public relations. It sought to announce to the localities the change in religious policy embodied in recent parliamentary legislation and it sought to emphasise the government's firm grasp upon events. The sermons which Alley preached at each visitation centre greatly furthered these objectives by explaining what had happened and by enjoining obedience upon the populace. Evidence from other dioceses visited in 1559 suggests that every opportunity was afforded members of the clergy who showed a reluctance to subscribe to the royal supremacy and the prayer book to think again.⁵¹⁹ Deprivation seems seldom to have been employed by the royal visitors.⁵²⁰ Determined resistance to subscription was more likely to lead to a summons to attend the Court of High Commission in London and to the sequestration of the offenders' benefices in the interim.⁵²¹

This kid-glove approach seems to have worked well enough in the parishes of the south-west. We have evidence of only one major incident of opposition to the new regime. This came from John Dagle who had gone out of his way to antagonise the royal visitors by publicly denouncing the religious settlement. However, once Dagle had been made aware of the commissioner's resolve, his resistance quickly crumbled. He recanted not only in his home parish of Bodmin, but also in a number of neighbouring churches.⁵²² This was all good propaganda for the new regime. Dagle continued undisturbed in his benefice until his death in 1565.⁵²³

But it was a different story in the cathedral close. There the canons conducted a last ditch stand, taking advantage of the government's

⁵¹⁶ Bayne, 'Province of Canterbury', p. 657.

⁵¹⁷ Gee, *Elizabethan Clergy*, p. 249.

⁵¹⁸ See above, p. 53.

⁵¹⁹ Gee, *Elizabethan Clergy*, pp. 71-136.

⁵²⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 142; Bayne, 'Province of Canterbury', p. 657.

⁵²² *Ibid.*

⁵²³ DHC, Chanter 19, fo. 8v.

conciliatory approach to conservatism. They were greatly helped in this by the excessive zeal that was shown by the royal visitors and some local protestants. At the outset of the visitation the commissioners moved to pull down and burn 'all images of idolatry' which had been erected in the Exeter city churches during Mary's reign.⁵²⁴ This was not part of Jewel's brief. Nor was the forcing of some of the Marian die-hards including (one suspects) the canons to build a bonfire in the cathedral churchyard to consume the offending objects.⁵²⁵ The government was quick to repudiate the visitors' actions.⁵²⁶ But the damage had already been done. To a man the canons boycotted the royal visitation, refusing either to disclose information about the cathedral's affairs or to receive a copy of the queen's injunctions.⁵²⁷

The chapter continued in its tetchy ways after the visitors had departed. At the beginning of December a number of zealous worshippers, some of them strangers, others local citizens, insisted on joining in the early morning cathedral service (which had been instigated by the royal injunctions) by singing psalms. The canons, regarding the practice as an infringement of the order laid down by the commissioners and finding that it disturbed the service, attempted to stop it. Thereupon a complaint was made to London, and three of the visitors, Jewel, Mountjoy and Mohun, wrote to the chapter rebuking it for restraining the godly zeal of the people of Exeter and commanding it at once to permit the singing of psalms to continue. A week later the Court of High Commission sent a second letter to the canons supporting the order of Jewel and his companions. To the letter of the visitors the chapter replied that the singing of psalms had been forbidden because it was not authorised by the new prayer book and was therefore a contravention of the act of uniformity.⁵²⁸

The outcome of this dispute is not known. In any event the issue was quickly overtaken by the gathering pace of religious change. The canons' strict regard for the letter of the law could only delay, not prevent, the advance of protestantism at Exeter. Already on 16 November responsibility for the spiritualities of the see had been transferred from the royal visitors to the dean and chapter of Canterbury, the guardians of the archdiocese during its vacancy.⁵²⁹ On 17 December Matthew Parker was consecrated archbishop, and on the twenty-second of the following month he appointed

⁵²⁴ Harte, *Gleanings*, pp. 15-16.

⁵²⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵²⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵²⁷ ECA, D&C.3552, fo. 142.

⁵²⁸ Bayne, 'Province of Canterbury', p. 643.

⁵²⁹ *Sede Vacante Institutions*, ed. Woodruff, p. 5.

George Carew and Robert Fisher *sede vacante* commissioners for Exeter.⁵³⁰ The choice of Carew and Fisher to administer the affairs of the see until a bishop had been appointed was consistent with the careful approach to change adopted by the government. Both were religious moderates having served in the Edward and Marian Churches.⁵³¹ However, their selection was not just aimed at preparing the ground for the establishment of a more progressive ecclesiastical hierarchy in the south-west.

The opening months of 1560 saw a change of emphasis in the formation of the early Elizabethan Church at Exeter. In the autumn of the preceding year 'radical' court patrons (among them the earl of Bedford) had canvassed the appointment of zealous divines (usually returned exiles) to the highest ecclesiastical offices in the land.⁵³² But not all of these clerics had felt able to accept the preferment that was offered them.⁵³³ The Elizabethan Church remained for them an imperfect (if perfectible) creation. Miles Coverdale was one of these recusants. It seems likely that Bedford had wanted him to return to Exeter.⁵³⁴ The reformer's refusal at the end of 1559 was thus a setback for the earl. Probably it was he or one of his 'radical' colleagues who secured the nomination of Gregory Dodds to the Exeter deanery in mid-December and the admission of Richard Tremayne to the cathedral treasurership the following month.⁵³⁵ But this achievement was much less impressive as a result of Coverdale's defection. The bishopric was the key office. It alone would offset the numerical inferiority of the radicals in the cathedral close. In the event the job went to William Alley, who though a client of Bedford also enjoyed the queen's favour.⁵³⁶ This made Alley less dependable as an ally of Dodds and Tremayne. As if to underline the point, he subsequently deprived one of Bedford's nominees from office.⁵³⁷

The withdrawal of Coverdale and his replacement by a less zealous divine seems to have encouraged the government to re-think its strategy concerning the Exeter chapter. Clearly something would have to be done about the conservatives. Yet it was not easy to prise them out of office. At

⁵³⁰ *Ibid.*; *Registrum Matthei Parker Diocesis Cantuariensis 1559-1575*, ed. W H Frere (Canterbury and York Society, 35, 36, 39, 1928-33), i. 214.

⁵³¹ Emden, *Biographical Register 1501-40*, pp. 101-3, 225.

⁵³² J A Vage, 'Two Lists of Prospective Bishops, 1559', *JSA*, 8 (1987), pp. 184-90, at p. 195.

⁵³³ *Ibid.*, p. 196.

⁵³⁴ See below, p. 70.

⁵³⁵ *Registrum Parker*, ed. Frere, i. 214; DHC, Chanter 19, fo. 19v. For Tremayne's connection with Bedford, see below, p. .

⁵³⁶ See below, p. 70.

⁵³⁷ See below, p. 73.

the end of 1559 (prior to the arrival of Dodds and Tremayne), there were just six canons residing at Exeter.⁵³⁸ Of these only George Carew could be described as favourably disposed towards the Elizabethan regime. By the following Easter, three of the five conservatives had departed. One, John Stephens, had died; two others, Blaxton and Walter Mugge, had been deprived by the High Commissioners.⁵³⁹ But this still left Leveson and Richard Gammon. The latter was not removed until 1569, whilst Veysey's nephew continued in office until his death in 1583.⁵⁴⁰ Clearly Leveson and Gammon had compromised themselves in order to remain in office. But this did not mean that they were any less sincere in their beliefs than Blaxton or Mugge. The preceding spring Gammon had been forced to recant 'certain of articles of popery' that he had preached.⁵⁴¹ Leveson, meanwhile, was a source of trouble for the government at Hereford where he served as cathedral treasurer.⁵⁴² Many of the Exeter conservatives had professional or personal ties with that see.⁵⁴³ Blaxton and Mugge were no exception. They retired there after their deprivations.⁵⁴⁴ Leveson sheltered them from the agents of the crown. He himself created a stir by refusing to read a homily or to make an open protestation of the new faith.⁵⁴⁵

The 'church popery' of Leveson and Gammon justified (if it did not create) the changed stance of the government towards the Exeter chapter. With only eight of nine canons now able to reside in the cathedral close at any one time and with the arrival of Dodds and Tremayne upon the scene, the likelihood of major disturbances arising amongst the residentiaries was strong.⁵⁴⁶ Conciliation was needed. Alley could help here. But he would need the support of Carew. The idea of using the elder statesman of the cathedral close to head a 'centre party' of canons was a novel if natural extension of the role that Carew had already begun to play at Exeter even before his appointment as a *sede vacante* commissioner. The troubles which arose over Dodds' nomination to the Exeter deanery enabled Carew to demonstrate his skills as a mediator and reconciler. At the beginning of January the conservatives had found two weaknesses in Dodds' position.

⁵³⁸ ECA, D&C.3707, fo. 44v.

⁵³⁹ *Ibid.*, fo 45; TNA, SP.15/11/45.

⁵⁴⁰ DHC, Chanter 19, fo. 28v; Chanter 21, fo. 8.

⁵⁴¹ Harte, *Gleanings*, p. 16. Surprisingly, in the light of this, it was the royal visitors who granted Gammon his place of residence in the chapter (ECA, D&C.3552, fo. 142).

⁵⁴² Emden, *Biographical Register 1501-40*, pp. 356-7.

⁵⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 57, 401.

⁵⁴⁴ TNA, SP.15/11/45.

⁵⁴⁵ Rose-Troup, *Western Rebellion*, p. 178, n. 1.

⁵⁴⁶ See above, p. 34.

Before they could proceed to elect him, an episcopal licence was required to authorise the election and Dodds needed to be admitted to a canonry.⁵⁴⁷ Carew was entrusted with the task of explaining these matters to Dodds.⁵⁴⁸ The latter thereupon resorted to Archbishop Parker for the licence, whilst Carew himself dealt with Lord keeper Bacon to ensure that Dodds was presented to a vacant canonry in time for the election.⁵⁴⁹ A potentially difficult situation (which could easily have fuelled the fires of religious rivalry) was thus speedily resolved. Already in a position of trust with the conservatives, Carew now became Dodds' 'singular good friend'.⁵⁵⁰

It was at this time that Carew gained wider recognition by being appointed to the deaneries of Windsor and the Chapel Royal.⁵⁵¹ Meanwhile, in the spring of 1560, not long after the removal of Blaxton and Mugge, Carew once more resorted to Lord Keeper Bacon. He returned with canonries for Robert Fisher and William Marwood, his chaplain.⁵⁵² The places of residence in the cathedral close which they subsequently gained were most probably also attributable to Carew's influence.⁵⁵³ When Alley took over the reins of government at the end of June he lent his support to Carew's initiative by collating two further moderates, John Smith (his diocesan chancellor) and Edward Ryley, to cathedral canonries.⁵⁵⁴ Again, they almost certainly owed their places of residence in the close to Carew's good offices.⁵⁵⁵

The arrival of Smith and Ryley set the seal upon the character of the early Elizabethan chapter at Exeter. For over twenty years politiques dominated capitular affairs. In the 1570s they became more firmly ensconced as a result of the appointment of the mild William Bradbridge to succeed Alley and Carew's capture of the deanery following Dodds' death in 1570.⁵⁵⁶ Throughout the whole of this period the politiques performed well their task of damping down the fires of factional rivalry. Indeed, they could be quite ruthless where trouble-makers were concerned as Gammon discovered to his cost in 1569. Gammon had deliberately gone out of his way to antagonise Dodds to the point at which the dean had him arraigned before the High

⁵⁴⁷ ECA, D&C.3552, fo. 149v.

⁵⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, fos. 150, 152.

⁵⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, fo. 162; BL, Lansdowne 443, p. 5.

⁵⁵⁰ ECA, D&C.3552, fo. 162.

⁵⁵¹ Emden, *Biographical Register 1501-40*, p. 103; ECA, D&C.3552, fo. 149v.

⁵⁵² BL, Lansdowns 443, pp. 8, 10; ECA, D&C.3552, fo. 162.

⁵⁵³ ECA, D&C.3707, fos. 45v-6.

⁵⁵⁴ DHC, Chanter 18, fo. 71v.

⁵⁵⁵ ECA, D&C.3707, fos. 45v-6.

⁵⁵⁶ *Registrum Parker*, ed. Frere, i. 322. See also below, pp. 78-90.

Commissioners on a charge of incontinence and fraud.⁵⁵⁷ Despite the trumped-up nature of the accusation (Alley refused to have anything to do with it) and despite Gammon's emotive plea that Dodds had removed him from the officiality of the capitular peculiar jurisdiction without the consent of the chapter, it was Gammon who found himself friendless and evicted from his canonry.⁵⁵⁸ Similarly, when Richard Tremayne took umbrage over his failure to gain the see of Exeter upon Alley's death, he was obliged to develop his enmity against Bradbridge outside the cathedral close.⁵⁵⁹

The rule of the politiques ended in the early 1580s with the deaths of Carew, Fisher, Marwood and Leveson.⁵⁶⁰ Leveson's demise was perhaps the most significant, because the *raison d'être* for a 'middle group' in the Exeter chapter was now removed. The politiques had performed a most useful service. They had held the fort in the south-west, giving stability to the local ecclesiastical hierarchy whilst the Elizabethan Church struck roots. The politiques were only conformists in a simple, pragmatic sense. They did not in any direct fashion pave the way for the intellectual defence of the 1559 religious settlement that emerged in the second half of Elizabeth's reign. This was a wholly separate development which will be chronicled in the next chapter. What Carew and his colleagues did do was to act as a buffer to the pretension of zeal. Historians now see protestantism as very inadequately established in the localities of the realm in 1560. By contrast, conservatism and scepticism were strongly entrenched.⁵⁶¹ Under these circumstances, the religious settlement could have been lost sight of altogether with zeal capturing the Elizabethan Church in a bid to counter the forces of popery. That this did not happen in the south-west was due to the politiques. True conformists like Alley needed the support of men of Carew's outlook to enable them to retain their independence not only of zeal, but also of the cold-statute protestantism which the politiques so well exemplified.

⁵⁵⁷ ECA, D&C.4539/7, 14, 15.

⁵⁵⁸ ECA, D&C.4539/5, 13; DHC, Chanter 19, fo. 28v.

⁵⁵⁹ See below, pp. 85-5.

⁵⁶⁰ ECA, D&C.3707, fos. 54, 55v-6.

⁵⁶¹ eg C Haigh, 'The Church of England, the Catholics and the People', in *The Reign of Elizabeth I*, ed. C Haigh (1984), pp. 195-219, at p. 196.

Chapter 3: The Bishops of Exeter 1560-1641

William Alley (1560-70)

Alley was born at High Wycombe in Buckinghamshire in about 1510.⁵⁶² His parents were probably well-to-do: certainly a namesake served as mayor of the borough in the early years of the sixteenth century.⁵⁶³ Educated at Eton and King's College Cambridge, Alley was ordained deacon in 1534 by which time he had probably fallen under the influence of Simon Heynes, the radical president of Queens' and vice-chancellor of the university.⁵⁶⁴ When Heynes was made dean of Exeter in 1537 he took Alley with him to strengthen the ranks of west country protestantism.⁵⁶⁵ It was not long before Alley had established a reputation as 'an earnest preacher' and 'inveigh[er] against false doctrine'.⁵⁶⁶ Under Edward VI he joined the zealous group of protestants centred upon the north Devon market town of South Molton.⁵⁶⁷ Through them he gained a number of benefices and came into contact with two important members of the Devon gentry class: Sir Peter Carew and Sir John Chichester.⁵⁶⁸ They in turn helped prepare the ground for Alley's swift rise to national prominence in the aftermath of Elizabeth's accession.

During the Marian reaction Alley did not flee abroad. Instead, having been removed from his benefices, 'he travelled from place to place in the north country, where he was not known' eking out a meagre living for himself and his family by practising physic and teaching scholars.⁵⁶⁹ Within eight months

⁵⁶² A B Emden, *A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford AD1501 to 1540* (Oxford, 1974), p. 6; G Oliver, *Lives of the Bishops of Exeter and a History of the Cathedral* (Exeter, 1861), p. 139; *Al Cant*, i. 21.

⁵⁶³ *The Courts of the Archdeaconry of Buckingham, 1483-1523*, ed. E M Elvey (Buckinghamshire Record Society, 19, 1975), pp. 54-5, 200, 204; *The First Ledger Book of High Wycombe*, ed. R W Greaves (Buckinghamshire Record Society, 2, 1956), pp. 55, 57-8, 64-5. It would not be surprising if Alley had a Lollard background given Lollardy's strength in the Chilterns at the turn of the sixteenth century (J A F Thomson, *The Later Lollards, 1414-1520* (Oxford, 1965), pp. 53-94).

⁵⁶⁴ Emden, *Biographical Register 1501-40*, p. 6; LA, Reg. XXVII, fo. 39; *Al Cant*, ii. 341.

⁵⁶⁵ Oliver, *Lives of Bishops of Exeter*, p. 276; TNA, E.344/19.15, *sub* Barnstaple deanery.

⁵⁶⁶ J Maclean, *The Life and Times of Sir Peter Carew* (London, 1857), p. 111.

⁵⁶⁷ BL, Lansdowne 377, fos. 8v-28.

⁵⁶⁸ TNA, E.334/4, fo. 21; C W Foster, 'Institutions to Benefices in the Diocese of Lincoln, 1540-1570', *AASRP*, 24 (1898), p. 21; Maclean, *Life of Carew*, p. 112; BL, Lansdowne 377, fo. 26.

⁵⁶⁹ DHC, Chapter 16, fo. 17v; C W Foster, 'Institutions to Benefices in the Diocese of Lincoln in the Sixteenth Century', *Lincolnshire Notes and Queries*, 5 (1898-8), p.

of Mary's death, however, Alley's name was being linked to a bishopric.⁵⁷⁰ At the same time he was appointed preacher for the royal visitation of the south-west.⁵⁷¹ On 1 January 1560 Alley was collated to a canonry in St Paul's Cathedral and to the prebend of St Pancras.⁵⁷² On 2 April, as 'bishop-designate' of Exeter he preached at court against blasphemy, dice, immorality and drunkenness.⁵⁷³ Within the month the royal *conge d'elire* had been issued.⁵⁷⁴

Alley's rise to the top was not quite as straightforward as this suggests. His patron was in all probability Francis Russell, the second earl of Bedford, the 'mainstay' of the continuing Reformation in the south-west.⁵⁷⁵ Carew and Chichester were the earl's lieutenants.⁵⁷⁶ Alley later referred to Bedford's 'munificent liberality', being 'most addict and tied with the bonds of singular and great benefits flowing from [him]'.⁵⁷⁷ The bishop's one published work, *The Poore Man's Librarie*, was dedicated 'to his singular good lord, Lord Russell'.⁵⁷⁸ However, Bedford's initial aim seems to have been to restore Miles Coverdale, the Edwardian bishop of Exeter, to the see.⁵⁷⁹ Alley would have one of the new foundations, Bristol or Gloucester perhaps.⁵⁸⁰ But Coverdale ruined these plans by rejecting episcopal office.⁵⁸¹ Alley was thus thrust forward into the limelight: his canonry at St Paul's came within a month of Coverdale's refusal. By now the divine may well have been enjoying the support of less forward elements at court. Certainly he soon

205; F Blomefield and C Parkin, *An Essay Towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*, 11 vols. (1805-10), viii. 63; J Vowell alias Hooker, *A Catalog of the Bishops of Exeter* (London, 1584), no. 46.

⁵⁷⁰ TNA, SP.12/4/39.

⁵⁷¹ C G Bayne, 'The Visitation of the Province of Canterbury, 1559', *EHR*, 28 (1913), p. 645.

⁵⁷² John le Neve, *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1541-1857: I, St Paul's, London*, comp. J M Horn (1969), p. 50.

⁵⁷³ *The Diary of Henry Machyn, Citizen and Merchant of London from AD1500 to AD1563*, ed. J G Nichols (Camden Society, 1848), p. 230.

⁵⁷⁴ *Registrum Matthei Parker Diocesis Cantuariensis 1559-1575*, ed. W H Frere (Canterbury and York Society, 35, 36, 39, 1928-33), i. 96.

⁵⁷⁵ P Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (1967), p. 52.

⁵⁷⁶ TNA, SP.12/6/17.

⁵⁷⁷ W Alley, *The Poore Man's Librarie. Rapsodie G A Byshop of Exester upon the First Epistle of S Peter, read publickely in the Cathedrall Church of Saint Paule, within the Citiie of London 1560[1]* (2nd edn., 1571), sig. Aiii.

⁵⁷⁸ Idem, *The Poore Man's Librarie, Rapsodie G A Bishop of Exeter upon the First Epistle of Saint Peter, red publiquely in the Cathedrall Church of Saint Paule, within the Citye of London 1560[1]*, epistle dedicatory.

⁵⁷⁹ TNA, SP.12/11/12; J A Vage, 'Two Lists of Prospective Bishops, 1559', *JSA*, 8 (1987), p. 195.

⁵⁸⁰ TNA, SP.12/4/39; SP.12/4/34.

⁵⁸¹ Vage, 'Two Lists', p. 196.

became popular with the queen. Every New Year, throughout his episcopate, he received a silver cup as a mark of royal favour.⁵⁸²

Alley's skill as a preacher was probably responsible for bringing him to the queen's attention. The bishop was, as one observer noted, a 'jolly' or witty orator.⁵⁸³ Not surprisingly, Alley's services were much sought after. In the summer of 1560, prior to his departure for Exeter, the bishop delivered a number of funeral sermons for prominent London citizens.⁵⁸⁴ In the opening months of 1561 Alley again preached at court and followed this with a course of lectures in St Paul's Cathedral on the first epistle of St Peter, which was subsequently published in *The Poore Man's Librarie*.⁵⁸⁵ This work, which contains the bishop's only extant sermons, was designed 'for such...that have no great store either of books or of money'.⁵⁸⁶ There were twelve lectures in all, each appended by detailed miscellanea or annotations. The first seven discourses, which form volume one of the book, deal with 'the nature and value of scripture and the Church'; the concluding five, volume two, examine the first epistle of St Peter itself noting '...to whom it was written, who wrote it, ...[and] what is written'.⁵⁸⁷

The Poore Man's Librarie is undoubtedly a work of erudition. Its author makes extensive use of patristic sources to buttress his arguments.⁵⁸⁸ The sermons in fact confirm what John Hooker, the Exeter city chamberlain, said of Alley.

He was very well-learned universally, but his chief study and profession was in divinity and in the tongues...[As bishop of Exeter] upon every holy day for the most part he preached, and upon the weekdays he would and did read a lecture of divinity, the residue of his time...he spent in his private studies, and wrote sundry books...He was well-stored, and his library well-replenished with all the best sort of writers, which most gladly he would impart and make open to every good scholar and student, whose company and conference he did most desire and embrace.⁵⁸⁹

⁵⁸² R Izaacke, *Antiquities of the City of Exeter* (1677), p. 129.

⁵⁸³ BL, Cottonian Titus B.II, fo. 434.

⁵⁸⁴ *Diary of Machyn*, ed. Nicholls, pp. 237, 240-1.

⁵⁸⁵ J Strype, *Annals of the Reformation and Establishment of Religion* (4 vols. In 7, Oxford, 1824), I. i. 407.

⁵⁸⁶ *Poore Man's Librarie* (1565), i. fo. 137. Copies of the work found their way into parish chests in the south-west (CRO, Glebe Terriers 2/110; P/5/1(A), p. 47).

⁵⁸⁷ *Poore Man's Librarie* (1565), i. fo. 19v; ii. fo. 1.

⁵⁸⁸ *Ibid.* (1571), *passim*. All subsequent references to *Poore Man's Librarie* will be to this edn.

⁵⁸⁹ Hooker, *A Catalog*, no. 46.

In fact Alley was not, despite his welcome at court, a particularly polished individual. On the contrary, '[h]e seemed to the first appearance to be a rough and an austere man' though 'in very truth' he was courteous, gentle and affable.⁵⁹⁰ The bishop was also 'somewhat credulous, and of hasty belief, and of light credit, which he did oftentimes mislike and blame in himself'.⁵⁹¹ These characteristics go a great deal of the way towards explaining the style and tone of Alley's utterances: plain-speaking buttressed by genuine sincerity and warmth. In other words, the bishop's bark was worse than his bite.

This places Alley's arguments in a different light from what we might normally expect from someone who showed all the signs of being an ardent conformist. 'There is no discipline better to a wise, grave and christian man...than to do after that manner, as he shall see that Church to do to the which he shall happen to come'.⁵⁹² This advice, tendered 'to quiet and peaceable wits', was evidently aimed at protestant critics of the Elizabethan settlement.⁵⁹³ Indeed, *The Poore Man's Librarie* is especially noteworthy for its willingness to recognise at an early date that the post-Reformation Church was vulnerable to protestant as well as catholic sniping.⁵⁹⁴ This issue was dealt with at length in the seventh sermon. Here Alley sought to repudiate the papist claim that 'anglicans' were schismatics. The bishop's solution was to maintain that the break with Rome constituted a justifiable act of schism. There were three 'notes' or marks of a true Church: pure and sound doctrine; the sacraments administered according to Christ's holy institution; and the right use of ecclesiastical discipline. The Church of Rome failed on all three counts. It was therefore legitimate to secede and to establish one's own Church.⁵⁹⁵

But, as Alley appreciated, these criteria begged questions. What was pure doctrine? What was the correct administration of the sacraments? What was the right use of ecclesiastical discipline? Rome might be in the wrong; but so, too, might the Church of England in the eyes of certain 'fantastical men'.⁵⁹⁶ Alley, therefore, took time out to detail the 'causes wherefore

⁵⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹² *Poore Man's Librarie*, i. fo. 185.

⁵⁹³ *Ibid.*, i. fo. 185v.

⁵⁹⁴ Compare John Jewell's *Apology of the Church of England* (1562) which 'erected all its defences on one flank only and allowed not so much as a suspicion that the English church settlement could be threatened from a protestant quarter' (Collinson, *Puritan Movement*, p. 61).

⁵⁹⁵ *Poore Man's Librarie*, i. fo. 179v-88.

⁵⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, i. fo. 183v.

schism ought not to be made'.⁵⁹⁷ The bishop focussed upon four areas of current controversy. Schism was not to arise for diversity of sincere doctrine. Nor was it to be invoked for the disordered lives of ministers, the diversity of rites and ceremonies, nor 'for them which do not worthily communicate the Lord's Supper'.⁵⁹⁸ These arguments were aimed at the anabaptists and their fellow-travellers, those 'which these many years have not...communicate[d] with any Church' because 'in all things and persons they find some want'.⁵⁹⁹ Yet Alley had a vested interest in minimizing the extent of the divisions in the ranks of domestic protestantism. He wanted the Elizabethan Church to be a success. He could not allow the papists to believe that 'anglicanism' was less strong than he wished it to be. Away from the glare of publicity afforded by Paul's Cross, the bishop might be more open.

This was certainly the case in a paper on doctrine and discipline which Alley delivered to the 1563 Convocation.⁶⁰⁰ Noticeably the shortcomings of Rome received scant attention. Instead the bishop focused upon two incidents from his own diocese involving protestant preachers whom Alley himself described as 'godly affected'.⁶⁰¹ The former concerned a dispute between rival divines and their supporters over that old chestnut of theological controversy: the descent of Christ's soul into Hell. One side based its case upon 'Erasmus and the Germans, and especially upon the authority of Mr Calvin and Mr Bullinger'.⁶⁰² Their opponents, meanwhile, drew upon 'all the fathers of both Churches, both of the Greeks and the Latins'.⁶⁰³ The second incident involved a preacher who 'not of the basest sort nor estimation...did glory and boast that he [had] made eight sermons in London against surplices, rochets, tippets, and caps, counting them not to be perfect that do wear them'.⁶⁰⁴ This may well have been John Huntingdon, Bedford's chaplain and a Marian exile, whom the earl had put into several livings in the southwest including a prebend in Exeter Cathedral from which he had been deprived by Alley in 1561.⁶⁰⁵

⁵⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, i. fo. 183v-5v.

⁵⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, fo. 183v.

⁶⁰⁰ Strype, *Annals*, I. i. 518-22.

⁶⁰¹ *Ibid.*, I. i. 519.

⁶⁰² *Ibid.*

⁶⁰³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, I. i. 520.

⁶⁰⁵ HMC *Report on the Records of the City of Exeter* (1916), p. 41; C H Garrett, *The Marian Exiles: a Study in the Origins of English Puritanism* (Cambridge, 1938), p. 194; *AI Ox*, ii. 773; DHC, Chanter 18, fos. 69, 72v; *Registrum Parker*, ed. Frere, i. 218; BL, Lansdowne 443(ii), p. 10; DHC, Chanter 18, fo. 73.

Alley's purpose in writing his paper was to provoke the Upper House of Convocation into firm action over what he felt to be a deteriorating religious situation. The first incident was used to buttress the bishop's plea for 'one kind of [sincere] doctrine' to be expounded both 'in matters contained in holy scriptures' and 'in matters ecclesiastical which be adiaphorous'.⁶⁰⁶ The second episode sought to underscore the proposition that 'we, being of one profession, and in one ministry, should not vary and jangle one against the other for matters indifferent, which are made politic by the prescribed order of the prince'.⁶⁰⁷ This desire for stability and certitude led Alley on to consider ways in which the Church itself might be improved. The bishop wished to see stricter controls placed upon the commutation of penance. He also sought 'some convenient and more speedy order' for unrepentant excommunicates who avoided arrest by fleeing.⁶⁰⁸ Sheriffs should not delay in the execution of the writ *de excommunicato capiendo*. Bishops, meanwhile, should be empowered to deal with crime arising in areas of exempt jurisdiction. Simony, witchcraft and walking and talking in Church during services, were three offences which required special attention. The last, indeed, was to be punished by 'some penal, sharp, yea, capital pains'.⁶⁰⁹

Alley's robust defence of the Elizabethan Church gave him ample scope to demonstrate his capacity for plain-speaking. Yet it also afforded him an opportunity to reveal that other side of his character which Hooker had described as gentle and affable. Alley's conformity rested upon an ability to accept the imperfections of the 1559 religious settlement. This meant a commitment to adiaphorism. In so far as man's relationship to God was concerned, those things which scripture had neither commanded, nor forbidden, were to be considered indifferent, permitted, free and voluntary.⁶¹⁰ This understanding enabled Alley to advance his argument of the justifiable act of schism. It also, as we have just seen, underlay his quest for order. Nonetheless, to claim that Alley was wedded to an adiaphoristic theology is not to reveal much about his spiritual 'thought'. For 'indifference' did not of itself lead to conformism. Rather it prepared the ground for it. The identity of those things which were to be designated *adiaphora* still had to be determined. Biblical reductionists, against whom Alley was contending in the seventh sermon of *The Poore Man's Librarie*,

⁶⁰⁶ Strype, *Annals*, I. i. 518.

⁶⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, I. i. 520.

⁶⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, I. i. 521.

⁶⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶¹⁰ B J Verkamp, *The Indifferent Mean: Adiaphorism in the English Reformation to 1554* (Ohio/Detroit, 1977), p. 162.

would not have denied the validity of an adiaphoristic theology. Their objection would be to the wide scope given to the definition of 'things indifferent' by the constitutions of the Elizabethan Church. For them, only those matters explicitly permitted in the scriptural text could be classified as *adiaphora*.⁶¹¹

How, then, did Alley acquire a broad definition of 'things indifferent'? The answer would seem to lie in the bishop's protestant roots. To be a proponent of adiaphorism in the sixteenth century was also to be touched by the spirit of humanism.⁶¹² Erasmian teachings infected both protestants and catholics alike. In the former they manifested themselves most strongly in the reformist polities of Switzerland and Upper Germany. Calvin, Zwingli, Bucer and Martyr were the leading lights of this urban or humanist Reformation.⁶¹³ Theirs was an outward-going religion, which true to Erasmian principles recognised the potential of all men to do good.⁶¹⁴ Accordingly, great emphasis was placed upon the communal aspect of the christian experience. All who showed a willingness to do so could enter into the Church of Christ. The price of admission was a form commitment to the paramountcy of the godly commonwealth, the members of which, both clerical and lay, would strive to perfect and consolidate the spiritual and moral life of the community, to renovate public charity, to ensure public instruction in the scriptures and to guarantee civil discipline. Social and educational improvement, two major humanist themes, would thus lead ultimately to an enhanced awareness and appreciation of God.⁶¹⁵

This vision of an earthly 'Kingdom of Christ' and the genre of practical divinity of which it formed so central a part exercised an especially potent influence upon that generation of English protestants whose years of prime intellectual development fell between the beginning of the fourth and the end

⁶¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 162-3.

⁶¹² *Ibid.*, p. 160.

⁶¹³ B Moeller, *Imperial Cities and the Reformation: Three Essays*, ed. and trans. H C D Midelfort and M U Edwards jnr (Philadelphia, 1972), *passim*.

⁶¹⁴ B Bradshaw, 'The Tudor Commonwealth: Reform and Revision', *HJ*, 22 (1979), p. 464.

⁶¹⁵ *Melanchthon and Bucer*, ed W Pauck (Library of Christian Classics, 19, 1969), pp. 161-70. This volume includes a modern translation of Bucer's *De Regno Christi* (1550), perhaps the single most important influence upon domestic protestant thinking in the middle years of the sixteenth century (P Collinson, 'The Reformer and the Archbishop: Martin Bucer and an English Bucerian', *JEH*, 9 (1971), pp. 305-30; M E Vandeschaar, 'Archbishop Parker's Effort Towards a Bucerian Discipline', *SCJ*, 8 (1977), pp. 85-103).

of the sixth decades of the sixteen century.⁶¹⁶ That Alley belong to this association need not be doubted. We have already noted one simple yet important hallmark: his use of the church fathers as a means of interpreting difficult passages of scripture.⁶¹⁷ For practical divines no harm attached to establishing what was customarily done in matters of religion many centuries earlier so long as it was acknowledged that scripture remained the ultimate authority where 'proof of true christianity' was concerned. Alley concurred.⁶¹⁸ He also agreed with his mentors on the subject of predestination. Election proceeded solely from God's pleasure and will. Good works had no role to play. Yet the justified man would nonetheless do good works. A true and lively faith was the mark of the elect. Beyond this God's judgement should not be sought. An assured trust in the mercy of God for Christ's sake held the key to salvation.⁶¹⁹

This emphasis upon the efficacy of faith enabled Alley and his fellow humanist divines to throw open the Church of Christ to all-comers. It also led them to concept of the godly commonwealth. The question of assurance of salvation, so central to later protestants, did not arise.⁶²⁰ God had deemed that man was born to society not solitude. The performance of good works would promote a community of mutual love and service.⁶²¹ Of course, none of this appears explicitly in Alley's writings. But this is hardly surprising given that the purpose of the bishop's polemics was to circumscribe the freedom of individuals to dissent from the Church of England. He was not concerned to advertise the freedom of the godly commonwealth.

More importantly, Alley's case for conformity rested upon a plea for tolerance and patience. We should not seek to separate out the wheat from the chaff. Let God do this. It is wrong for servants to behave as masters.⁶²² Underlying this please was the same impetus which underlay the quest for a godly commonwealth, namely a desire to confront the major issues of the christian experience and by implication to avoid ensnarement in minor or

⁶¹⁶ P Collinson, *Archbishop Grindal 1519-1583: the Struggle for a Reformed Church* (1979), pp. 49-56; D D Wallace jnr, *Puritans and Predestination: Grace in English Protestant Theology, 1525-1695* (Chapel Hill, 1982), pp. x-xi; P Collinson, "A Magasine of Religious Patterns2: an Erasmian Topic Transposed in English Protestantism", in *SCH*, 14 (1977), pp. 223-49; *idem*, 'The Reformer and the Archbishop', pp. 305-30; Vandeschaar, 'Archbishop Parker's Efforts', pp. 85-103.

⁶¹⁷ See above, p. 71.

⁶¹⁸ *Bucer*, ed. Pauck, pp. 232-3; 236-7; *Poore Man's Librarie*, i. fo. 14.

⁶¹⁹ *Bucer*, ed. Pauck, pp. 198-9; *Poore Man's Librarie*, ii. fos. 20-3.

⁶²⁰ R T Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649* (Oxford, 1979), *passim*.

⁶²¹ *Bucer*, ed. Pauck, pp. 166-9.

⁶²² *Poore Man's Librarie*, i. fo. 185v.

subsidiary concerns.⁶²³ Arguably it was this attitude of mind which gave such a wide scope to Alley's definition of 'things indifferent'. Adiaphorism did not act as a restraint upon any 'radical' tendencies which the bishop's protestant upbringing may have contained. Rather the latter reacted upon the former. Only by limiting the test of a true Church to certain fundamentals could the humanist belief in the propensity of all men to do good be realised in a thoroughly protestant setting.

But why was Alley demonstrating his reformist credentials through the medium of conformism? Obviously the bishop felt troubled by the difficulties which attended upon the birth of the Elizabethan Church. Perhaps, too, there was an element of self-interest in his actions, a desire to ingratiate himself with the queen and the archbishop. Certainly in its 'undiluted' form the idea of the godly commonwealth presupposed a substantial criticism of Tudor society and government. Too close an adherence to its more controversial features could well lead to trouble, as Grindal was later to discover.⁶²⁴

Yet there may have been another reason for Alley's conformity. Not only did the 'Kingdom of Christ' suggest the possibility of major reforms in both Church and State; it also contained the potential to support a drive towards authoritarianism.⁶²⁵ The godly commonwealth was to be established from above. Ministers of 'probity and trustworthiness' were to be appointed to bishoprics and the parishes. The universities and schools were to be restored to a state of well-being suitable for their task of producing a godly clergy. Steps were to be taken to keep church property for the use of churches, and to administer it so as to make funds available for ministers' salaries, for their training at the seminaries, for the maintenance of ecclesiastical buildings, and for poor relief. Meanwhile, the people would need to be prepared for the commonwealth by legislation and law enforcement. All private homes were to be kept holy. The sanctity of marriage was to be scrupulously observed. Every child was to be educated and trained for Christ and the Church. Idlers were not to be tolerated. Laws were to be 'steady shining lights for all the citizen's life and activities'.⁶²⁶

⁶²³ *Bucer*, ed. Pauck, p. 169.

⁶²⁴ Collinson, *Archbishop Grindal*, pp. 233-52.

⁶²⁵ Vandeschaar, 'Archbishop Parker's Efforts', pp. 85-103. It will be apparent that I disagree with the argument of M Todd, *Christian Humanism and the Puritan Social Order* (Cambridge, 1987), which maintains that humanism was a wholly progressive phenomenon.

⁶²⁶ *Bucer*, ed. Pauck, pp. 266-394. The quotation is at p. 391.

What was it in Alley which led him to stress the 'hierarchical' rather than 'democratic' aspect of the godly commonwealth? Clearly this had nothing to do with questions of progressivism or conservatism. The tenor and content of Alley's theology was at one with that of the so-called radical bishops of the early Elizabethan Church. To that extent, Alley's willingness to support the prophesying movement in his diocese and his bid to revive and in some cases resurrect the ancient organs of ecclesiastical government in the south-west were both legitimate and compatible activities.⁶²⁷ Nonetheless, it would be misleading to suppose that there was nothing of substance dividing Alley from those of his episcopal colleagues who had spent the years of Mary's reign abroad. Arguably, Alley's failure to go on the Marian exile deprived him of an important experience: that of freedom from the constraints of monarchical government. During the middle years of the sixteen century humanism was transformed from an ideal critical of the Tudor polity into an ideology supportive of the centralised and authoritarian ethos of the renaissance state.⁶²⁸ By fleeing abroad and residing in urban communes, leading English protestants were able to gain a temporary immunity from this transformation. Consequently, they were able to continue to give priority to the 'progressive' aspect of the godly commonwealth. Stay-at-homes like Alley, however, were led to shift their emphasis towards 'conservatism'. Only with Elizabeth's accession was this 'conflict' resolved when the returned exiles entered upon their bishoprics and themselves began to fall under the spell of the new monarchy. John Woolton, Alley's spiritual heir as bishop of Exeter, was to prove a case in point.⁶²⁹

William Bradbridge (1571-78)

Alley's appointment to Exeter had found favour with both zealous protestants and the queen. The choice of William Bradbridge at the beginning of 1571 singularly failed to maintain this harmony.⁶³⁰ Bedford, in particular, was

⁶²⁷ BL, Additional 29,546, fos. 40-1. Even the least 'progressive' aspects of Alley's writings, namely his projected improvements to the system of ecclesiastical discipline outlined in his 1563 Convocation paper, reflected the influence of Bucer. Stricter controls upon the commutation of penance reflected Bucer's wish to see a sincere public confession of wrong-doing by those convicted of spiritual crime. The heavy emphasis placed upon the crime of walking and talking in church derived directly from the pages of *De Regno Christi* (Vandeschaar, 'Archbishop Parker's Efforts', pp. 89-90). For Alley's involvement in diocesan government, see below, pp. 218-21.

⁶²⁸ Bradshaw, 'Tudor Commonwealth', pp. 472-3.

⁶²⁹ See below, pp. 90-111.

⁶³⁰ *Registrum Parker*, ed. Frere, i. 152-4.

annoyed. He had wanted Richard Tremayne, the cathedral treasurer, to succeed.⁶³¹ But he was frustrated by Burghley and Archbishop Parker.

This was an undoubted blow for the cause of further reform. Tremayne promised to be an ideal bishop as far as the puritan interest was concerned. Coming from one of the leading protestant gentry families of the south-west, he had actively conspired against the Marian regime.⁶³² At Elizabeth's accession his proficiency in 'the High Dutch tongue' had landed him the job of escorting the earl of Arran from Geneva to England. Thereafter he opted for a career in the Church. Tremayne was ordained deacon by Grindal at the beginning of 1560 at the time that he received the Exeter treasurership. Further preferment in the south-west soon followed.⁶³³

During the 1560s Tremayne and Gregory Dodds promoted the cause of godliness in the Exeter chapter.⁶³⁴ Bedford was grooming them as potential successors to Alley. When Dodds' health gave way in 1570, Tremayne's path to the episcopal throne seemed assured.⁶³⁵ But he and his patron reckoned without the machinations of the royal court. It would be easy to explain Tremayne's failure in terms of his devotion to zeal. In the 1563 Convocation he had been among those who had voted for both the six, and the more radical seven, articles to reform the Elizabethan prayer book.⁶³⁶ At the time of Alley's death, Tremayne was only forty-three, still sufficiently young to promise (or threaten) thorough-going reform in the local Church.⁶³⁷ A lack of gravitas, even a cavalier temperament, can credibly be mustered to account for Tremayne's subsequent soujourn in the ecclesiastical wilderness.⁶³⁸

Yet ultimately the divine and his patron were made to suffer by their own party. When it came to filling vacant sees, Exeter was not very high on the list of priorities. And in 1570 certain issues had to be speedily resolved. This was where William Bradbridge came in. He was the very antithesis of the sort of divine that Bedford was seeking. Indeed, the early was soon to refer to him as a 'dumb dog'.⁶³⁹ This was not altogether surprising because

⁶³¹ HMC, *The Manuscripts of the Marquis of Salisbury*, i. 477.

⁶³² *Registrum Collegii Exoniensis: Register of the Rectors, Fellows and Other Members on the Foundation of Exeter College Oxford*, ed. C W Boase (Oxford Historical Society, 27, 1894), p. 67; Garrett, *Marian Exiles*, p. 311.

⁶³³ *Ibid.*; DHC, Chanter 18, fos. 56-7, 85v.

⁶³⁴ See above, p. 65; see below, pp. 84-85.

⁶³⁵ TNA, PROB.11/52, fo. 279v.

⁶³⁶ Strype, *Annals of the Reformation*, I. i. 504-5.

⁶³⁷ *Faculty Office Registers 1534-1549*, ed. D S Chambers (Oxford, 1965), p. 301.

⁶³⁸ See below, pp. 92-93.

⁶³⁹ HMC, *Salisbury*, ii. 184.

Bradbridge was essentially an ecclesiastical careerist who had managed to swim with the tide of doctrinal change during the middle decades of the sixteenth century. John Hooker, perceptive as always, noted that the new bishop 'was zealous in religion but now so forwards as he was wished to be'.⁶⁴⁰ He was also 'a divine by profession'.⁶⁴¹

Bradbridge had grown up in severely traditionalist circles. His father was a wealthy mercer of Chichester, who was on good terms with the local dean and chapter.⁶⁴² With another brother already earmarked to succeed his father in the family business, William and his youngest brother, Austin, were given the option of careers in the Church.⁶⁴³ William was sent up to Magdalen College, Oxford in the mid 1520s. He succeeded well enough to gain a fellowship, but resigned it when a living belonging to the Chichester chapter fell vacant in 1535.⁶⁴⁴ Further items of preferment came Bradbridge's way during the 1540s, but it was not until 1555 that he acquired a prebend, that of Lyme and Halstock in Salisbury Cathedral.⁶⁴⁵ Four years later William also gained the prebend of Sutton in his native diocese.⁶⁴⁶ Thereafter, in 1562 he succeeded his brother Austin as chancellor of Chichester Cathedral and became dean of Salisbury the following year.⁶⁴⁷

By now Bradbridge was well into old age. Indeed, he was seventy by the time he got Exeter.⁶⁴⁸ Evidently, he had long set his sights on gaining a place on the episcopal bench and was anxious not to be denied. But what

⁶⁴⁰ Hooker, *A Catalog*, no. 47.

⁶⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴² WSRO, STC.1/5, fos. 90v-7v; *The Lay Subsidy Rolls for the County of Sussex, 1524-25*, trans. and ed. J Cornwall (Sussex Record Society, 56, 1956), p. xiv; VCH, Sussex III (1973), p. 92; A Hay, *The History of Chichester* (Chichester, 1804), p. 569. Probably the prominent early Tudor ecclesiastic Nicholas Bradbridge, a former prebendary of the cathedral, was a relative (A B Emden, *A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to AD1500* (3 vols., Oxford, 1957), i. 241-2).

⁶⁴³ WSRO, STC.1/7, fo. 57.

⁶⁴⁴ Emden, *Biographical Register*, p. 66; W D Macray, *A Register of the Members of St Mary Magdalen College Oxford from the Foundation of the College, New Series II, Fellows 1522-1575* (Oxford, 1897), p. 64; *The Acts of the Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral Church of Chichester 1472-1544 (The White Act Book)*, ed. W D Peckham (Sussex Record Society, 52, 1951-2), p. 46.

⁶⁴⁵ W H R Jones, *Fasti Ecclesiae Sarisberiensis or a Calendar of the Bishops, Deans, Archdeacons and Members of the Cathedral Body at Salisbury from the Earliest Times to the Present* (Salisbury, 1879), p. 399.

⁶⁴⁶ J Le Neve, *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1547-1857: II, Chichester Diocese*, comp. J M Horn (1971), p. 54.

⁶⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 12, 14; SCL, Chapter Muniments, Press IV, Box L, Bundle 1/9; BL, Lansdowne 24/16.

⁶⁴⁸ DHC, Chanter 20, fo. 44v.

commended him to those who had a say in such matters? Certainly not his zeal. Bradbridge subsequently made much of the fact that as bishop he participated in, and presided over, the prophesyings that Alley had begun.⁶⁴⁹ We have no firm record that Bradbridge ever preached. Nor do we have any evidence of his expertise as an author of theological tracts. Wood reports Bradbridge to have 'arrived to some eminence in the [Oxford] theological faculty' when he gained his B.D. degree in 1539.⁶⁵⁰ However, we need to balance this with the fact that Bradbridge failed to get his doctorate of theology in 1565.⁶⁵¹ He was frankly not a prominent university or college man. He avoided administrative office whilst a fellow of Magdalen and his resignation from the college's governing body effectively cut him off from the Oxford academic community.⁶⁵² As Hooker commented, he was 'a professor of divinity...[who was] not taken to be so well-grounded as he persuaded himself'.⁶⁵³

Bradbridge may well have owed his career under Elizabeth to the exploits of his brother, Austin. Unlike William, Austin showed an early and clear predilection for protestantism. When he entered New College Oxford in 1546 Austin may still have been a conservative. But at Mary's accession he fled abroad, eventually becoming a member of Knox's congregation at Geneva.⁶⁵⁴ Upon his return, William Barlow, the first Elizabethan bishop of Chichester, collated him to the cathedral chancellorship.⁶⁵⁵ Shortly afterwards, Austin married Barlow's eldest daughter, gained the treasurership and became vicar-general of the diocese.⁶⁵⁶ An untimely death in 1567 cut short a promising career.⁶⁵⁷

Evidently Barlow's regard for Austin worked to William's benefit. The bishop came to rely almost exclusively upon the advice and assistance of the two brothers. 'I refrained to communicate so frankly with others', Barlow told the

⁶⁴⁹ BL, Additional 29546, fos. 40-1. As chancellor of Chichester Cathedral Bradbridge was required to give lectures on theology. But the task could be discharged through a competent deputy (M E C Walcott, *The Early Statutes of the Cathedral Church of the Holy Trinity, Chichester* (1877), pp. 4, 21-2).

⁶⁵⁰ *Ath Ox*, ii. 815-16.

⁶⁵¹ *Fasti*, p. 169.

⁶⁵² Macray, *Register of Members*, p. 64.

⁶⁵³ Hooker, *A Catalog*, no.47.

⁶⁵⁴ Garrett, *Marian Exiles*, p. 96.

⁶⁵⁵ Le Neve, *Chichester*, comp. Horn, p. 12.

⁶⁵⁶ R B Manning, *Religion and Society in Elizabethan Sussex* (Leicester, 1969), p. 52, n. 1; Le Neve, *Chichester*, comp. Horn, p. 14; *Original Letters from the Bishops to the Privy Council, 1564*, ed. M Bateson (Camden Society, New Series, 53, 1895), p. 9.

⁶⁵⁷ Garrett, *Marian Exiles*, p. 96.

privy council in 1564, 'because I doubted of their secretness that retinue and alliance being so great in these parts'.⁶⁵⁸ Barlow's support was probably crucial in getting Bradbridge established as a member of Burghley's patronage circle.⁶⁵⁹ This would explain why William got the Salisbury deanery, a royal appointment, ahead of other, aspiring candidates. Bradbridge realised that prospective bishops were often chosen from amongst the ranks of cathedral deans and the Salisbury deanery was one of the best waiting-places.⁶⁶⁰ This encouraged him to make a show of competence. Thus as dean he performed his duties with diligence. He attended more meetings of the Salisbury chapter than he missed. He was also for several years elected as keeper of the muniments, an annual appointment, which demanded residence in the cathedral close.⁶⁶¹

Nonetheless, Bradbridge maintained his ties with Chichester and to some purpose as it was to this see that he initially aspired.⁶⁶² Bishop Barlow died in August 1568.⁶⁶³ Almost at once Archbishop Parker wrote to Burghley in support of Richard Curteys who had been appointed dean of Chichester the previous year.⁶⁶⁴ Parker had an interest in the see. One of Barlow's daughters had married a younger son of the archbishop.⁶⁶⁵ Curteys was also Parker's chaplain.⁶⁶⁶ Certainly the archbishop was anxious to forestall a rival, but unnamed, contender for the diocese.⁶⁶⁷ This has usually been taken to be the ambitious William Overton, treasurer of the cathedral and another of Barlow's sons-in-law.⁶⁶⁸ But it could just as easily have been Bradbridge. Parker likened the anonymous suitor to Cheyney of Gloucester

We of this order learn by experience what rule Gloucester maketh in his people. He is so old that he would bring his people to his contemplations which he laboureth to do, but spieth that he shall never, and thereupon

⁶⁵⁸ *Original Letters*, ed. Bateson, p. 9.

⁶⁵⁹ For the importance of this circle, see W S Hudson, *The Cambridge Connection and the Elizabethan Settlement of 1559* (Durham, N.C., 1980).

⁶⁶⁰ Bradbridge's two successors as dean, Edmund Freake and John Piers, progressed to bishopric (*Le Neve, Fasti*, ii. 617).

⁶⁶¹ SCL, Chapter Muniments, Chapter Act Book 15. I am grateful to Miss Suzanne Eward, keeper of the Salisbury capitular muniments, for this information.

⁶⁶² *Chapter Act Book*, ed. Peckham, p. 58.

⁶⁶³ *Le Neve, Chichester*, comp. Horn, p. 2.

⁶⁶⁴ *Correspondence of Matthew Parker, DD, Archbishop of Canterbury*, eds. J Bruce and T T Perowne (Cambridge, 1853), p. 332; *Le Neve, Chichester*, comp. Horn, p. 6.

⁶⁶⁵ Manning, *Elizabethan Sussex*, p. 52, n. 1.

⁶⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

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⁶⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 69, n. 3. Certainly Overton seems to have been staking a claim to Chichester prior to Barlow's death when he wrote to Burghley criticizing Curteys' rule as dean (TNA, SP.12/46/9).

wisheth he were discharged, which he hath pretended a long time. But he meaneth another thing.⁶⁶⁹

Neither Overton, nor William Day, the provost of Eton – yet another contender for the vacant see – were ‘so old’, nor, perhaps, so ineffective.⁶⁷⁰

Ultimately Parker’s intervention on behalf of Curteys proved decisive. Burghley seemed ready enough to accept the latter, a noted ‘Grindalian’ who enjoyed wide support.⁶⁷¹ Nonetheless, it took almost two years to get Curteys formally appointed.⁶⁷² Of course, a delay of this kind might mean anything: a desire on the part of the crown to benefit from the revenues of the vacant diocese or a late change of heart by Parker who did not wish to lose the services of an able preacher at court. Yet it may also be the case that some form of compensation as being worked out for Bradbridge.

Interestingly, a number of sees fell vacant during the period 1568-71.⁶⁷³ One of these was Salisbury, though Bradbridge had already accepted Exeter by the time that John Jewel’s death was announced.⁶⁷⁴ This was unfortunate, for Bradbridge would have much preferred Salisbury to the remote south-west. When the diocese again fell vacant in 1577 Bradbridge lost no time in writing to Burghley to stake his claim. Exeter, he claimed, was far too large a see for his liking and the region was swarming with ‘sectaries’. It would be a great kindness on the part of the Lord Treasurer to get him translated to ‘the place from whence [he] came’.⁶⁷⁵

⁶⁶⁹ *Parker Correspondence*, eds. Bruce and Perowne, p. 332.

⁶⁷⁰ BL, Additional 6346, fo. 45. Day was in fact proposed for Chichester by Overton, his brother-in-law.

⁶⁷¹ Manning, *Elizabethan Sussex*, p. 71.

⁶⁷² Le Neve, *Chichester*, comp. Horn, p. 2.

⁶⁷³ Manning, *Elizabethan Sussex*, pp. 69-70.

⁶⁷⁴ Le Neve, *Fasti*, ii. 606.

⁶⁷⁵ BL, Lansdowne 24/16. This is a conjectural reading of the evidence, Standard authorities interpret ‘the place from whence I came’ to mean the Salisbury deanery, thus implying that Bradbridge was seeking early retirement rather than translation. But the context suggests otherwise:

‘If it please your lordship [Burghley] to send me hence and restore me to the place from whence I came, you could never do me such a pleasure. The time serveth; the place is open. I wish your favour were no less bent to drive me hence to Sarum again than in my first suit for the deanery’.

My interpretation is supported by two pieces of evidence. First a rumour was circulating in the diocese of Exeter in Feb. 1575/6 that Bradbridge ‘should be removed to Salisbury’. Secondly, the see of Salisbury fell vacant at about the time that Bradbridge wrote to Burghley. Bishop Guest died between 28 Feb. and 10 Apr 1577 and Bradbridge wrote on 11 Mar. But the Salisbury deanery was not vacant on this last date. The occupant, John Piers, had been appointed bishop of Rochester in Apr. 1576, but he had been allowed to hold the deanery *in commendam* with the see. Piers shortly became bishop of Salisbury and thus vacated the deanery. But he

This rather justified Parker's misgivings about Bradbridge's suitability for episcopal office. Yet the archbishop did not stand by his convictions when it most mattered. He might have been able to deny Bradbridge the see of Exeter. Instead he took the easier option of allowing the divine to be posted to the relative obscurity of the south-west. Nonetheless, Bradbridge was sufficiently worried as to offer Parker a *douceur*: the right of next presentation to the archdeaconry of Totnes for a twenty-one year term. Although made six months after Bradbridge's consecration, the grant was entered in the archiepiscopal register amidst the record of the bishop's nomination, election and installation.⁶⁷⁶

Not altogether surprisingly, Bradbridge's rule at Exeter was far from peaceful. Crucially, the new bishop lacked the support of the protestant elite of the south-west. He was both reviled and held up as a target for intimidation and exploitation. Bedford led the way. He duped Bradbridge into believing that the episcopal advowson of Buckland Filleigh belonged to his family. He then allied himself with a section of the Exeter oligarchy 'to act against [the bishop].....and to follow him about by one Prideaux, the earl's servant'.⁶⁷⁷ More destructively, Bedford's dissatisfaction enabled Tremayne to wage his own vendetta against the luckless Bradbridge. Throwing caution to the wind, Tremayne sided openly with religious radicals in the diocese. In 1575-6 and 1582-3, he took to preaching at the Cornish market town of Liskeard, a noted centre for progressives.⁶⁷⁸ On the former occasion Tremayne was in the company of a 'Mr Ford', probably William Forthe the official of the archdeacon of Cornwall who had recently read Thomas Cartwright's *Admonition to the Parliament*.⁶⁷⁹ Tremayne's second visit (albeit after Bradbridge's death and when any hope of further preferment had clearly gone) found him sharing a pulpit with the presbyterian exile, Eusebius Paget.⁶⁸⁰

seems not to have been chosen for Salisbury until the autumn of 1577. Possibly Bradbridge in his letter was anticipating the deanery falling vacant. But to do so he would have needed to know that Piers was to succeed Guest some six months before the appointment was in fact made (N J G Pounds, 'William Carnsew of Bokelly and His Diary, 1576-7', *JRIC*, New Series, 8 (1978), pp. 14-60, at p. 32; *Le Neve, Fasti*, ii. 606-7; J Le Neve, *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1541-1857: III, Canterbury, Rochester and Winchester Dioceses*, comp. J M Horn (1974), p. 51; *CPR 1575-8*, p. 150).

⁶⁷⁶ *Registrum Parker*, ed. Frere, i. 154.

⁶⁷⁷ DHC, Chanter 24, fo. 69; and see below, p. 86.

⁶⁷⁸ CRO, BLIS/266-7.

⁶⁷⁹ DHC, Chanter 41, pp. 91-3; Collinson, *Puritan Movement*, p. 149.

⁶⁸⁰ See below, pp. 102-06.

Furthermore, in 1576 Archbishop Grindal named both Tremayne and Bradbridge as commissioners for the metropolitical visitation of the southwest.⁶⁸¹ The treasurer thereupon proceeded to license the master of Liskeard grammar school ('a young man' Bradbridge alleged, 'lately come thither not entered into the ministry') to catechise and expound scripture.⁶⁸² Uproar ensued when a rival preacher challenged the schoolmaster's teachings.⁶⁸³ Bradbridge was forced to intervene to restore order.⁶⁸⁴ Not long afterwards, Tremayne attempted to secure the grant of an ecclesiastical commission for himself 'and certain his cousins and special friends', or so Bradbridge claimed in a letter to Burghley.⁶⁸⁵ This was not the first time that Tremayne had sought an ecclesiastical commission for the diocese. But on each occasion Bradbridge had opposed the move, ostensibly because of the burdens another court and its personnel would place upon the local population, but also, perhaps, because of the threat which such a tribunal would pose to his authority as bishop. Tremayne had a further trick up his sleeve. His tenure of the officiality of the caputular peculiar jurisdiction afforded him ample opportunity to hinder Bradbridge's administration.⁶⁸⁶

From this it is easy to understand why Bradbridge came to repent of his promotion to Exeter. His initial response was to seek to surround himself with trusted nominees and to keep the 'greedy gulls' of the local gentry at arms' length.⁶⁸⁷ But this, of course, only added to his problems. For his style of government evoked memories of the clericalist regimes of pre-Reformation days. The appointment of William Marston to the post of diocesan chancellor within forty-eight hours of Bradbridge's consecration was especially controversial.⁶⁸⁸ Marston was a mere twenty-six years of age; he was also the bishop's nephew and as such his reformist credentials were

⁶⁸¹ LPL, Reg. Grindal, i. fo. 96v. Bradbridge and Tremayne were also members of the commission of the peace for Cornwall during the 1570s (BL, Egerton 2345, fo. 8; TNA, SP.12/104, fo. 121v).

⁶⁸² BL, Lansdowne 24/16. The schoolmaster was probably John Fowle, a Cambridge graduate, who later as rector of nearby St Ive was identified as a 'resolute puritan minister' (*A/ Cant*, I. ii. 167); G C Boase, *Collectanea Cornubiensis* (Truro, 1890), p. 1387; DHC, Chanter 20, fo. 55; TNA, SP.14/10A/81).

⁶⁸³ BL, Lansdowne 24/16. This was perhaps William Minterne, another resolute puritan who after a spell as schoolmaster of Plymouth became rector of Botus F;emong in south-east Cornwall (CRO, BLIS/266; DHC, Chanter 858, fos. 96v-7v; LPL, Reg Whitgift, ii. fo. 238; TNA, SP.14/10A/81).

⁶⁸⁴ BL, Lansdowne 24/16.

⁶⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸⁶ *Ibid.*; and see below, pp. 139-41.

⁶⁸⁷ Pounds, 'Carnsew's Diary', p. 44.

⁶⁸⁸ *Registrum Parker*, ed. Frere, i. 154; DHC, Chanter 726/34; CCCC, Parker 97, fo. 160v.

suspect.⁶⁸⁹ Like Bradbridge Marston had managed to make the transition from Marian catholicism to Elizabethan protestantism with the minimum of effort. By the end of 1570 he had been collated to a cathedral prebend and the precentorship of the chapter house.⁶⁹⁰ Soon his two brothers, Nicholas and Vincent, were collated to prebends and livings in the diocese.⁶⁹¹ In 1574 an unsuccessful attempt was made to appoint Nicholas to the office of archdeacon of Cornwall.⁶⁹² Francis Cox, James Proctour and John Colcill, canons of Chichester and Salisbury, also benefitted from personal knowledge of Bradbridge.⁶⁹³

Of course, nepotism was to be expected of new diocesans seeking to establish themselves in their charges. Bradbridge's mistake was to compound this with a high-handed attitude and frankly eccentric behaviour. In 1572 the bishop dismissed his principal registrar, Thomas Germyn, for failing to keep 'a perfect register' of administrative business and for 'lewd and evil behaviour'.⁶⁹⁴ The Germyns were an important Exeter patrician family, with marked protestant leanings.⁶⁹⁵ Thomas had recently succeeded his father as principal registrar and held the office by virtue of a life grant from Bishop Alley.⁶⁹⁶ Nonetheless, Bradbridge sought to overturn the patent and to appoint another, William Hylles, an outsider to the diocese, who was currently serving as registrar of the archdeaconry of Cornwall.⁶⁹⁷ After persisting for eighteen months with Hylles, the bishop relented (perhaps on George Carew's advice) and allowed Germyn to resume his office.⁶⁹⁸

Bradbridge's apparent willingness to infuriate leading members of the local laity also manifested itself in his decision to abandon the episcopal palace as

⁶⁸⁹ *Abstracts of Inquisitions Post Mortem for the City of London Returned into the Court of Chancery during the Tudor Period, Part III, 19-45 Elizabeth 1577-1603*, ed. E A Fry (British Record Society, 36, 1908), pp. 37-8. See also above, p. 45.

⁶⁹⁰ DHC, Chanter 20, fos. 1v, 5v.

⁶⁹¹ *Abstracts of Inquisitions Post Mortem*, ed. Fry, p. 38; DHC, Chanter 20, fos. 33v, 38v, 55.

⁶⁹² *Ibid.*, fo. 18v.

⁶⁹³ *Ibid.*, fos. 3, 7v, 19. Interestingly Cox was a supporter of Overton in the latter's rivalry with Bishop Curteys. Curteys had earlier reprimanded Cox for irregularities as a prebendary of Chichester (Manning, *Elizabethan Sussex*, pp. 67-8, 72-3).

⁶⁹⁴ DHC, Chanter 41, p. 65; ECA, D&C.3498/135. We do not know what Germyn had done to annoy Bradbridge.

⁶⁹⁵ TNA, REQ.2/29/23; 210/31; 212/1. See also below, p. 220.

⁶⁹⁶ ECA, D&C.355s, fo. 176.

⁶⁹⁷ DHC, CC.151, commission *in partibus*, Kendall *c. Mayo*; Chanter 783b, cover.

⁶⁹⁸ DHC, Chanter 20, fo. 17; Chanter 41, p. 76; ECA, D&C.3498/132. It may be that Germyn mobilized Bedford on his behalf and that the earl's servant, Prideaux, was used to pressurize the bishop. Carew, as always, took the role of mediator. See above, p. 84.

his normal place of residence for the remote parsonage of Newton Ferrers in south-west Devon, one of two livings held *in commendam* with the see.⁶⁹⁹ From Bradbridge's point of view the move was not without its advantages. It enabled him to cut his living costs. The episcopal palace was 'overlarge and too amply for the present state of the bishopric and too onerous for [the bishop] to uphold and maintain from year to year'.⁷⁰⁰ A less formal, more leisurely existence could be had at Newton Ferrers. Accordingly, the bishop employed a small household staff.⁷⁰¹ He also took to farming in a modest way. At his death in 1578 he had a flock of a hundred sheep and lambs together with three dozen or more horses, pigs and cattle.⁷⁰²

Not that Bradbridge entirely neglected the duties of his office. He convened the episcopal audience court in his parsonage.⁷⁰³ He also participated in visitations of the see and of Exeter College, Oxford and he attended the House of Lords during the parliamentary sessions of 1571, 1572 and 1575.⁷⁰⁴ At Christmas 1577 Bradbridge broke his exile and journeyed to Exeter for the Quarter Sessions.⁷⁰⁵ The bishop was running matters to suit himself. But his independence was more apparent than real. Exeter remained the administrative centre of the diocese. By isolating himself at Newton Ferrers, the bishop made himself especially vulnerable to the wiles of his lay deputies. Indeed, it was this which proved his undoing.

At the centre of the scandal was Henry Borough, sub-collector of the clerical tenths and subsidies for the diocese. Borough, who combined the beliefs of a zealous protestant with the instincts of an opportunist, clearly saw the sub-collectorship as a means of ascending the social ladder.⁷⁰⁶ His will testifies to the success of this strategy.⁷⁰⁷ Fraud and inefficiency had long bedevilled the

⁶⁹⁹ Hooker, *A Catalog*, no. 47; *Registrum Parker*, ed. Frere, iii. 1021, 1023-4. The other living was Lezant in Cornwall.

⁷⁰⁰ Bodl Lib, Selden Supra 42, fo. 13.

⁷⁰¹ In 1578 there were 2 servants, a footman, a horseman and a cook (TNA, E.178/2874).

⁷⁰² TNA, E.347/14/part I, no. 94.

⁷⁰³ DHC, Chanter 858, fos. 37v-80.

⁷⁰⁴ BL, Lansdowne 24/16; DHC, Chanter 50, *sub* 6 Feb. 1575-6; LJ, i. 669-753. Bishops of Exeter were by custom visitors of Exeter College. The college had been founded by Bishop Stapeldon at the beginning of the fourteenth century.

⁷⁰⁵ TNA, E.178/2874.

⁷⁰⁶ TNA, PROB.11/107, fo. 224v; E.178/2874. Borough's wife was a sister of the puritan JP Richard Reynell of Creedy Wiger (Vivian, *Visitations of Devon*, p. 169).

⁷⁰⁷ Borough's possessions at the time of his death in c1605 included manorial lands and rectorial tithes. In 1578 he was reported to be 'worth in leases, goods and chattels a £1000'. This was alleged to be a substantial improvement on his position 7 or 8 years earlier. By the mid 1590s Borough was claiming gentry status. To justify his new standing he financed the construction of 'a new fair gallery' in his

collection of the clerical tenth and subsidy at Exeter. As we have seen, Bishop Veysey had a far from satisfactory collector in William Strowbridge.⁷⁰⁸ Turberville granted the collectorship to his nephew Nicholas and this may have introduced some element of stability into proceedings.⁷⁰⁹ But under Alley the old problems returned and the bishop died indebted to the crown.⁷¹⁰ Possibly Alley was Borough's first victim, for the latter was serving as deputy to the official sub-collector, John Killigrew, in 1569.⁷¹¹ In that year Borough gave evidence of his sharp practices, sealing up the church door at Marldon for alleged non-payment on the day the subsidy payment was due and then compelling the unfortunate curate to contribute 2s 6d (12.5p) more than was legally required.⁷¹² From the bishop's point of view this would have been merely a question of ethics were it not that Borough withheld money that was owed to the Exchequer, blaming the shortfall on the recalcitrant clergy.

It was this deceit which a commission of inquiry into the taxation of curates within the diocese hinted at in 1573⁷¹³. But by then Borough had secured for himself a position of trust with Bishop Bradbridge. Borough was appointed joint sub-collector of the see with Ellis Bennet, steward to the bishop, at the outset of Bradbridge's episcopate.⁷¹⁴ However, Borough quickly became the senior partner. The basis of the bishop's trust was bonds which Bradbridge took from Borough discharging the former from any responsibility for faults in the latter's accounts.⁷¹⁵ But the virtue of this safeguard was greatly diminished by Bradbridge's abdication from any involvement in the business of collection. This proved fatal. For it enabled Borough to make Bradbridge a major debtor with the crown whilst concealing the fact from the bishop.

parish church of Broad Clyst. At this time (1595) Borough was also serving as 'a general collector' of lay subsidies in the eastern hundreds of Devon. Borough's rise from obscurity was not to everyone's liking: Thomas Chapple defaced the coat of arms that the collector had emblazoned on the gront of the new gallery (TNA, PROB.11/107, fos. 224v-9v; E.178/2874; STAC.5/B72/33).

⁷⁰⁸ See above, pp. 28-29.

⁷⁰⁹ See above, pp. 59-60. But compare TNA, C.3/131/7, 72, 76.

⁷¹⁰ TNA, E.178/2874.

⁷¹¹ TNA, E.135/11/14, fo. 28v. The Killigrews were also rapacious where money was involved. See below, pp. 111-14.

⁷¹² *Ibid.*, fo. 31v.

⁷¹³ TNA, E135/11/14.

⁷¹⁴ TNA, E.178.2874.

⁷¹⁵ *Ibid.* By 7 Edw VI, c. 4 all under-collectors appointed by episcopal patent were to be bound by recognizances to answer for such sums as were due from their jurisdictions. The collectors were also to agree to save the bishop harmless from these dues. See F Heal, 'Clerical Tax Collection Under the Tudors: the Influence of the Reformation', in *Continuity and Change: Personnel and Administration of the Church of England, 1500-1642*, eds. R O'Day and F Heal (Leicester, 1976), pp. 97-122.

Not only was the sub-collector extorting money from members of the diocesan clergy and pocketing the revenues which belonged to the government; he was also transferring the blame for the shortfall from himself to his employer by persuading Bradbridge that all was well, thereby procuring his own acquittance from the bishop, when in fact the full sums of money collected and owed never reached London.⁷¹⁶

By 1577 even Bradbridge had come to suspect that he was in debt. However, close questioning of Borough at Newton Ferrers reassured him, 'whereat the said bishop rejoicing drank to the [gentlemen present] and said that he would not be indebted to the queen of anything'.⁷¹⁷ But Bradbridge's illusions were to be short-lived and before his death he had begun to make systematic inquiries into his deputy's conduct. Indeed, Borough was so busy deceiving the bishop that he even intercepted the servant whom the latter had sent to the Exchequer in order to discover his true position. Borough's final act of deception was to forge the bishop's signature when Bradbridge refused to sign the sub-collector's release for the subsidy payment of the preceding Christmas, involving a sum of £237, until the bishop had received his own acquittance from the crown.⁷¹⁸

This was in May 1578. By then the Exchequer had come to realise that something was seriously wrong. In January of that year, Sir John Killigrew was commissioned to inquire into the missing £237.⁷¹⁹ His report has not survived. But it was clearly condemnatory, for the authorities moved quickly upon Bradbridge's demise at the end of June to impound his goods.⁷²⁰ An inventory was drawn up and the bishop's possessions appraised.⁷²¹ Whilst they met the shortfall of the Christmas 1577 subsidy, the goods failed to defray Bradbridge's total debts to the Exchequer, some £1,400.⁷²² Meanwhile, a new commission was issued to Richard Tremayne, Stephen Townsend and John Woolton, canons of Exeter and contenders for the now vacant episcopal throne.⁷²³ Their proceedings were to last for well over a

⁷¹⁶ TNA, E.178/2874.

⁷¹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷¹⁸ *Ibid.* The £237 appears to have been the clerical tenth from the archdeaconry of Cornwall which constituted part-payment of the second element of the subsidy of 19 Eliz I.

⁷¹⁹ TNA, E.178/3224.

⁷²⁰ Bradbridge died on 28 June 'very suddenly, nobody being about him'. The sheriff of Devon was in possession of his goods by 3 July (DHC, Chanter 20, fo. 44v; Hooker, *A Catalog*, no. 47; TNA, E347/14/part 1, no. 94).

⁷²¹ *Ibid.*

⁷²² DHC, Chanter 24, fo. 69.

⁷²³ *Ibid.*; TNA, E.178/2874; SP.46/16, fo. 171; DHC, Chanter 19, fos. 14, 28.

year, by which time Woolton had emerged as Bradbridge's successor. Further investigations were conducted during the opening months of 1580 by a group of justices.⁷²⁴ Eventually Borough's duplicity was revealed and he ended in a debtor's prison.⁷²⁵ Nonetheless, he had the last laugh. In 1584 he once more became sub-collector for the diocese and continued thus for a further fourteen years despite attempts to dislodge him.⁷²⁶

John Woolton (1579-94)

It was an ill-wind that blew nobody any good. Borough's misdeeds gave Bedford the leverage he needed to become the dominant voice in the nomination of Bradbridge's successor. He lost little time in pressing home his advantage.⁷²⁷

At first the earl was content to leave the choice to Burghley: his only concern was that the new bishop should be a diligent and preaching divine.⁷²⁸ But soon Bedford began to sing the praises of John Woolton. He had heard a rumour that Townsend 'should be in the election'. Yet the dean was 'nothing fit for the place'. Burghley would well remember the part that Townsend had 'played.....for the college at Manchester'. Woolton, by contrast was 'a man well-learned, of honest life and conversation, wise in government and a very good and diligent preacher'. Bedford recalled that his father had often told him 'how well [Burghley] took the letters written in that behalf (i.e. on the subject of choosing bishops)', adding, that 'if he had written for any particular man, his lordship would have been willing to further him'.⁷²⁹

This seems to have decided the matter. Possibly Burghley or others at court had it in mind to appoint Woolton to the see of Chester which had stood vacant for over a year, for Woolton was a Lancastrian by birth and a 'Grindalian' by nature, two important assets in the dark corners of the north-

⁷²⁴ TNA, E.178/2874.

⁷²⁵ Heal, 'Clerical Tax Collection', in *Continuity and Change*, eds. O'Day and Heal, p. 116. By 14 Eliz I c 7 the lands and goods of under-collectors were made liable to seizure for arrears in tenths and subsidies.

⁷²⁶ TNA, Chanter 41, pp. 436-8. See below, pp. 124.31.

⁷²⁷ HMC, *Salisbury*, ii. 184.

⁷²⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷²⁹ *Ibid.*, ii. 213.

west.⁷³⁰ But in the end William Chadderton was selected and Woolton sent to the south-west, where indeed he had spent most of his clerical career.⁷³¹

But why was Bedford prepared to back Woolton and not Townsend or Tremayne? The last, as we have seen, had been the earl's candidate in 1571.⁷³² Townsend, even more so, owed his prominence in the diocese to the Russell circle. An outsider to the region, Alley had collated him to a prebend in 1569.⁷³³ Four years later he had been presented by Bedford to the Devon rectory of Farringdon.⁷³⁴ Yet by 1579 he had fallen from grace. The Manchester College incident may have been a convenient smokescreen behind which the earl could hide the real reason for denying Townsend the undoubted benefit of his support. In fact, it is difficult to discover what it was that the divine had done wrong at Manchester. Townsend held a fellowship in the collegiate church from 1568 to 1575, but as he was also a residentiary of Exeter Cathedral from 1571 his scope for involvement at Manchester was clearly limited.⁷³⁵

Presumably Bedford had in mind the maladministration of the college by its warden, Thomas Herle, whom we met earlier serving as Bishop Coverdale's chancellor.⁷³⁶ Herle had sold some of the college's lands and leased others on favourable terms to William Killigrew, one of the gentlemen of the privy chamber and a fellow Cornishman. However, this was uncovered and in 1575 Herle was forced to resign. The opportunity was taken to grant a new charter to the college whilst the wardenship was passed to John Woolton.⁷³⁷ As Townsend relinquished his fellowship on the eve of these changes, there are grounds for supposing that he had been implicated by events. Interestingly, Townsend's first benefice in the south-west, Highampton, was gained in 1568 on the resignation of Herle.⁷³⁸ Subsequently, Townsend

⁷³⁰ TNA, SP.12/126/14, endorsement; Le Neve, *Fasti*, iii. 258-9; *The Spending of the Mony of Robert Nowell of Reade Hall, Lancashire: Brother of Dean Alexander Nowell 1568-1580*, ed. A B Grosart (n.p., 1877), p. 267; Collinson, *Puritan Movement*, p. 201.

⁷³¹ Le Neve, *Fasti*, iii. 259.

⁷³² See above, pp. 78-79.

⁷³³ DHC, Chanter 19, fo. 28v.

⁷³⁴ DHC, Chanter 20, fo. 11v.

⁷³⁵ *Fellows of the Collegiate Church of Manchester*, ed. F Renaud (Chetham Society, New Series, 21, 1891), i. 55; ECA, D&C.3707, fo. 51.

⁷³⁶ See above, p. 42.

⁷³⁷ R Churton, *The Life of Aleander Nowell Dean of St Paul's* (Oxford, 1809), pp. 253-5; *The Rectors of Manchester and the Wardens of the College Church*, ed. F R Raines (Chetham Society, New Series, 5, 1885), i. 78-86.

⁷³⁸ DHC, Chanter 19, fo. 24v.

entered a caveat on Herle's behalf concerning the right of presentation to the Devonshire rectory of Black Torrington.⁷³⁹

The careers of Townsend and Herle suggest the 'going to seed' of early zeal. Certainly it is worth noting that a vigorous commitment to protestantism was often combined with a strong materialistic drive. Borough's activities underline the point as do those of William Killigrew, the man-at-court for a group of leading west country zealots.⁷⁴⁰ Even Tremayne's campaign of disruption against Bradbridge can be included here. Yet it is difficult to imagine that Bedford would have begrudged these individuals their moments of self-indulgence, though he might well have disliked the philosophy which underlay their deeds.

Perhaps the earl was capable of identifying a certain cynicism which led the interest of the individual – 'the elect' – to dominate that of the community. This, of course, is not to say that Bedford was not himself guilty of a similar bias in his thinking. But he might excuse his use of double standards by maintaining that an important difference existed between himself and Townsend and Tremayne. These divines could identify themselves with the most progressive of protestant circles, namely presbyterianism. We noted earlier Tremayne's contacts with Eusebius Paget, the exiled Northamptonshire minister.⁷⁴¹ Townsend, too, was held in some esteem by the latter.⁷⁴² In fact, it could be argued that Paget's stay in the south-west in the early 1580s provided an important litmus test insofar as allegiance to the cause of zeal was concerned. The puritan's presence served to expose points of difference within the ranks of local protestantism. Indeed, it was the 'Grindalian' Woolton who became Paget's chief antagonist in the diocese, a role which may have earned for him the nickname of 'the fox' in the *Martin Marprelate* tracts.⁷⁴³

Woolton was born near Whalley in Lancashire in about 1536.⁷⁴⁴ His father was of humble background, but his mother was a younger daughter of John Nowell of Read Hall.⁷⁴⁵ This made Woolton a nephew of Alexander and

⁷³⁹ DHC, Chanter 17, unfol.

⁷⁴⁰ See below, pp. 111-31.

⁷⁴¹ See above, p. 84.

⁷⁴² BL, Lansdowne 45/42. See also below, p. 101 n. 802.

⁷⁴³ *Martin Marprelate Tracts: Hay Any Worke for Cooper* (1845), p. 74. See also below, pp. 102-06.

⁷⁴⁴ *Spending of the Mony*, ed. Grosart, p. 267; J Strype, *The History of the Life and Acts of Edmund Grindal* (Oxford, 1821), p. 5; F Godwin, *De Praesulibus Angliae Commentarius* (1616), p. 477.

⁷⁴⁵ *Spending of the Mony*, ed. Grosart, pp. 83, 267; Godwin, *De Praesulibus*, p. 477.

Laurence Nowell, luminaries of the early Elizabethan Church.⁷⁴⁶ In fact, it was to Uncle Alexander that Woolton owed his upbringing and early education.⁷⁴⁷ Nowell was a fellow of Brasenose College, Oxford.⁷⁴⁸ By the mid-century he was a confirmed protestant 'with a distinctly humanistic turn of mind'.⁷⁴⁹ Woolton himself was admitted to Brasenose in October 1553.⁷⁵⁰ Soon, however, he fled abroad to join Nowell in exile.⁷⁵¹

The two probably returned to England in the spring of 1559.⁷⁵² Woolton was ordained twelve months later by Grindal and subsequently married the daughter of the purveyor of provisions for Protector Somerset's household, a 'godly old man...an harbourer of godly men in those [Marian] troubles'.⁷⁵³ Woolton's first preferment was the crown living of Spaxton in Somerset.⁷⁵⁴ Very likely Nowell's brother, Robert, the attorney-general of the Court of Wards, was responsible for this.⁷⁵⁵ A chaplaincy to the bishop of Bath and Wells also now fell to him.⁷⁵⁶

Woolton's association with the diocese of Exeter began formally in 1565 when the future privy councillor, Sir Amias Paulet, presented him to the east Devon living of Sampford Peverell.⁷⁵⁷ The following year Woolton was collated to a prebend in Exeter Cathedral by Bishop Alley.⁷⁵⁸ In 1568 Sir Peter Carew and Sir John Chichester wrote to Grindal on Woolton's behalf asking the bishop to intercede with Archbishop Parker for the granting of a licence of non-residence so that their client might 'more freely preach abroad' and not be hindered by 'the promoters who are most busy against the best men'.⁷⁵⁹ Two years later, Dean Dodds presented Woolton to the vicarage of Braunton in north Devon.⁷⁶⁰ This was quickly followed by admission to a

⁷⁴⁶ Churton, *Life of Nowell*, p. 389.

⁷⁴⁷ TNA, SP.12/126/4; HMC, *Salisbury*, ii. 213.

⁷⁴⁸ *AI Ox*, iv. 1021.

⁷⁴⁹ C Haigh, *Reformation and Resistance in Tudor Lancashire* (Cambridge, 1975), p. 163.

⁷⁵⁰ *Brasenose College Register 1509-1909* (2 vols., Oxford, 1909), i. 21.

⁷⁵¹ BL, Lansdowne 45/43; *Ath Ox*, i. 600; Garrett, *Marian Exiles*, pp. 237-8).

⁷⁵² TNA, SP.12/4/34.

⁷⁵³ Strype, *Life of Grindal*, p. 58; BL, Lansdowne 45/42, 43.

⁷⁵⁴ *Somerset Incumbents from the Hugo MSS 30279-80, in the British Museum*, ed. F W Weaver (Bristol, 1889), p. 436.

⁷⁵⁵ *Ibid.*; *DNB, sub nomine* Sir Edward Waldegrave; *CPR 1560-3*, p. 469; *Spending of the Mony*, ed. Grosart, p. 267; Churton, *Life of Nowell*, p. 140.

⁷⁵⁶ TNA, SP.12/76, fo. 33v.

⁷⁵⁷ DHC, Chanter 19, fo. 11; *DNB, sub nomine* Sir Amias Paulet.

⁷⁵⁸ DHC, Chanter 19, fo. 14.

⁷⁵⁹ *Remains of Grindal*, ed. Nicholson, p. 299. For Carew and Chichester, see above, p. 70.

⁷⁶⁰ *Registrum Parker*, ed. Frere, i. 312.

canon residentiary's place in Exeter Cathedral.⁷⁶¹ In 1571 and 1572 Bedford presented Woolton to the rectories of Farringdon and Whimple.⁷⁶² Other preferment followed.⁷⁶³

In nominating Woolton for Exeter, Bedford was clearly choosing someone with an untarnished reputation who possessed all the attributes necessary to be a 'good' or 'true' bishop.⁷⁶⁴ 'Great good things are looked and hoped for at his hands', wrote John Hooker, '.....that he being now made a watchman over the house of Israel and a shepherd over the Lord's flock.....will attend the same, and perform the office of a true bishop in preaching in season and out of season'.⁷⁶⁵ Preaching, certainly, was the name of Woolton's game. During the 1570s, a decade perhaps when early promise at last bore fruit, the divine 'read the divinity lecture in Exeter [Cathedral] twice weekly for four years and preached twice every Sabbath'. In the plague year of 1576 Woolton 'with one other' stayed behind in the city 'preaching publicly and comforting privately' those who were infected by the disease.⁷⁶⁶ As bishop, Woolton continued to expound scripture regularly on Sundays. This commitment to a pastoral ethic left a heavy legacy of religious treatises and sermons. In addition to the six tracts that were published in his lifetime, there were some sixty or more works which remained in manuscript at the time of his death in 1594.⁷⁶⁷

Woolton's extant writings leave us in no doubt that he was a 'Grindalian', if by 'Grindalian' we mean someone who was touched by the ideals of the godly commonwealth outlined earlier in our discussion of Alley and who was not

⁷⁶¹ ECA, D&C.3707, fo. 50v.

⁷⁶² *Registrum Parker*, ed. Frere, i. 318; DHC, Chanter 20, fo. 53v.

⁷⁶³ *Ibid.*, fos. 16, 64v; T Rymer, *Foedera, Conventiones, Literae et Cuiuscunque Generis Acta Publice Inter Reges Angliae* (1741), vi. 166.

⁷⁶⁴ Collinson, *Puritan Movement*, p. 104.

⁷⁶⁵ Hooker, *A Catalog*, no. 48.

⁷⁶⁶ BL, Lansdowne 45/43.

⁷⁶⁷ *The Christian Manuell or, Of the Life and Manners of True Christians* (1576; reprinted by the Parker Society, Cambridge, 1851); *An Armoure of Proufe; Very Profitable, As Well For Princes, As All Other in Authoritie* (1577); *A Newe Anatomie of Whole Man, Aswell of His Body, As of His Soule* (1577); *Of the Conscience, A Discourse Wherein is Playnely Declared, the Unspeakable Joye, and Comfort of a Good Conscience, and the Intollerable Griefe and Discomfort of an Evill Conscience* (1577); *A Treatise of the Immortalitie of the Soule...* (wherein is declared the Origins, Nature and Powers of the same, together with the state and condition thereof, both as it is conjoined and dissolved from the body) (1577); *The Castell of Christians and fortresse of the faithfull, besieged, and defended, now almost sixe thousand years* (1577); BL, Harleian 5827, fo. 50. A seventh tract, *David's Chain*, may have been published but no trace of the work has remained (see Bodl Lib, Dodsworth 153, fo. 152).

afraid to expound those ideals to the uttermost.⁷⁶⁸ The bishop's six tracts were published in 1576-7, at the height of the 'reformed episcopal' drive.⁷⁶⁹ It was therefore entirely appropriate that they should convey the message of the mid-century humanist Reformation in so ample a fashion. The sermons, it might be said, contain what someone like Alley might have written had he not been so much of a conformist. They are in a sense Alley's vicarious works. This suggests that there may have been an element of naivety about Woolton's tracts. Certainly they are very idealistic. But it was in the nature of the humanist to strive for perfection in an imperfect, materialistic world.⁷⁷⁰ By showing despair, Woolton was also offering hope.

The six tracts appeared at a particularly traumatic time for English protestantism.⁷⁷¹ 'Satan's rage [was] stirring up men to cruel wars and calamities, to forsake true religion, and to run into ignorance and blasphemy'. The Turks were invading Hungary. There were 'the daily slaughters and butchery of Christ's children' in Scotland. The duke of Alba was in the Low Countries. There had been the 'French cruelty' of St Bartholomew's Day. 'We live no doubt in the last time, and old age of the world, which is feeble and doting, for by common course of nature, after vigour and strength, followeth inclination and faintness, and the end of things is always weak'. At times like this all the godly could do was to fall back upon 'a grounded faith' and 'suffer afflictions patiently'. Their hope lay in the knowledge that 'the light of Christ's Church is never quenched'. 'Let all men that have a place in Christ's Church, rest and stay themselves upon God in these days of our[s], wherein the world runneth upon wheels'. The godly will ever put their trust in the Lord. Christians were 'a regiment' and 'God therefore the captain of his army'.

Against this broad synopsis, Woolton had a more specific point to make. Whilst much of Europe was in turmoil, England was not. Indeed, the country 'ha[d] been blessed with halcyon days in policy and commonwealth'. This was surely because England was 'the haven of Christ's ship and the harbour of persecuted men for the gospel'. 'Some commonwealths will not be overthrown so long as they suffer Christ's ship to ride quietly in their strands,

⁷⁶⁸ See above, pp. 74-78.

⁷⁶⁹ P Collinson, 'Episcopacy and Reform in England in the Later Sixteenth Century', *SCH*, 3 (1966), pp. 91-125.

⁷⁷⁰ Bradshaw, 'Tudor Commonwealth', p. 464.

⁷⁷¹ The quotations in this paragraph are taken from the epistle dedicatory of *Armoure of Proufe*.

give harbour unto his Church, [and] maintaineth schools and universities being the fountain of humanity and christianity'.⁷⁷²

Nonetheless, all was not well with England. 'The ecclesiastical estate [was] encumbered with clouds of trouble'. There were 'so many great and grievous inconveniences between the shepherd and the sheep', that it was impossible to 'tell which way to turn'. Both the clergy and the laity were to blame for this. Many pastors ignorantly or maliciously corrupt[ed] the doctrine of.....grace, sin and good works'. Many others 'den[ied] the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the flesh'. Some preachers pandered to 'the carnal affection' (i.e. materialism) of their audience by 'speak[ing] pleasant things in the pulpit'. Others were ambitious and proud, 'puffed up by arrogance'. Then there were the dumb dogs and those who were contemptuous of the tongues and the arts. 'Rude and rustical pastors daily increase[d]'. Such unlearnedness bred evils in the Church and mischiefs in the commonwealth for 'ignorance was the mother of error'.⁷⁷³

Yet it was to the laity that Woolton addressed his most scathing remarks. It was an article of faith for him that 'the property of the Church belongeth not to the prince or priest but to the whole Church'. It was especially galling that so many of the magisterial class who ought to have behaved as 'nursing fathers of Christ's Church', turned out to be little more than 'church robbers'.⁷⁷⁴ Woolton's *An Armoure of Proufe*, dedicated to no less a person than Burghley, had been aimed at these men 'in authority' and had sought to demonstrate the crucial role they needed to perform in establishing and perpetuating the godly commonwealth.⁷⁷⁵ Irresponsibility, which in this case meant the expropriation of ecclesiastical wealth for private consumption, could not be tolerated. The system of impropriations was a scandal, beggaring the ministers who served such livings and enriching the unworthy impropriators.⁷⁷⁶ Moreover, the latter had the temerity to suggest that humility and poverty should be the preacher's lot. The church spoilers 'will have ministers and preachers to follow with friars' wilful poverty'. 'They give a flea and take a camel; they leave a loaf and take an horse'.⁷⁷⁷ Behaviour of this kind only set a bad example to the lower orders. It was no wonder that the latter 'walked abroad on Sundays' and indulged themselves in sports

⁷⁷² *Castell of Christians*, sig. Avii.

⁷⁷³ *Ibid.*, sig. Ei-v.

⁷⁷⁴ *Of the Conscience*, sig. Hii; *Armoure of Proufe*, epistle dedicatory; *Castell of Christians*, sig. Eviv.

⁷⁷⁵ *Armoure of Proufe*, epistle dedicatory.

⁷⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 1-5; 11r-v, 28, 40v.

⁷⁷⁷ *Of the Conscience*, sig. Hiiiv.

and pastimes when they ought to have been at church.⁷⁷⁸ Even when the 'poore sorts' did attend services and sermons, they failed to be inspired by what they say and heard.⁷⁷⁹

Woolton's attack on the incipient secularism of Tudor society not surprisingly got him into trouble with the authorities. His tract, *Of the Conscience*, proved the most inflammatory. In it he seemed to come close to suggesting that the rich were more likely to be damned than the poor because they had so often acquired their wealth unfairly at the expense of others.⁷⁸⁰ The willingness of members of the nobility to rest upon their ancestors' deeds rather than to do good works themselves implied an evil rather than a pure conscience. And only the latter could, in truth, be said to hold forth the promise of an afterlife of 'perfect pleasure'.⁷⁸¹

Woolton reacted to his critics with some degree of fortitude. He accepted that he had overstepped the mark in *Of the Conscience*, but he clung tenaciously to his view of the gentleman church robber. However, to be on the safe side, he would correct, or at least modify, what he had said regarding election and good works. In being forthright about the 'evil consciences' of the rich, Woolton had implied that salvation might hinge upon a willingness to do good deeds.⁷⁸² This, of course, was not what he had intended. Not only did Woolton need to mend his fences with the ruling classes, he now also needed to restore his intellectual credibility. This he achieved in the course of the three remaining extant tracts, *The Christian Manuell*, *The Immortalitie of the Soule* and *a New Anatomie*. In these works Woolton concentrated on the individual and his relationship to God and society. As we saw with Alley, this did not mean a retreat into introspection.⁷⁸³ Rather, the purpose of the exercise was to banish away any undue preoccupation with the individual self and to build up a confidence and trust in the saving mercy of Christ so that the reader could go forth anew into the community assured of his own salvation and of his capacity to do good for others.

⁷⁷⁸ *Castell of Christians*, sig. Eviii.

⁷⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸⁰ *Of the Conscience*, sig. Di-ii. For a general discussion see P Lake, 'Conformist Clericalism? Richard Bancroft's Analysis of the Socio-Economic Roots of Presbyterianism', *SCH*, 24 (1987), pp. 219-29.

⁷⁸¹ *Of the Conscience*, sig. Dii, Oii.

⁷⁸² *Castell of Christians*, sig. Ev-vii.

⁷⁸³ See above, pp. 74-78.

It was precisely this which put the role of good works into proper perspective. Woolton recognised that there were 'two sorts of men, to wit, of false christians in name and title only, and of true christians in word or work'. The latter comprise 'the body or society of the Church', 'the communion of saints'; the former the reprobate who 'with their life argue their tongue of untruth and falsehood'.⁷⁸⁴ Like Alley, Woolton was a credal predestinarian.⁷⁸⁵ He believed that the regenerate and unregenerate had been chosen from the corrupt mass of mankind consequent upon the Fall. Initially, 'man's nature had been innocent and uncorrupted'. 'God had created man after his own image'. But the 'miserable ruin' of the fall – the destruction of God's image in man by man – had ended this 'state of innocence'. Yet God was a forgiving deity. 'He spiritually form[ed] and fashion[ed out of] carnal man, a new, just, and holy man'. He removed him from his past sins and promised him eternal life. This was regeneration and Christ was 'to be the way of regeneration'. There was no self-help involved. Only through faith, given him by Christ's justice, could man become regenerate.⁷⁸⁶ Thus is followed that the world might also be populated by those who were not in receipt of this saving mercy. Both the latter – the reprobate – and the elect would go good works, for a knowledge of God was not denied to the unregenerate. But whereas the elect performed their works with 'the assuarance of pleasing God', the reprobate did not.⁷⁸⁷

Woolton's theology thus demanded a confidence on the part of the believer in his own salvation. Yet this was not easily had if both saints and sinners were not readily distinguishable in everyday society. Here Woolton came close to advocating a voluntaristic doctrine of faith.⁷⁸⁸ That in fact he managed to avoid this was due to the outward thrust implicit in 'community' or 'public' works. Confidence of one's salvation was to be found in an unswerving commitment to good works. Not only did such deeds serve for the profit of one's neighbours: they also 'confirm our faith in us, and assure us of our election'. 'A godly life is always conjoined with a lively faith'. Those who had only 'temporary faith' would ultimately fall by the wayside unable to maintain the necessary degree of commitment.⁷⁸⁹

Of course, in practice, the temptation to see in good works a ready means of salvation remained strong. Only the injunction to consider others before

⁷⁸⁴ *Christian Manuell*, pp. 8, 13.

⁷⁸⁵ Kendall, *English Calvinism*, p. 79. See also below, p. 168.

⁷⁸⁶ *A Newe Anatomie*, epistle dedicatory, fos. 2-3, 26v-7, 35v, 37v.

⁷⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, fo 37v; *Christian Manuell*, pp. 72-3.

⁷⁸⁸ Kendall, *English Calvinism*, pp. 21-8.

⁷⁸⁹ *Christian Manuell*, pp. 7, 72-3.

oneself 'so that God might be glorified amongst men' provided any safeguard. This, however, can have been of little comfort to the magistrates against whom Woolton had inveighed so strongly. It was no doubt of some value to learn that wealth was not a barrier to salvation and that the elect and reprobate were to be found at all levels of society. But it cannot have been welcome news to discover the extent to which good works predominated in Woolton's theology and the manner in which that domination was conceived. A 'doing' religion, especially one which required so unselfish a contribution from the individual might not after all be worth the bother. There were, perhaps, easier ways of establishing whom the elect and reprobate might be.

It is extremely unlikely that Woolton's audience, even those who had been the target for his severest criticisms, would have assessed the situation in so starkly cynical a fashion. But the latent possibility raises an interesting point about the divine's relationship to zeal. Woolton was a Grindalian. But did this also make him a puritan bishop like his near contemporary Matthew Hutton?⁷⁹⁰ At first sight the question may seem somewhat superfluous given that the two men had been exposed to the same religious teachings.⁷⁹¹ But we need to remember that those influences also served to bind Woolton very closely to Alley. Should, therefore, the latter also be viewed as a puritan bishop? If we believe that the common denominator between the three divines and zeal was a 'certain style of evangelical protestantism – a nexus of attitudes about the nature of true religion in its confrontation with popery and its dealings with lay society', then we must answer 'yes'.⁷⁹² Admittedly it is difficult to imagine Woolton or Alley defining their spirituality in terms of 'a constant struggle to externalise [their] sense of [their] own election through a campaign of works directed against antichrist, the flesh, sin and the world'.⁷⁹³ But this did not seriously flaw their claim to be regarded as puritans. A more temperate use of language did not disguise their firm adherence to the concept of a godly commonwealth and to a view of a true Church composed only of 'lively stones', fundamentals in the evangelical protestant position.⁷⁹⁴

⁷⁹⁰ P Lake, 'Matthew Hutton – a Puritan Bishop?', *History*, 64 (1979), pp. 182-204.

⁷⁹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 183-7.

⁷⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 202.

⁷⁹³ P Lake, *Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church* (Cambridge, 1982), p. 282.

⁷⁹⁴ *Idem*, 'The Significance of the Elizabethan Identification of the Pope as Antichrist', *JEH*, 31 (1980), pp. 161-78, at p. 162.

However, the matter cannot be left here. It seems a reasonable observation to make that the inclusion of Hutton within the ranks of puritanism (and by implication Woolton and Alley) rests upon a generous interpretation of the common ground which existed between the divine and zeal. Such generosity is validated by the desire to establish Hutton's 'position in the spectrum of religious opinion'.⁷⁹⁵ In other words, an assumption is being made about Hutton's importance as a divine. Hutton is being viewed as a puritan because an explicit distinction has been postulated between his spirituality and his role as a leading churchman. It is the former and not the latter which determines his position in the spectrum of religious opinion. In other words, Hutton's membership of the Church of England's hierarchy, his conformist ties, are being seen as an accretion to an inherently puritan stance. The latter antedates the former and is therefore the dominant element in the archbishop's religious make-up.

But can Hutton's zeal and conformity be so readily segregated? Were not Grindalianism and conformism branches of the same spiritual tree, protestant humanism? Did they not, therefore, enjoy the same degree of 'antiquity' and respectability? This does not mean that Hutton, Woolton and Alley were not puritan bishops. But it does suggest that their ties with zeal may not have been so clear-cut as was argued in the preceding paragraph. Just as Alley's conformism rested upon strong radical impulses, so then did Woolton and Hutton's Grindalianism encompass discernible and important conformist tendencies. The difference between these divines was one of degree, not of kind.

What the foregoing thus attempts to suggest is that we should perhaps view divines like Alley, Woolton and Hutton on their own terms rather than commit them irredeemably to either a conformist or a puritan camp. In the first twenty years of Elizabeth's reign, these men and others like them formed the religious backbone of the Church of England. But it may be that this subsequently ceased to be so. The events of the 1580s – Whitgift's rise to power and the emergence onto the political and ecclesiastical stage of presbyterianism – may have effectively ended this moderate alliance's domination of domestic religious affairs.⁷⁹⁶ Woolton's experiences as bishop of Exeter can be used to give substance to these assertions.

⁷⁹⁵ Lake, 'Matthew Hutton', p. 184.

⁷⁹⁶ Collinson, *Puritan Movement*, pp. 243-329. For further discussion of the issues raised in the preceding paragraphs see below, pp. 119-20.

Woolton's episcopate began badly. The position he inherited from his predecessor, Bradbridge, was not a good one, even allowing for the Borough incident. Episcopal finances were at a low ebb. The crown's rapacious demands for the payment of first trusts on the bishopric panicked Woolton into borrowing from his clergy.⁷⁹⁷ Although eventually exonerated from this tax, Woolton was still glad of the money to establish his household.⁷⁹⁸ Part of the loan repayment was still outstanding six years later.⁷⁹⁹

Woolton was consecrated bishop of Exeter at the beginning of August 1579.⁸⁰⁰ Within a matter of weeks he had embarked upon his primary visitation of the diocese.⁸⁰¹ Unfortunately at the crucial moment he fell ill and was obliged to entrust matters to Townsend 'and other learned men', who may have exceeded their brief by withdrawing letters of ordination and institution from clergy who were supposedly unworthy.⁸⁰² At about this time also a cell of the Family of Love was uncovered. This seems to have shocked the bishop who learned of the sect's existence from the earl of Bedford.⁸⁰³ No doubt Woolton also felt embarrassed. In his *Castell of Christians* he had confidently declared that 'the anabaptists and fellowship of love' had been suppressed and rooted out in England.⁸⁰⁴

Swift action was taken against the group's ring-leader, Anthony Randall, the rector of Lydford, a large and remote parish on the western edge of Dartmoor.⁸⁰⁵ Randall was deprived from his living and imprisoned in the

⁷⁹⁷ BL, Lansdowne 45/42.

⁷⁹⁸ TNA, SP.12/253/77; BL, Lansdowne 45/42.

⁷⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰⁰ LPL, Reg. Grindal, i. fo. 53.

⁸⁰¹ DHC, Chanter 20, fos. 45v-6.

⁸⁰² BL, Lansdowne 45/42, 43. There is a hint here of strained relations between Woolton and Townsend. Eusebius Paget was delighted with Townsend's 'thrusting out of ignorant and lewd ministers'. Woolton subsequently returned some of the letters though he basically defended Townsend's actions. Possibly Woolton was not anxious to reveal publicly that all was not well between himself and Townsend. The latter's wife was involved in spreading a rumour in the summer of 1581 that Woolton had syphilis. Interestingly, too, Townsend served as the bishop's chancellor at the start of the episcopate, but resigned after only twelve months. He then became dean of the cathedral, an office in the gift of the crown and an ideal base from which to oppose the rule of his diocesan which indeed he did when Woolton sought to introduce new statutes for the cathedral in 1581 (*ibid.*; DHC, Chanter 858, fo. 97; Chanter 782, fo. 417; Chanter 783, fo. 84; Chanter 21, fos. 12-13; see below, p. 148).

⁸⁰³ APC 1578-80, p. 445.

⁸⁰⁴ *Castell of Christians*, sig. Eii.

⁸⁰⁵ *Registrum Parker*, ed. Frere, i. 318.

episcopal gaol.⁸⁰⁶ But this was not the end of the matter. Randall's wife petitioned the privy council for her husband's release, alleging that he had purged himself of his crime.⁸⁰⁷ This stirred the council into ordering Woolton to send Randall up to London for examination by High Commissioners. But the judges were unable to convict Randall and he was set free in the spring of 1580.⁸⁰⁸ Randall then proceeded to vex Woolton over the matter of his deprivation by appealing to the Court of Arches and later to the Court of Delegates. He also, again unsuccessfully, complained about the bishop to the privy council.⁸⁰⁹ All of which time, wrote Woolton, Randall continued to cling to his 'damnable opinions and heresies'. In June 1581 the bishop sent Burghley a copy of Randall's beliefs subscribed 'within these few days'. Meanwhile, the Family of Love gained fresh converts in the south-west and Woolton personally 'brought twenty to open recantation' in Exeter Cathedral.⁸¹⁰

One gets the impression that Woolton was not a lucky bishop. Illness again prevent him making a visitation of his diocese in 1582. This time it was his wife who was stricken. Her worsening condition and eventual demise once more obliged Woolton to appoint deputies. The bishop's eldest son also proved a source of trouble, being 'seduced by Michals the Jesuit and others' after Woolton had ordained him and provided him with a living in Somerset. Then there was a scandal in the episcopal household when a female servant was made pregnant by another of the bishop's servants.⁸¹¹ On top of all this Woolton was constantly being assailed by a stream of governmental directives and commands.⁸¹² It was, therefore, not surprising that the bishop should lose his 'cool' when faced by wilful provocation from radicals like Eusebius Paget.

Paget's confrontation with Woolton has been well-chronicled.⁸¹³ Here we will be concerned with the broader issues of the episode. Paget's arrival in the south-west in the summer of 1580 was not unsolicited. Sir Richard Grenville,

⁸⁰⁶ DHC, Chanter 20, fo. 50; *APC 1578-80*, p. 362.

⁸⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 386.

⁸⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 445.

⁸¹⁰ BL, Lansdowne 33.15. For Randall's 'strange opinions' see J Strype, *The Life and Acts of John Whitgift* (Oxford, 1882), pp. 158-60.

⁸¹¹ BL, Lansdowne 45/43.

⁸¹² DHC, Chanter 41, pp. 80-566.

⁸¹³ Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall*, pp. 336-7; *idem*, *Sir Richard Grenville of the 'Revenge'* (1977), pp. 174-7; I Gowers, 'Puritanism in the County of Devon 1570-1641', Exeter MA thesis (1970), pp. 26-8; P Collinson, 'The Puritan Classical Movement', London PhD thesis (2 vols., 1957), i. 492-5; C I A Ritchie, 'Sir Richard Grenville and the Puritans', *EHR*, 77 (1962), pp. 518-23.

who presented the presbyterian divine to the Cornish rectory of Kilkhampton, was evidently seeking a zealous incumbent for his family's living.⁸¹⁴ Paget was probably chosen because of his ties with Sir Francis Hastings, a younger brother of the third earl of Huntingdon and a distant cousin of Grenville.⁸¹⁵ Seemingly Paget had to be wooed into coming to Cornwall. After his troubles in Northamptonshire, the divine had moved to Somerset where he had been presented to the living of West Camel. He was reluctant to move again unless he could secure a promise that he would not be harassed for his views on the prayer book and the Elizabethan Church.⁸¹⁶ This he later alleged he received from both Grenville and Woolton.⁸¹⁷

Perhaps the bishop was given assurances by Grenville that things would be all right. Certainly the latter seems to have been playing a canny game. Grenville, in fact, may have been attempting to use Paget to boost his standing as a godly magistrate. Associating himself with a known radical would serve to underline the recent victory he had gained as sheriff over the catholic Arundell interest through the exposure, trial and conviction of the seminary priest, Cuthbert Mayne.⁸¹⁸ Grenville probably had a personal animus against the Arundells. The latter, 'the men of inland interests', had long dominated Cornish politics. The former, 'hot-tempered, determined, energetic, harsh', was presentation of the 'coastal', privateering interest which now came to the fore.⁸¹⁹

Paget's appointment to Kilkhampton, however, proved to be costly mistake. Grenville had overestimated his ability to keep the divine's excesses in check. Paget was not a man to confine himself to one parish. Before long he was setting the town of Barnstaple by its ears with fierce attacks from the pulpit on anglican ritual and discipline.⁸²⁰ This was especially embarrassing for Grenville because it was he who had probably been responsible for getting

⁸¹⁴ DHC, Chanter 20, fo. 51; *The Letters of Sir Francis Hastings (1574-1609)*, ed. C Cross (Somerset Record Society, 69, 1969), p. 26.

⁸¹⁵ *Idem, The Puritan Earl: The Life of Henry Hastings Third Earl of Huntingdon 1536-95* (1966), p. 41.

⁸¹⁶ Collinson, *Puritan Movement*, p. 151; *Letters of Sir Francis Hastings*, ed. Cross, p. 25.

⁸¹⁷ *The Seconde Parte of a Register Being A Calendar of Manuscripts Under That Title Being Intended for Publication About 1593, And Now in Dr William's Library, London*, ed. A Peel (2 vols., Cambridge, 1915), i. 287.

⁸¹⁸ Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall*, pp. 347-54.

⁸¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 347.

⁸²⁰ HMC, *Fourteenth Report, Appendix IV: The Manuscripts of Lord Kenyon (1894)* pp. 619-20.

Paget the lectureship.⁸²¹ Nonetheless, Grenville seems to have played along with his protégé's excesses for a while longer, perhaps in the hope that he might after all be backing the right horse. Indeed, in 1581, Grenville increased the temp of reform. In this year the 'ultra presbyterian' David Black arrived from Scotland and set up school at Kilkhampton. Woolton was prevailed upon to grant him a licence to teach.⁸²²

Black's arrival marked the end of any hope which Grenville might still have had that Page would see the sense of restraint. Together the divines proceeded to wage an unrelenting campaign of abuse against the prayer book and the Church's hierarchy. An attempt was made by Paget to establish 'four grant (i.e. quarterly) communions' at Barnstaple after the Genevan model and to exclude the ungodly and statute protestants from the sacraments.⁸²³ Meanwhile, Black and his scholars – termed 'the reformed college' and clearly no ordinary group of schoolchildren – went on sorties to neighbouring churches 'of purpose to quarrel at the sermons' of conforming clergy.⁸²⁴ Back at Kilkhampton, Grenville tamely acquiesced in the attempt to impose a presbyterian regime on the parish, going so far as to allow a conventicle to meet in his house and to attend the Genevan-style funeral of one of Paget's children.⁸²⁵

Matters were evidently getting out of hand. It was time for the authorities to intervene. Woolton took the crucial step in May 1582 when he announced to Burghley a change of approach in his dealings with the most forward members of his clergy. 'Since the lamb's skin will do no good, I will make trial now the lion's will prevail'. The bishop was tired of 'seditious persons expelled from other places attempting to build their nests and to hatch their eggs' in the south-west. He had come round to Burghley's view 'that leniency will nothing prevail with these contentious persons'. He would, therefore, suspend Paget.⁸²⁶ Evidently Woolton had been monitoring the situation for some while and had been in contact with higher authority. Subsequent events would show the extent to which the bishop now looked to London, and in particular to Lambeth, for guidance.

⁸²¹ For Grenville's influence in north Devon, see Rowse, *Sir Richard Grenville*, pp. 113-16.

⁸²² DHC, Chanter 41, p. 202.

⁸²³ *Seconde Parte of a Register*, ed. Peel, i. 289-91.

⁸²⁴ LPL, CM.XII/16.

⁸²⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸²⁶ TNA, SP.12/153/55.

But the for moment at least Woolton's new approach made little impact. We do not in fact know whether the bishop carried out his threat to suspend Paget. Perhaps Grenville sought to intervene once again. If so, it was all the more significant that fifteen months later Grenville himself had changed his tune. Sir Francis Hastings learnt of this change of heart and berated his cousin for his inconstancy, suggesting that his pride had got the better of him. 'The man whom the Lord hath thoroughly seasoned with humility, he falleth flat before the sceptre of the word, and yieldeth to be censured by it, as a mean to reform him'.⁸²⁷

Now that Grenville had burnt his boats with the radical wing of puritanism it was possible to take a firmer line with nonconformity in the diocese. The 1584 metropolitical visitation of the south-west seems to have been used as the vehicle to dislodge Paget and Black from their north Cornish stronghold.⁸²⁸ Both men were cautioned by Woolton for their failure to obey the laws of the Church and respectively inhibited from preaching and keeping school.⁸²⁹ Their disregard of these commandments brought them before the court of High Commission.⁸³⁰ Paget was deprived from Kilkhampton and Black, presumably, warned off.⁸³¹ After much foot-dragging, the two divines and their not inconsiderable following of friends and relatives left the area and the diocese.⁸³² Paget's parting shots consisted of an attempt to discredit Grenville and Woolton in the eyes of the government. Both men were sufficiently worried to pen lengthy defences of their conduct.⁸³³

The Paget episode, it was suggested earlier, served to expose a difference of opinion within the ranks of west country protestantism.⁸³⁴ Certainly Paget and Black were able to call upon a body of local support for their activities. Black's 'reformed college' allegedly comprised the sons of gentry.⁸³⁵ At Barnstaple, members of both the clergy and laity gave their backing to Paget's deeds.⁸³⁶ Of course, it is a moot point to what extent local factional rivalries presented the two divines with a ready-made body of support. When Grenville turned upon Paget, the latter sought protection from 'his

⁸²⁷ Cross, *Puritan Earl*, p. 42.

⁸²⁸ LPL, Reg. Whitgift, i. 228-31v; DHC, Chanter 783a, *sub* 16 July 1584, Off. c. Maye; *Seconde Parte of a Register*, ed. Peel, i. 287.

⁸²⁹ *Ibid.*; LPL, CM.XII/15.

⁸³⁰ *Seconde Parte of a Register*, ed. Peel, i. 286-91; LPL, CM.XII/16.

⁸³¹ DHC, Chanter 21, fo. 20.

⁸³² TNA, SP.12/176/58, i & ii.

⁸³³ *Ibid.*; BL, Lansdowne 45/42, 43.

⁸³⁴ See above, pp. 92-93.

⁸³⁵ LPL, CM.XII/16.

⁸³⁶ *Seconde Parte of a Register*, ed. Peel, i. 289-91.

justice of the peace', John Kempthorne, who was Sir Richard's sworn enemy.⁸³⁷ Kempthorne was also known to Woolton 'for his vehement disposition to all innovations'.⁸³⁸

Of a similar ilk in the bishop's eyes were Robert Dillon, Humphrey Specott and Robert Moyle.⁸³⁹ Dillon's brother had been in trouble with Woolton for slandering the episcopal bench.⁸⁴⁰ Robert himself had led a raid on Barnstaple Church during Paget's 'rule' 'spoil[ing] the organs' and threatening the mayor.⁸⁴¹ Specott clashed with Woolton over the living of Tetcott when the latter refused to admit the former's nominee, 'an obstinate maintainer of schism', and collated his own candidate to the benefice.⁸⁴² Specott brought an action at common law against the bishop, whilst the radical puritan leadership in London seized upon the incident as yet further proof of episcopal malice.⁸⁴³ Moyle was the son-in-law of Anne Locke, the friend and confidante of John Knox.⁸⁴⁴ In 1583 Anne married the Exeter merchant Richard Prowse, the same year in which Christopher Goodman, another old Genevan, visited the city and preached a spirited and controversial sermon in the cathedral.⁸⁴⁵

It was perhaps more than coincidence which drove Woolton to identify the leadership of lay radicalism in the south-west with members of the lesser gentry. Changing economic circumstances in later Elizabethan England were broadening the base of the magisterial class.⁸⁴⁶ Kempthorne, Dillon, Specott and Moyle were all justices of the peace.⁸⁴⁷ They each exercised ecclesiastical patronage either in their own right or vicariously.⁸⁴⁸ Evidently there was a strong case for believing that these 'rising' men and their clerical adherents formed a defined pressure or interest group. But this impression may have been fostered by Woolton's prejudices. It is well-known that the

⁸³⁷ TNA, SP.12/176/58; Ritchie, 'Grenville and the Puritans', p. 523.

⁸³⁸ BL, Lansdowne 53/90.

⁸³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴⁰ DHC, Chanter 858, fos. 107v-9.

⁸⁴¹ HMC, Kenyon, p. 620.

⁸⁴² *Seconde Parte of a Register*, ed. Peel, ii. 27; DHC, Chanter 21, fo. 22.

⁸⁴³ *The Reports of Sir Edward Coke*, eds. J H Thomas and J F Frazer (6 vols., 1826), iii. 115-19; *Seconde Parte of a Register*, ed. Peel, ii. 87, 262.

⁸⁴⁴ J L Vivian, *Visitations of 1530, 1573 and 1620* (Exeter, 1887), pp. 334-5; P Collinson, 'The Role of Women in the English Reformation Illustrated by the Life and Friendships of Anne Locke', *SCH*, 2 (1965), pp. 258-72, pp. 264-5.

⁸⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 270.

⁸⁴⁶ P Clark, *English Provincial Society from the Reformation to the Revolution: Religion, Politics and Society in Kent, 1500-1640* (Hassocks, 1977), pp. 248, 267.

⁸⁴⁷ BL, Lansdowne 53/90.

⁸⁴⁸ DHC, Chanter 19, fos. 16, 20v; Chanter 20, fo. 15v; Chanter 21, fos. 31, 47.

campaign to establish a presbyterian system of church government in Elizabethan England attracted comparatively few lay supporters, especially from amongst the gentry.⁸⁴⁹ Yet having said this, it is equally apparent that the more radical exponents of puritanism were by no means completely ostracised by the so-called moderate advocates of further reform. Indeed, as our study of Gervase Babington will seek to show, a 'radical' interest group in the provinces might well possess ties of respectability with 'moderate' progressives both locally and at court.⁸⁵⁰ This, of course, was what enabled 'radicalism' to function purposefully. But in doing so compromises were inevitably made between the various grades of puritanism.

Woolton was unable or unwilling to come to terms with this. The concept of 'a rock-solid doctrinal consensus, uniting all sections of English protestant opinion' was fundamental to the bishop's attitude towards ecclesiastical affairs.⁸⁵¹ The radicals, the biblical fundamentalists, were of course part of that consensus. But they represented an extremity in the spectrum of religious opinion. Of much greater importance was the broad base of protestant belief at the centre. This was where Woolton and the Grindalian Church were to be found. But if the bishop thought himself to be holding the balance in the Elizabethan Church, why did he apparently change his stance? The traditional picture of Woolton is of a progressive turned conservative.⁸⁵² The responsibilities of episcopal office became too much for him and his outlook altered accordingly. He became 'constantly an asserter of conformity against the opposers thereof'.⁸⁵³

Admittedly this is a crude analysis but, as we have seen, Woolton's own words seemingly betrayed him. Moreover, it could well be argued that the bishop's change of heart in practice came in 1584 rather than 1582. The metropolitical visitation of the former year was quickly followed by the summoning of parliament. Woolton went up to London to attend the Lords.⁸⁵⁴ There he sampled the view from the centre of government. Doubtless he conversed with fellow diocesans and perhaps also met Whitgift. When Woolton returned to the south-west he was suitable galvanised. The next year he reported to Burghley on the closer control that he had taken

⁸⁴⁹ Collinson, *Puritan Movement*, pp. 188-9, 306-7.

⁸⁵⁰ See below, pp. 111-31.

⁸⁵¹ Lake, 'Matthew Hutton', p. 200.

⁸⁵² DNB; R J E Boggis, *History of the Diocese of Exeter* (Exeter, 1922), p. 378; F White, *Lives of the Elizabethan Bishops* (1898), pp. 261-2.

⁸⁵³ Izaacke, *Antiquities of Exeter*, p. 140.

⁸⁵⁴ DHC, Chanter 41, [440].

over the administration of ecclesiastical justice in his see, evidence surely for the potency of Whitgiftian fervour in the later Elizabethan Church.⁸⁵⁵

Yet when we come to examine what in fact Woolton's 'get tough' policy amounted to, we find a rather different story. Caution and selectivity seem to have been the hallmarks of the bishop's approach to dealing with the over-zealous members of his diocese. Admittedly we are far from having all the evidence at our disposal, but it remains a fact that in the fourteen or so years of his episcopate, Woolton deprived only eleven ministers from their benefices.⁸⁵⁶ Bradbridge evicted sixteen incumbents in half the time.⁸⁵⁷ Moreover, not all of the eleven can be assumed to have been rabid puritans.⁸⁵⁸ Possibly Woolton was using less formal means of bringing aberrant clergy to book.⁸⁵⁹ Certainly the diocesan administration at Exeter acquired a greater tautness under his leadership.⁸⁶⁰ Symptomatic of this was the case taken to ensure that clerical subscriptions were properly recorded after 1584.⁸⁶¹ But these features only serve to underline the belief that Woolton's bark was somewhat worse than his bite. The image of a bishop preparing to deprive 'certain ministers' on the very day of his death in March 1594 perhaps after all misleads.⁸⁶²

But why did Woolton adopt this comparatively mild stance in his dealings with zeal? Possibly pragmatism had a part to play. We know that Whitgift himself after an initial onslaught against puritanism became more selective in his targets, reserving his strongest fire for the radicals.⁸⁶³ Woolton may, therefore, have been following the archbishop's lead in restricting the scope of the conformist drive in the south-west. Doubtless as a lapsed Grindalian he would have been grateful to do so. But it may also be the case that Woolton had a more positive reason for his 'moderate' approach. It should not be forgotten that at the same time as the bishop was coming to terms with convinced presbyterians like Paget, Black, Melanchthon Jewell and John Travers and with radicals such as John Holmes (Specott's candidate for Tetcott) and Bartholomew Stevens, the vicar of Spreyton, he himself was giving succour to the cause of further reform in the south-west.⁸⁶⁴ It is

⁸⁵⁵ BL, Lansdowne 45/43.

⁸⁵⁶ Gowers, 'Devon Puritanism', p. 22.

⁸⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵⁸ DHC, Chanter 858, fo. 130.

⁸⁵⁹ See below, p. 137.

⁸⁶⁰ See below, pp. 231-33.

⁸⁶¹ DHC, Chanter 50, *sub* 10 July 1584; Chanter 151a, *passim*.

⁸⁶² HMC, *Salisbury*, xvii. 623.

⁸⁶³ Collinson, *Puritan Movement*, pp. 263-72.

⁸⁶⁴ Gowers, 'Devon Puritanism', pp. 34-8; ITL, Petyt 538.38/24.

instructive to compare Woolton's willingness to quieten Paget and company with his willingness to allow a combination lecture like the one at Saltash in Cornwall, whose membership included another Scottish presbyterian exile in John Cowper, to flourish.⁸⁶⁵ Similarly, it was under Woolton that many of Melanchthon Jewell's 'resolute puritan ministers' of 1604 were admitted to benefices.⁸⁶⁶ The bishop himself presented one – Robert Clay – to Spreyton in 1588. Seventeen years later, Clay suffered deprivation for his refusal to subscribe to the three articles.⁸⁶⁷

Presumably Woolton felt that these particular examples of zeal posed no substantial threat to the ecclesiastical *status quo* of the region. The fact that certain ministers got into trouble in 1604 merely showed that Woolton's values had ceased to be relevant.⁸⁶⁸ Possibly, as we have suggested, this was the judgement of history which the bishop sought. But in reality the position may have been rather different. The foregoing evidence suggests that there was a greater degree of consistency about Woolton's behaviour as diocesan than tradition would allow. His capacity to demonstrate 'puritan' characteristics had not been entirely extinguished by the events of the 1580s. But whilst we might admire Woolton's principles, we cannot believe that they served the purpose to which he sought to apply them. Woolton, we have agreed, was a Grindalian divine. His restricted application of conformist policies as bishop was in keeping with that basic spiritual urge. But, as we also argued earlier, to claim that Woolton was a Grindalian figure is not also to say that he was a puritan bishop in the sense that his role as diocesan was to mitigate the effects of Whitgiftianism upon zeal.⁸⁶⁹ Woolton may well have conceived of himself as such. But a distinction needs to be made between perception and reality. The facts of the case tell us that Woolton changed course as bishop. He himself acknowledged this. Yet his behaviour towards 'moderate' zeal (or rather what he took to be moderate zeal) was consistent with a Grindalian upbringing.

This paradox can readily be explained if we are prepared to accept that Woolton was from the outset of his clerical career both a progressive and a conformist. Grindalianism was not an alternative to conformism in the sense that adherents of the former could not also attach to the latter. There was, in short, a common spiritual impulse underlying both 'temperaments'. It

⁸⁶⁵ *The Warrender Papers*, eds. A T Cameron and R S Rait (Scottish Historical Society, 18, 1931), i. 203-5; R Carew, *Survey of Cornwall* (1602), pp. 112-13.

⁸⁶⁶ Gowers, 'Devon Puritanism', p. 43.

⁸⁶⁷ DHC, Chanter 21, fo. 37.

⁸⁶⁸ TNA, SP.14/10A/81.

⁸⁶⁹ See above, pp. 98-100.

thus follows that Woolton's conformist leanings as bishop of Exeter did not constitute a surrender of principle. Nor did his attempt to restrict the scope of episcopal reaction in the south-west make him into a crypto-Grindalian, a luke-warm conformist. Bedford's nomination had gone to a man who was as much a painful governor as preacher.⁸⁷⁰ Loss of the Exeter chapter's act book for the 1570s probably skews our estimation of the divine's role as canon residentiary. But it does seem likely that Woolton's contribution as an administrator was as important as his academic prowess. Very possible Woolton fulfilled that most exacting of roles of legal and business adviser to the chapter, travelling back and forth to London and generally interceding on his fellow canons' behalf with the wider, lay world.⁸⁷¹ Doubtless it was this which brought the divine into contact with Burghley.⁸⁷² Doubtless also, it enabled Woolton's uncle, Nowell, to get him the wardenship of Manchester College.⁸⁷³

A capacity for 'good government' – what Hooker would later identify as the 'politician' in Woolton – therefore allowed the disciplinarian and hierarchical element which was so dominant in Alley's outlook to surface when the former became bishop⁸⁷⁴. Radicals like Paget and Black threatened disorder. They must be stopped so that the moderate consensus could thrive and not be tarred by the brush of nascent presbyterianism. Indeed, we may wonder whether Woolton's willingness to fall in behind Whitgift's leadership was not symptomatic of this desire to maintain 'the promise of Grindal's Church'.⁸⁷⁵ If Woolton believed strongly in the latter – an on preceding evidence there seems little reason to doubt that he did – then it was possible and logical that he should resort to one form of 'extremism' in order to defeat another. The ends justified the means.

Yet it may be that Woolton and Whitgift had more in common than the former was prepared to acknowledge. Woolton might readily object to being called a turncoat by radical puritans. Yet, according to the preceding discussion, the bishop's claim to consistency of conduct in reality rested upon his protestant humanist roots which contained both 'conservative' and 'progressive' tendencies. In other words, a shift of emphasis within an established set of beliefs and values enabled Woolton to deny the charge that he had changed sides. Yet if this was the case with the bishop, then it surely must also have

⁸⁷⁰ TNA, SP.12/126/4.

⁸⁷¹ *HMC, Salisbury*, ii. 213. See also below, p. 143.

⁸⁷² *Ibid.*

⁸⁷³ *Rectors of Manchester College Church*, ed. Raines, i. 83, 85.

⁸⁷⁴ TNA, SP.12/126/4; BL, Harleian 5827, fos. 50, 73.

⁸⁷⁵ Collinson, *Puritan Movement*, pp. 177-90.

been so with those 'moderates' like Tremayne and Townsend who readily consorted with radical puritans.⁸⁷⁶ Neither group of moderates had betrayed their principles. Rather they had ceased to conceive of them in the same terms.

Thus it may be that Woolton's vision of 'a rock-solid doctrinal consensus' was flawed. Certainly that consensus existed, but it is to be doubted whether after the events of the 1580s it could any longer be viewed in terms of a spectrum of religious opinion. Arguably the later was being replaced by a growing polarity of outlook.⁸⁷⁷ It was increasingly impossible for Woolton to conceive of himself as occupying a broad central position within the Elizabethan Church. What we described earlier as the religious backbone of that Church was being torn asunder by the contrary pressures of Whitgiftianism and presbyterianism. Neither of these could legitimately be regarded as extremes in the sense that Woolton wished them to be understood. Indeed, their ability to 'capture' the moderate middle ground indicated otherwise. Certainly Woolton was doubly deluded. Neither Whitgiftianism nor Grindalianism were quite what he wished them to be. Thus in striving to preserve his image of the doctrinal consensus, he was actually promoting the very divisions that a moderate like himself so abhorred.

Gervase Babington (1595-97)

Woolton had been nominated to Exeter because of his spotless 'Grindalian' background. He was a man of principle who would not act irresponsibly. There was thus more than an element of irony in the choice of the equally 'moderate' Babington as his successor. For it was Babington's unprincipled and irresponsible behaviour which enabled him to gain Exeter in the opening months of 1595.⁸⁷⁸

At the centre of the affair was William Killigrew, whom we have already met in connection with the troubles at Manchester College.⁸⁷⁹ William was the younger brother of Henry Killigrew, the diplomatist and husband of the godly Catherine Killigrew, Burghley's sister-in-law.⁸⁸⁰ As groom of the privy chamber, William was in an ideal position to benefit from royal patronage. A

⁸⁷⁶ See above, p. 92.

⁸⁷⁷ For this idea see Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, p. 280 and *passim*.

⁸⁷⁸ LPL, Reg. Whitgift, ii. fos. 38-44v.

⁸⁷⁹ See above, p. 91.

⁸⁸⁰ A C Miller, *Sir Henry Killigrew: Elizabethan Soldier and Diplomat* (Leicester, 1963), pp. 4.

number of offices came his way during the second half of Elizabeth's reign, including in 1595 the treasurership of the chamber. Later under James, Killigrew was knighted and appointed chamberlain of the Exchequer.⁸⁸¹ William always lived beyond his means.⁸⁸² Consequently, he was ever alert to the possibility of financial gain. The alienation to himself and his heirs of the episcopal manor of Crediton revealed him at his most acquisitive.

Killigrew had long coveted the estate. But obstacles stood in his way. As we have seen, Crediton had initially been lost to the see of Exeter during Edward VI's reign. Mary had restored the manor to Bishop Turberville as a fee farm and with the proviso that no diocesan should lease the estate for a term longer than his own life-time without the special licence of the crown.⁸⁸³ It was by this method that Killigrew first acquired an interest in Crediton.

Twenty-one year leases of the manor were made to him by Bishops Alley, Bradbridge and Woolton in 1569, 1572 and 1584 respectively.⁸⁸⁴ Prior to the last demise, however, Killigrew proposed an exchange of properties involving the inappropriate rectory of Goran in south Cornwall, which he and his brother John had purchased from the crown in 1564.⁸⁸⁵ The difficulty was that Goran's annual rental value was no more than £80 whereas Crediton's was calculated at £150.⁸⁸⁶ To overcome this, Killigrew argued that £40 of the latter sum constituted an annuity due to bishops of Exeter in recompense for the initial alienation of the estate in 1548.⁸⁸⁷ He also attempted to enhance Goran's valuation. Killigrew was able to call upon the support of the privy council for his scheme.⁸⁸⁸ But despite the pressure that was brought to bear upon Woolton, the bishop 'being a person of great integrity' stood firm. Killigrew was obliged to accept another twenty-one year lease, albeit at the somewhat reduced rent of £140.⁸⁸⁹

⁸⁸¹ *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1558-1603*, ed. P W Hasler (3 vols., 1981), ii. 398-9.

⁸⁸² *DNB, sub nomine*, Sir Robert Killigrew.

⁸⁸³ See above, pp. 50-51.

⁸⁸⁴ *CPR 1566-9*, p. 393; *CPR 1569-72*, p. 455; TNA, C.66/1260, m. 10.

⁸⁸⁵ TNA, C.3/346/1; *CPR 1563-6*, p.163.

⁸⁸⁶ TNA, C.3/346/1. In real terms Crediton may have been worth as much as £30000 a year at the end of the sixteenth century (*ibid.*).

⁸⁸⁷ ECA, D&C.3551, fos. 214-15v. But it would seem that this annuity was extinguished when Mary restored Crediton to Turberville (*ibid.*, fos. 303-4).

⁸⁸⁸ *HMC, Salisbury*, v. 52.

⁸⁸⁹ TNA, C.3/346/1.

Woolton's death, however, created an opportunity for 'the hungry courtier'.⁸⁹⁰ During the see's vacancy, control over its temporalities passed to the crown. Killigrew could now achieve his objective by invoking the 1559 act of exchange which empowered the queen to exchange crown impropriations for episcopal estates of an equivalent value.⁸⁹¹ Accordingly, Killigrew revised his plans. He would restore the rectory of Goran to Elizabeth who would then grant it by letters patent to the see of Exeter. In return the new bishop would convey Crediton to the queen. A further grant by royal letters patent would bring the manor as a fee farm to Killigrew and his descendants.⁸⁹²

In advancing this strategy Killigrew was naturally anxious to avoid a repetition of 1584. He had heard that Babington 'had a purpose to leave the...bishopric of Llandaff' which he had held since 1591.⁸⁹³ Killigrew thus decided to persuade the divine to seek Exeter rather than St Asaph, the see which Burghley had earmarked for him. Negotiations between the courtier and the bishop most probably took place in the autumn of 1594. Giving his reasons, Killigrew promised Babington 'the best help and furtherance both of himself and of his honourable friends' in the business of translation.⁸⁹⁴ From this point onwards, the two men were engaged in a conspiracy to convince the authorities, and in particular the queen, of the virtue of their proceedings.

By the beginning of November, the first half of the bargain had been achieved. Babington's name was now firmly linked to Exeter. Earlier contenders for the see – William James the dean of Christ Church and William Hughes the ageing bishop of St Asaph – had fallen by the wayside.⁸⁹⁵ However, official approval for the exchange itself was slower in coming. Killigrew held the trump card of the queen's goodwill. But many of the privy councillors who had approved Killigrew's scheme in 1584 were now dead. It would be necessary to scrutinize afresh his proposal.

Early in December, the queen instructed Lord Buckhurst and Sir John Fortescue 'to consider seriously of the cause...whether it can be prejudicial to the bishop or no'. But Elizabeth made it clear that she wanted Killigrew's

⁸⁹⁰ J Price, *Danmonii Orientales Illustres: Or the Worthies of Devon* (Exeter, 1701), p. 87.

⁸⁹¹ *Statutes of the Realm* (11 vols., 1810-28), iv. Part i. 381-2.

⁸⁹² TNA, C.3/346/1.

⁸⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹⁵ ECA, D&C.3498/147; TNA, SP.12/259/46.

plan to succeed if at all possible.⁸⁹⁶ In fact, she believed that the greater obstacle was likely to be Babington who thus needed to be 'spoken with'.⁸⁹⁷ On 17 December, presumably as part of Buckhurst and Fortescue's deliberations, Killigrew commissioned a survey of the manor of Crediton to verify that the estate's annual rental value was no more than £100. This had been done by the end of January.⁸⁹⁸ A few days later, the *conge d'elire* for Exeter was at last issued.⁸⁹⁹ Babington was elected at the beginning of February.⁹⁰⁰ The royal assent followed a month later and on 22 March, the day on which Babington was enthroned, the queen granted Goran to the bishopric.⁹⁰¹ Probably it was then also that Babington alienated Crediton to the crown. Finally, in mid May, Killigrew received the manor, having in the meantime arranged for his servant to take a lease of Goran from the new bishop for £100 per annum, thereby disguising the inequality of the exchange.⁹⁰²

Babington's role in these events revealed him to be no less an opportunist than Killigrew. But a propensity for the main chance may not have been the sole reason for his selection. After all, Hughes of St Asaph, judging by his exploits in the Welsh see, would have done as much if not more than Babington to satisfy the courtier's demands.⁹⁰³ But Hughes had no pretensions to being a religious progressive, whereas Babington did. Arguably this made a difference for someone like Killigrew who belonged to a godly faction embracing the court, the city of London and the south-west.⁹⁰⁴ Certainly it is interesting to note that Killigrew's friend, the former radical Robert Some, was a strong contender to replace Babington at Exeter when the latter moved to Worcester in the autumn of 1597.⁹⁰⁵ It is possible that this projected promotion, sponsored as it was by the earl of Essex, represented an attempt to secure an episcopal succession in the south-west that was favourable to, and enhanced the standing of, the interest group of which Killigrew was a member.⁹⁰⁶ Profit and protestantism might thus become sides of the same coin.

⁸⁹⁶ *HMC, Salisbury*, v. 52.

⁸⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹⁸ TNA, C.3/346/1.

⁸⁹⁹ Le Neve, *Fasti*, i. 379; LPL, Reg. Whitgift, ii. fo. 41v.

⁹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, ii. fo. 40v.

⁹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, ii. fos. 38v-9; DHC, Chanter 21, fos. 56v-7; TNA, C.66/1442, mm. 11-14.

⁹⁰² TNA, C.66/1442, mm. 9-11; C.3/346/1.

⁹⁰³ White, *Lives of Elizabethan Bishops*, pp. 196-8.

⁹⁰⁴ See below, pp. 124-31.

⁹⁰⁵ P Lake, 'Robert Some and the Ambiguities of Moderation', *AR*, 71 (1980), pp. 254-79, at p. 259, n. 27; *HMC, Salisbury*, vii. 359. See also below, p. 119.

⁹⁰⁶ *HMC, Salisbury*, vii. 376.

Let us explore these issues in greater detail. Perhaps the most immediate concern is the manner in which Babington was chosen for Exeter. Whatever Killigrew's motives may have been and however well-placed he was to pursue them, it is difficult to imagine a courtier so controlling events prior to the 1590s. As we have seen, for the first half of Elizabeth's reign the business of choosing bishops of Exeter rested entirely with two men: the earl of Bedford and Lord Treasurer Burghley. Theirs was an exclusive relationship. Others might seek to influence them, but they made the decisions. Prospective candidates would have to pass their scrutiny. In 1585, however, their partnership ended. The death of the earl of Bedford proved as significant an event insofar as control over religious and political affairs in the south-west was concerned as the demise of the Courtenay interest almost half a century earlier.⁹⁰⁷ The nature of the earl's influence in the region was personal: his practical authority far transcended the bounds set by the offices and estates that he held.⁹⁰⁸ This made him a difficult act to follow, a point all too readily demonstrated by his grandson, Edward, who when he emerged from his minority proved to be very much the archetypal aristocratic nonentity.⁹⁰⁹

In fact, Bedford's mantle as lord lieutenant of Devon fell to his son-in-law, William Bourchier, the third earl of Bath.⁹¹⁰ Not only was Bath a newcomer to the south-west: he was also a strong upholder of the 1559 religious settlement.⁹¹¹ This immediately led to controversy. Former 'moderate' followers of Bedford such as the Chichesters, Fortescues and Pollards combined with 'radicals' like the Dillons to wage a struggle for pre-eminence in north Devon, where Tawstock, the Bourchier family seat and subsequently a renowned high church sanctuary, lay.⁹¹² Nearby Barnstaple, the 'capital' of the area, witnessed some of the worst troubles. Bath was the town's recorder and was seeking to establish his authority there in the fact of opposition from the Chichesters and the corporation.⁹¹³ Once begun such rivalries proved hard to resolve, especially as local catholics, hitherto quiescent, seized upon the opportunity to embarrass the progressives.

⁹⁰⁷ *DNB, sub nomine*, Francis Russell, second earl of Bedford; see above, pp. 13, 22.

⁹⁰⁸ *House of Commons*, ed. Hasler, ii. 122-49.

⁹⁰⁹ *CSPD 1581-90*, p. 371; G Scott Thomson, *Two Centuries of Family History* (1932), p. 311.

⁹¹⁰ *The Complete Peerage*, ed. G E Cokayne (1950-9), ii. 17-18.

⁹¹¹ *AI Cant*, I. i. 187; *HMC, Salisbury*, xi. 443.

⁹¹² BL, Lansdowne 68/101; 71/74; TNA, STAC.5/B22/4; *The Correspondence of John Cosin, Bishop of Durham*, ed. G Ormsby (Surtees Society, 52, 55, 1869-72), i. 10.

⁹¹³ *House of Commons*, ed. Hasler, i. 144.

Barnstaple's urban life was constantly disrupted by factional in-fighting in the early seventeenth century.⁹¹⁴

News of Bath's troubles soon reached the privy council. At the end of 1591 'certain gentlemen of Devon' complained to Burghley about the conduct of Thomas Hinson, the earl's land agent and former tutor at Cambridge. Bath had brought Hinson with him when he came west, intruding him upon the local elites to the extent of getting him elected M.P. for Barnstaple. The complainants alleged that the position of trust and authority which Hinson enjoyed with the earl denied them access to Bath's counsels and favours. Indeed, Hinson had poisoned the latter's mind against the gentry and had 'driven a wedge' between Bourchier and his wife. Allegations of jurisdictional malpractice were sufficient to bring Hinson before the privy council. A period of imprisonment ensued.⁹¹⁵ At the end of the following year it was Bath's turn to write to Burghley. Predictably he protested about the behaviour of certain of the local gentry who had made strife between himself and his wife and had set themselves against him, 'relying on my wife's favour and her friends whose credit is great in the court and this is it that maketh them presume so much'.⁹¹⁶

A changing situation in the localities was matched by changing conditions at the centre of government. Here, too, consensus rule was giving way to conflict. The rivalry of Robert Cecil and the earl of Essex scarcely needs rehearsal. By the mid 1590s Burghley's grasp on events was slackening. A struggle to succeed him ensued. Cecil eventually won. Essex, isolated at court, rebelled and was executed. Certainly the rivalry between Cecil and Devereux was real enough. But it seems increasingly implausible to view it in terms of a clash of ideologies rather than of personalities.⁹¹⁷ Crude labels such as 'conservative' and 'progressive', whilst broadly acceptable as a means of understanding the struggle waged in the south-west, are less appropriate when discussing political and religious affairs at the centre of government. Indeed, it may well be that the fluid situation at court consequent upon Burghley's decline prevented rather than fostered the formation of clear-cut factional allegiances.⁹¹⁸ Strong polarities were avoided as courtiers uneasily sought to come to terms with the new environment. As will later be suggested, this tendency, at least insofar as religious matters

⁹¹⁴ See below, pp. 209-17.

⁹¹⁵ Gowers, 'Devon Puritanism', pp. 125-38.

⁹¹⁶ BL, Lansdowne 68/101; *House of Commons*, ed. Hasler, i. 144.

⁹¹⁷ BL, Lansdowne 71/74.

⁹¹⁸ S Adams, 'Faction, Clientage and Party: English Politics, 1550-1603', *History Today*, 2 (1982), pp. 33-9, at pp. 34, 39.

were concerned, persisted well after Cecil had secured his victory.⁹¹⁹ A unity of purpose, albeit one based upon self-interest and survival, became the hallmark of the Jacobean court.⁹²⁰

Babington's career provides us with a beginning. He was a midlander by birth, with a claim to gentle status.⁹²¹ He matriculated from Trinity Cambridge in 1567 where his tutor was none other than John Whitgift, then master of the college. This was the beginning of a life-long friendship.⁹²² Subsequently Babington was appointed joint-tutor with Whitgift to the young earl of Essex: again an event which yielded a long-term benefit.⁹²³ Having entered the ministry, Babington became a university preacher and served briefly as a curate in one of the Cambridge city churches.⁹²⁴

Then in about 1582, upon the recommendation of the heads of the colleagues, he was appointed domestic chaplain to Henry Herbert, the earl of Pembroke, a cousin of the earl of Leicester.⁹²⁵ During the next few years Babington divided his time between a lectureship at Cardiff (which he most likely owed to Pembroke's influence) and the earl's family seat at Wilton in Wiltshire where he established close ties with Pembroke's wife, the sister of Sir Philip Sidney, reputedly helping her with the translation of the psalms into verse.⁹²⁶ It was apparently Herbert's influence, and perhaps also that of Whitgift, which enabled Babington to become prebendary of Wellington in Hereford Cathedral in 1588.⁹²⁷ Pembroke also got Babington the treasurership of Llandaff Cathedral two years later.⁹²⁸ Then in 1591, having gained his D.D. and having preached at Paul's Cross and at court, Babington

⁹¹⁹ L L Peck, *Northampton: Patronage and Policy at the Court of James I* (1982), pp. 18, 215-16.

⁹²⁰ See below, pp. 120-23.

⁹²¹ *Ath Cant*, iii. 21; *The Visitations of the County of Norrington in the Years 1569 and 1614*, ed. G W Mansall (Harleian Society, 4, 1871), pp. 17-18.

⁹²² *Ath Cant*, iii. 21; Strype, *Life of Whitgift*, i. 156; White, *Lives of Elizabethan Bishops*, p. 216.

⁹²³ *DNB, sub nomine*, Robert Devereaux, second earl of Essex, BL, Lansdowne 25/46.

⁹²⁴ *Ath Cant*, iii. 22.

⁹²⁵ *Ibid.*; *DNB, sub nomine*, Henry Herbert, second earl of Pembroke.

⁹²⁶ *Ath Cant*, iii. 22; *The Workes of the Right Reverend Father in God Gervase Babington, Late Bishop of Worcester* (1615), epistle dedicatory, sig. A3; White, *Lives of Elizabethan Bishops*, p. 318. Pembroke held the title of Lord Herbert of Cardiff.

⁹²⁷ Le Neve, *Fasti*, i. 531; *DNB, sub nomine*, Henry Herbert; *Diocese of Hereford: Institutions, Etc. (AD 1539-1900)*, comp. A T Bannister (Hereford, 1923), p. 18: White, *Lives of Elizabethan Bishops*, pp. 292-4).

⁹²⁸ Le Neve, *Fasti*, ii. 262.

was elevated to the see of Llandaff. Pembroke may have shared the honours for this appointment with Burghley.⁹²⁹

Babington's career is important for revealing with especial clarity the closeness of the Whitgiftian and Grindalian positions in the late Elizabethan Church. Certainly it is a moot point whether Babington's upbringing as a divine better qualified him to play the role of conformist or progressive. Admittedly zealots had little difficulty in regarding him as a puritan bishop.⁹³⁰ But it may be that their appraisal lacked subtlety. For there seems little doubt that Babington's position was most ambiguous.

The divine was always able to draw upon the two strands of influence within the contemporary anglican Church. This set him apart from his predecessor at Exeter. Unlike Woolton, Babington was not someone for whom conformism represented a late awakening. Conformist tendencies were not suddenly made overt in him. They and zeal coexisted openly. The bishop's writings made this apparent.⁹³¹ On the one hand we have the by now familiar emphasis upon a true and lively faith as the key to individual salvation, combined with the vision of an all-embracing and all-pervading godly commonwealth as the ideal to which the Elizabethan state should aspire.⁹³² On the other hand, we have a frank reminder of the need for obedience, inculcation and order to enable the full establishment of Christ's rule amongst men.⁹³³ Thus with one voice Babington proposes reform, whilst with another voice he warns of the perils inherent in too excessive a

⁹²⁹ *Ath Cant*, iii. 22; G Babington, *A Sermon Preached At Paules Crosse, the Second Sunday in Michaelmas Tearme 1590*, in *Workes*; *idem*, *A Sermon Preached at Court at Greenwich, XXIIII of May 1591*, in *Workes*; Sir J Harrington, *A Briefe Viewe of the State of the Church of England As It Stood in Q Elizabeth and King James His Reigne to the Yeare 1608* (1653), p. 129; TNA, SP.14/2/138

⁹³⁰ Collinson, *Puritan Movement*, p. 459.

⁹³¹ Babington's favourite authorial medium was the commentary on passages of scripture; his writings ran into several editions both during and after his life-time (*Workes, passim*; A W Pollard and G R Redgrave, *A Short Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland and Ireland 1475-1640* (1926), p. 26).

⁹³² Babington, *Sermon Preached at Paules Crosse*, in *Workes*, p. 58; *idem*, *Certaine Plaine, Briefe, and Comfortable Notes Upon Every Chapter of Genesis*, in *Workes*, pp. 90, 97, 159; *idem*, *Comfortable Notes Upon the Bookes of Numbers and Deuteronomy with An Exposition of the Catholike Faith: Or the Twelve Articles of the Apostles Creed*, in *Workes*, pp. 9, 20, 32, 75, 90, 102, 117; see above, pp. 75-78, 98-100.

⁹³³ G Babington, *Comfortable Notes Upon the Bookes of Exodus and Leviticus*, in *Workes*, pp. 264-89, 341, 390; *idem*, *Notes Upon Numbers and Deuteronomy*, in *Workes*, pp. 18, 202; *idem*, *A Verie Fruitful Exposition of the Commandments, By Way of Questions and Answers for Greater Plainnesse*, in *Workes*, p. 50; *idem*, *Sermon Preached at Paules Crosse*, in *Workes*, p. 60.

campaign of improvement. Reform must come from above, it must be carefully controlled and regulated.⁹³⁴ Government, however, wicked, had to be obeyed.⁹³⁵ Zeal must have its limits and bounds, beyond which if it pass it is not zeal, but a 'fault and [an] indiscretion'.⁹³⁶

Babington's outlook, it could be said, represents an amalgam of the prime tendencies inherent in both Alley and Woolton. This, perhaps, explains why in 1604 – a key year insofar as any test of allegiance was concerned – Babington was able to attend the Hampton Court conference well-disposed to the puritan side and yet could also preach Whitgift's funeral sermon.⁹³⁷ Such extreme moderation might suggest some element of equivocation on the author's part and it is certainly legitimate to ask in view of the bishop's well-attested capacity for unprincipled behaviour whether this 'perfect' *via media* was a real or contrived position? This returns us to the point we made earlier in connection with the Cecil-Devereux rivalry.

It will be apparent the extent to which Whitgift figures in Babington's career. Not only was the archbishop the divine's tutor, the source from which Babington gained his 'humanist' outlook, but he was also the tutor of Essex and Pembroke.⁹³⁸ Now these two earls are commonly identified as puritan sympathisers. Essex, indeed, inherited Leicester's mantle as leader of the progressive party.⁹³⁹ But this did not prevent him from remaining on good terms with the archbishop. Illustrative of this is the attempt made by Essex and Whitgift to get Robert Some nominated to Exeter in 1598.⁹⁴⁰

Some, as we have already noted, was a former presbyterian radical who had rehabilitated himself with the authorities become master of Peterhouse, where Whitgift had once been a fellow, and vice-chancellor of Cambridge University.⁹⁴¹ Although Some was evidently behaving in a selfish way – he wanted to gain high ecclesiastical office – he nonetheless managed to 'change sides' without impugning his puritan credentials.⁹⁴² This perhaps suggests that Whitgift and his conformist colleagues may not have been overly concerned to extract a full confession of past errors from Some as the

⁹³⁴ Babington, *Notes Upon Genesis*, in *Workes*, pp. 141, 159, 186-7; *idem*, *Notes Upon Exodus and Leviticus*, in *Workes*, pp. 210, 221, 293, 337, 341, 357, 397, 415.

⁹³⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹³⁶ Babington, *Notes Upon Numbers and Deuteronomy*, in *Workes*, p. 102.

⁹³⁷ BL, Sloane 271, fo. 23v; Strype, *Life of Whitgift*, ii. 508.

⁹³⁸ *DNB*, *sub nomine*, Henry Herbert.

⁹³⁹ Collinson, *Puritan Movement*, p. 445.

⁹⁴⁰ *HMC, Salisbury*, vii. 359, 376.

⁹⁴¹ *DNB*, *sub nomine*, Robert Some; see above, p. 114.

⁹⁴² Lake, 'Robert Some', pp. 277-8.

price of his 'defection'. Doubtless the archbishop recognised the propaganda value of the affair and was determined to make things as easy as possible for the divine. Yet it may be that Whitgift identified the gain to conformism not in terms of Some's movement away from radicalism, which after all was not great, but in terms of Some's retention of his zealous principles. If someone like Some could be viewed as a conformist and yet at the same time be said not to have reneged upon his puritan ideals, then there were surely strong grounds for believing that Whitgiftianism comprised the moderate centre of the Church of England. Arguably, the archbishop was seeking to expand the conformist polarity within the Calvinist consensus back into the centre-ground position formerly occupied by the likes of Alley and Woolton prior to the 1580s.⁹⁴³

Such a view can alter our perception of Babington. It could be argued that Whitgift and not the bishop was responsible for the latter's 'extreme moderation'. Any artificiality inherent in that outlook derived directly from the archbishop's desire to construct a broad-based national Church.⁹⁴⁴ Babington was not being forced to take 'sides'. Indeed, as far as Whitgift was concerned there were no sides to take. If a presbyterian divine like Some could be assimilated within the archbishop's spectrum of religious allegiance, so then also could an ecclesiastic like Babington who had never aspired to true radicalism. In Whitgift's scale of values, Babington's conformist and progressive tendencies were barely distinguishable. That the bishop should seek to defend the earl of Essex before the queen after the earl's disgrace or that he should go on to enforce the 1604 canons in his diocese of Worcester, a promotion which he very probably owed to Essex, were actions devoid of ideological significance.⁹⁴⁵

But why was Whitgift able to make his vision of a broad-based national Church work? After all, disharmony rather than unity was the dominant feature of religious and political life in the south-west at the close of Elizabeth's reign. But this, of course, was in the localities. At the centre of government, as we have already suggested, events might well take a different course.⁹⁴⁶ Arguably Whitgift's vision was both the creature and creator of this divergence. Underlying the Cecil-Devereux rivalry in the

⁹⁴³ See above, pp. 98-100.

⁹⁴⁴ Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, p. 226.

⁹⁴⁵ TNA, SP.12/274/71; *Certaine Considerations Drawne From the Canons of the Last Synod...For Not Subscription...Within the Diocese of Worcester* (1605); *Certaine Demands Propounded by Some Religious Gentlemen to...Bishops Bancroft, Fletcher, Chaderton, Babington, Cotton and Dove* (1605); HMC, *Salisbury*, vii. 376.

⁹⁴⁶ See above, pp. 115-17.

1590s was the wider problem of a royal patronage crisis.⁹⁴⁷ War and inflation had eroded the stock of wealth normally used to reward the servants and supporters of the crown, whilst at the same time increasing the demand for recompense. Such conditions fuelled the fires of competition and self-interest.⁹⁴⁸ By seeking to remove the element of ideology from court politics, Whitgift offered to facilitate the pursuit of personal ambition by affording patron-client relationships a wide field of action, whilst at the same time sustaining the drive towards opportunism by making its pursuit that much more straightforward. Thus, in a very real sense, the archbishop's new-modelled spectrum of religious allegiances became a self-fulfilling prophecy. The concept was advantageous to those at court wishing to use it, and because they used it, it worked.

Here Babington may have been more sinned against than sinning. Caught up in the spiral of incipient 'anglicanism' he found himself cut off from the 'reality' of local opinion. Ecclesiastical patronage in the mid 1590s was especially problematical. As always under the Tudors the Church's wealth proved an easy target for the unscrupulous. In the early 1590s an unusual number of sees fell vacant through the death of their incumbents.⁹⁴⁹ A ready means of rewarding courtiers was now at hand for the crown. It is clear from the chronology of episcopal appointments made between the end of 1594 and late 1595 and from the associated correspondence that the queen refused to allow certain of the promotions and translations to proceed until the prospective bishops had agreed to assign to selected courtiers various parts of their estates.⁹⁵⁰ Wickham of Winchester, Fletcher of London and Hutton of York are known to have been victims.⁹⁵¹ So, too, was Babington even though he sought to exploit the situation to his advantage. In reality the divine had no more choice in the matter than Wickham and his colleagues. He was caught up in a scramble for office and yet found himself without any ready source of patronage. Both conditions were symptomatic of the new atmosphere prevailing at court.

The round of episcopal promotions and translations which resulted from the mortality of the early 1590s was second in magnitude only to the series of

⁹⁴⁷ J E Neale, 'The Elizabethan Political Scene', *PBA.*, 34 (1948), pp. 97-117.

⁹⁴⁸ J Hurstfield, 'Political Corruption in Early Modern England', *History*, 52 (1967), pp. 16-34.

⁹⁴⁹ Le Neve, *Fasti*, i. 145, 302; ii. 301.

⁹⁵⁰ *HMC, Salisbury*, v. p. xi.

⁹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, v. 31-2, 35, 42, 46, 50, 174.

appointments made at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign.⁹⁵² But the intervening years had witnessed an important development: the emergence of a professional, graduate, anglican, clergy. At the outset of the queen's reign suitable candidates for episcopal office were in short supply. Choice was limited. But now in the 1590s there was a flourishing of talent as the post-Reformation Church came of age.⁹⁵³ Yet in one important respect this proved to be a false dawn. Certainly there was a much wider choice for those selecting bishops. But at the same time it also became much harder to gain episcopal office. The prospect of an influx of new-blood appointees encouraged the formation of a hierarchy of preferment within the episcopate.

Thus from the mid 1590s onwards there was a much greater resort to translation as a means of filling vacant sees.⁹⁵⁴ Established diocesans strove for the most prestigious and wealthy bishoprics. Those who could get on did; those who could not languished.⁹⁵⁵ This, of course, was a constant of preferment in the Church. But it was the Whitgiftian fluidity which made a virtue of self-help, thereby generalising the rivalry. Indeed, Babington's career was a testimony to this new-found freedom of action. From a position in the autumn of 1594 where it seemed likely that he would be left at the see of Llandaff, or at best translated to the equally ill-endowed diocese of St Asaph, he was able to move firstly to the south-west and thence to Worcester, the see once held by his lifelong mentor, Whitgift.⁹⁵⁶

This competitive spirit had two contrasting effects upon the episcopate. On the one hand it made for instability and uncertainty as ecclesiastics jockeyed for position and favour.⁹⁵⁷ On the other hand it produced stability and assurance. The need for bishops and leading divines to keep an eye on the court, even to the extent of becoming practising courtiers, inevitably distanced them from their diocesan charges. This separation was as much intellectual as physical. Its manifestation was a common culture or identity.

⁹⁵² R Houlbrooke, 'The Protestant Episcopate 1547-1603: the Pastoral Contribution', in *Church and Society in England: Henry VIII to James I*, eds. F Heal and R O'Day (1977), pp. 78-98, at p. 82.

⁹⁵³ R O'Day, *The English Clergy: The Emergence and Consolidation of a Profession 1558-1642* (Leicester, 1979), *passim*. For further consideration of this development see below, pp. 264-65.

⁹⁵⁴ eg Le Neve, *Fasti*, i. 105, 379; ii. 24.

⁹⁵⁵ H R Trevor-Roper, 'James I and His Bishops', in *Historical Essays* (1957), pp. 130-45; D E Kenney, 'The Jacobean Episcopate', *HJ*, 5 (1962), pp. 175-81, at p. 179.

⁹⁵⁶ TNA, SP.12/259/46. This undated state paper is calendared for June 1596 (CSPD 1595-7, p. 247). However internal and other evidence points to the autumn of 1594 (*HMC, Salisbury*, v. 18, 177); Harrington, *A Briefe Viewe*, p. 129.

⁹⁵⁷ Trevor-Roper, *Historical Essays*, pp. 130-45.

We can explore this development more closely later.⁹⁵⁸ But certain salient points can be mentioned now in connection with Babington. The essence of this 'court' culture was scholastic humanism. Insofar as a Grindalian divine like Babington was concerned, the practical or extrovert characteristics inherent in the concept of the godly commonwealth were now confined within an introverted academic context. The broad, social ideals of the humanist Reformation henceforth became a 'pure' rather than an 'applied' science.

Something of this can be seen in the way in which Babington cultivated the friendship of Sir Edward Stradling when bishop of Llandaff. Stradling was a leading member of the Glamorganshire gentry. Yet he was also a Roman Catholic. Stradling's grandfather had married the daughter of Sir Thomas Arundell of Lanherne in Cornwall, whilst his father, Sir Thomas, was a long-standing client of Henry Fitzalan, the twelfth earl of Arundel. The last had been responsible for establishing Edward's ties with Sussex. Stradling had represented two of the county's boroughs in the Marian parliaments of 1554 and 1558. Edward subsequently married into the recusant Gage family of Firle. Yet despite these and other handicaps – Stradling's brother had fled overseas at Elizabeth's accession whilst his father had refused to accept the 1559 religious settlement – Edward was able to play a prominent part in local government in the second half of the sixteenth century. He served as J.P., sheriff and deputy lieutenant of Glamorganshire before his death in 1609.⁹⁵⁹

Babington, of course, had little time for papists. He viewed the pope as 'a monster', 'neither God nor man', who 'came from Hell'.⁹⁶⁰ When Bancroft proposed in the House of Lords in 1606 that papists should have a toleration for four years, the bishop allegedly retorted that it was a pity they should be tolerated seven days.⁹⁶¹ It was, therefore, all the more surprising, even allowing for Stradling's willingness to act as a conforming catholic under Elizabeth, that Babington should refer to his 'godly zeal', include him alongside the earl of Pembroke and other 'gentlemen of Glamorgan' in the dedication of his *Exposition of the Commandments* and seek his support for the living of St Athan of which he was patron.⁹⁶²

⁹⁵⁸ See below, pp. 166-72, 186-92.

⁹⁵⁹ *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1509-1558*, ed. S T Bindoff (3 vols., 1982), iii. 393-4.

⁹⁶⁰ Babington, *Notes Upon Exodus and Leviticus*, in *Workes*, Table of Principal Matters (Leviticus), *sub nomine Pope*.

⁹⁶¹ *The Diary of Walter Younge, Esq. (Written At Colyton and Axminster, Co. Devon From 1604 to 1628)*, ed. G Roberts (Camden Society, 1848), p. 6.

⁹⁶² *Stradling Correspondence: A Series of Letters Written in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, ed J M Traherne (1840), pp. 277, 280; Babington, *A Verie Fruitful Exposition*, in *Workes*, epistle dedicatory.

Yet Stradling was not simply a local notable whose goodwill needed to be cultivated. It is true that after Elizabeth's accession Stradling withdrew from the wider world. He did not again serve as an M.P. Yet he still retained a 'national' importance. Staying at home in Glamorgan, he was able to devote more of his time to the study of Welsh history and genealogy. 'He became a very useful man in his county', wrote Wood, 'and was at the charge of such Herculean works for the public good, that no man in his time went beyond him. But, above all, he is to be remembered for his singular knowledge in the British language and antiquities'.⁹⁶³ John Davys Rhys, a fellow catholic, dedicated his Welsh Grammar to Stradling in 1592.⁹⁶⁴

At first sight these scholarly pursuits seem only to confirm Stradling's 'localism'. But this would be to forget the extent of his circle of friends and acquaintances. Not only was Stradling on good terms with conservatives like Lord Buckhurst and Viscount Montagu, he also corresponded and conversed with the Sidneys, the Herberts, Sir Francis Walsingham and Sir Walter Raleigh.⁹⁶⁵ Evidently kinship ties were of some importance here, but it seems more probable that it was Stradling's intellectual interests which were ultimately responsible for his protestant contacts. Certainly it is of more than passing interest to note that leading conservatives like Henry and Thomas Howard, the earls of Northampton and Arundel, who were rehabilitated at court in the early years of the seventeenth century, were also men of letters.⁹⁶⁶ Arguably this played an important role in their reintroduction to the world of high politics. Men of breeding, conjoined by 'traditional beliefs about correct behaviour and modes of action', could always work together.⁹⁶⁷ It is important to recognise that this viewpoint was not an inherently 'catholic' one. Buckhurst and Montagu both had pretensions to being poets.⁹⁶⁸ But the Sidney family and Sir Walter Raleigh boasted the more substantial and developed literary talent. A common 'humanist' interest in the arts afforded such men a common language of discourse, thereby

⁹⁶³ *Ath Ox*, ii. 50.

⁹⁶⁴ *Stradling Correspondence*, ed. Traherne, p. x.

⁹⁶⁵ *House of Commons*, ed. Bindoff, iii. 393-4; *Stradling Correspondence*, ed. Traherne, pp. 11, 23, 24, 52, 73, 139.

⁹⁶⁶ Peck, *Northampton*, pp. 18-23; K Sharpe, *Sir Robert Cotton 1586-1631: History and Politics in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1979), p. 209.

⁹⁶⁷ Idem, 'The Earl of Arundel, His Circle and the Opposition to the Duke of Buckingham, 1618-1628', in *Faction and Parliament: Essays on Early Stuart History*, ed. K Sharpe (Oxford, 1978), pp. 209-44, at p. 244.

⁹⁶⁸ *DNB, sub nominibus*, Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst and Anthony Browne Viscount Montagu.

exemplifying the 'broad church' ethos which typified court life in the two decades prior to the rise of Buckingham.⁹⁶⁹

But if it is being suggested that Babington and Stradling's friendship derived ultimately from an intellectual union between leading courtiers whose respective clients or acquaintances the two men were, then it is also important to note how an ostensibly 'court' culture might be disseminated throughout the provinces of the realm by means of factional or kinship ties. Arguably, it was this phenomenon which a certain Henry Locke was seeking to utilize in his bid to become sub-collector of the clerical tenths and subsidies at Exeter in the mid 1590s. Locke was the son of the godly Anne Prowse by her first husband, Henry, a London mercer.⁹⁷⁰ After a time spent at Oxford, Locke had gone to court where he may have found a place in the entourage of the second earl of Bedford. This brought him into direct contact with Burghley and Robert Cecil. The latter continued to act as Locke's protector throughout the 1590s despite the courtier's mounting financial difficulties.⁹⁷¹ It was doubtless the threat of bankruptcy which made the sub-collectorship so attractive.

As we have seen, Henry Borough was able to make a handsome profit from his tenure of the office under Bradbridge.⁹⁷² Despite being called to account for his fraudulent practices, Borough managed to regain possession of the collectorship under Woolton.⁹⁷³ But the bishop's demise in 1594 voided his authority and transferred the responsibility for the gathering of clerical taxes within the diocese to the Exeter dean and chapter.⁹⁷⁴ This was the signal for Locke to make his move. Both during the closing months of 1594 and again when the see was vacant following Babington's translation to Worcester, the canons of Exeter were subjected to the impecunious courtier's solicitations.⁹⁷⁵

⁹⁶⁹ *Ibid., sub nominibus*, Sir Philip Sidney and Sir Walter Raleigh. See also Sharpe, *Sir Robert Cotton*, pp. 84-5.

⁹⁷⁰ For Anne Prowse see above, pp. 115-16.

⁹⁷¹ *House of Commons*, ed. Hasler, ii. 484-5.

⁹⁷² See above, p. 87 and n. 166.

⁹⁷³ DHC, Chanter 41, pp. 436-8. This seems to have been against Woolton's will. The bishop evidently granted the collectorship to John Periam, a member of a prominent Exeter family. But Periam, for reasons best known to himself, sub-let the office to Borough. Woolton was presented with a *fait accompli*, though the terms of the grant gave him some comfort in that Borough's tenure was to lapse if Periam died or if he ceased to be bishop.

⁹⁷⁴ Heal, 'Clerical Tax Collection', in *Continuity and Change*, eds. O'Day and Heal, p. 103. Chapters had overall charge of tax-gathering *sede vacante*.

⁹⁷⁵ HMC, *Salisbury*, v. 33; vii. 347, 382, 386, 406, 422; ECA, D&C.3498/146.

But Borough proved too resilient a character to succumb to these tactics. Not only was he able to gain the dean and chapter's confidence in 1594 and 1597, but he also continued as sub-collector in the intervening period of Babington's rule.⁹⁷⁶ Locke was even unable to capitalise upon Borough's fraudulent dealings during the interregnum following Woolton's death which resulted in the financial embarrassment of the dean and chapter and the distraint of caputular lands by the Exchequer.⁹⁷⁷

It would be easy to explain Locke's reversals in terms of personal ineptitude. The courtier's well-attested capacity for financial mismanagement together with his plan to re-employ Borough as his deputy (a plan which Borough was quick to reject), provided strong incentives for maintaining the *status quo*. 'We cannot understand', a much-harassed dean and chapter bluntly told Cecil, 'that Mr Locke is of sufficiency to answer her majesty and the church, or of skill to exercise the office'.⁹⁷⁸ Yet, according to Locke, the chapter did not speak with one voice. The courtier laid the blame for his rejection squarely on the shoulders of Matthew Sutcliffe, the dean of Exeter. It was he who was allegedly responsible for drafting Locke's letters of rejection in 1594 and 1597, letters which were supposedly 'misliked by the chapter'.⁹⁷⁹

But why should Sutcliffe wish to frustrate the courtier? One obvious explanation is ideology. Sutcliffe was at this stage in his career a strong supporter of conformism. He may have had ambitions regarding the see of Exeter and was therefore attempting to cut a thoroughly orthodox figure.⁹⁸⁰ Locke, meanwhile, claimed kinship with leading zealots. Possibly it was his mother's friendship with John Knox which commended him to Cecil as a useful go-between in the negotiations with the earl of Bothwell.⁹⁸¹ At court Locke enjoyed the support of the 'puritan' countess of Warwick.⁹⁸² The latter's husband had acted as patron to the presbyterian divines Christopher Goodman and Thomas Wood, both of whom were well-known to Anne Prowse.⁹⁸³ Locke's mother dedicated a treatise to the countess in 1590.⁹⁸⁴ Alternatively, through Anne Prowse's second husband, Edward Dering, Locke had an entry to the circle of Henry and Catherine Killigrew, which embraced

⁹⁷⁶ ECA, D&C.4587/14-18; *HMC, Salisbury*, vii. 422.

⁹⁷⁷ ECA, D&C.3553, fos. 69, 81-2; BL, Lansdowne 158/9.

⁹⁷⁸ *HMC, Salisbury*, vii. 146, 382, 422.

⁹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, vii. 382, 406.

⁹⁸⁰ *DNB, sub nomine*, Matthew Sutcliffe. See also below, pp. 143-44.

⁹⁸¹ *House of Commons*, ed. Hasler, ii. 484-5.

⁹⁸² *DNB, sub nomine*, Henry Lok.

⁹⁸³ Collinson, *Puritan Movement*, p. 52; *idem*, 'Role of Women in English Reformation', p. 263.

⁹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 272.

such notable militant puritans as Andrew Melville, John Field and Walter Travers.⁹⁸⁵

However, we should beware of pressing this explanation too far. Sutcliffe would shortly desert the ranks of conformist, whilst Locke's ties with radicalism were governed more by birth than conviction.⁹⁸⁶ Thus whilst Henry's mother brought him into close contact with the leadership of the Elizabethan presbyterian movement, so then did his father's friends and relatives afford him a more moderate and conventional protestant background. The courtier's paternal uncle, Michael Locke, was a famous traveller and a friend of Sir Martin Frobisher. Michael's second wife was the widow of Caesar Adelmore and therefore the mother of Julius Caesar, a close friend of Whitgift and a future chancellor of the Exchequer.⁹⁸⁷ Meanwhile, Locke's paternal aunt, Dorothy, had married John Cosworth, a London mercer of Cornish extraction who held the receivership of the duchy of Cornwall.⁹⁸⁸ Through Cosworth's kin, Locke had a ready access to leading gentry figures in the south-west, notably the Carews and Arundells and indirectly the Godophins and Killigrews.⁹⁸⁹ Locke himself subsequently married into the Cornish magistracy. His wife was Ann Moyle whose brother Robert had married Henry's sister and Anne Prowse's daughter.⁹⁹⁰

Locke may thus have been using the wider range of relationships on his father's side of the family to overlay the more limited ties of his mother's kinfolk and acquaintances. Certainly, it was with members of the former that Locke most clearly identified. Like his uncle Michael who published a part translation of Peter Martyr's *Historie of the West Indies*, Locke had pretensions to being a man of letters.⁹⁹¹ Unfortunately, he proved 'an indifferent religious poet', indeed 'a writer of execrable verse', whose work, it was alleged, was fit only 'to lie in sundry nooks amongst old boots and shoes'.⁹⁹² Locke's favourite medium was the sonnet. Between 1593 and 1596 he published several hundred, both religious and secular.⁹⁹³ Each had a

⁹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 269; *DNB*, *sub nomine*, Lady Catherine Killigrew; Collinson, *Puritan Movement*, pp. 166, 233-4.

⁹⁸⁶ *Idem*, 'Role of Women in English Reformation', p. 263. For Sutcliffe see below, pp. 144-45.

⁹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*; *DNB*, *sub nomine*, Sir Julius Caesar.

⁹⁸⁸ *Richard Carew of Antony 1555-1620: The Survey of Cornwall etc*, ed. F E Halliday (1953), p. 312; Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall*, p. 331.

⁹⁸⁹ *Survey of Cornwall*, ed. Halliday, pp. 313, 315.

⁹⁹⁰ *House of Commons*, ed. Hasler, ii. 484-5; see above, p. 106.

⁹⁹¹ Collinson, 'Role of Women in English Reformation', p. 263.

⁹⁹² *Ibid.*; *DNB*, *sub nomine*, Henry Lok; *Survey of Cornwall*, ed. Halliday, p. 20.

⁹⁹³ *Miscellanies of the Fuller Worthies Library: Poems by Henry Lok, Gentleman (1593-1597)*, ed. A B Grosart (1871).

dedictee. Invariably this was a leading politician or courtier – evidently Locke was resorting to crude flattery in order to further his career – but on occasions others were favoured.⁹⁹⁴ Richard Carew of Antony in Cornwall, an ‘especial friend’, was one of the exceptions.⁹⁹⁵

Carew, of course, was related to Locke, albeit distantly. In 1577 he had married the daughter of John Arundell of Trerice by Arundell’s second wife, Catherine Cosworth.⁹⁹⁶ Catherine’s first husband had been Allen Hill, a London mercer, who was apparently a business associate of her great-uncle John and his brother-in-law, Henry Locke’s father.⁹⁹⁷ But it was the ‘intellectual’ tie which ultimately brought Locke and Carew together. Unlike his kinsman, Carew possessed genuine literary talent. Whilst at Oxford he had been ‘called to dispute *ex tempore* with the matchless Sir Philip Sidney’ in the presence of Sidney’s uncles, the earls of Leicester and Warwick.⁹⁹⁸ In addition to Latin and Greek, Carew knew Italian, French, Spanish and German. His antiquarian and heraldic pursuits led him to be elected a member of the Society of Antiquaries in 1598.⁹⁹⁹ This brought him into contact with such well-known intellectuals as Sir Robert Cotton, Sir Henry Spelman and William Camden upon whose *Britannia* Carew modelled his magnum opus, *The Survey of Cornwall*.¹⁰⁰⁰

It seems reasonable to suppose that Locke was hitching his star to Carew: for example the two men combined to write commendatory verses for their cousin Michael Cosworth’s versification of the psalms.¹⁰⁰¹ Certainly Carew had much to offer Locke in terms of local respectability. And it was local respectability which the latter required in his bid to become sub-collector of the clerical tenths and subsidies at Exeter. Admittedly others in the southwest might have performed a similar service for Locke. Carew was not alone amongst the gentry of Cornwall and Devon in combining intellectual pursuits with the more humdrum existence of a squire and J.P.¹⁰⁰² But where Carew

⁹⁹⁴ H Locke, *Ecclesiastes, Otherwise Called the Preacher, Containing Solomon’s Sermons Or Commentaries...Upon the 49 Psalme of David His Father* (1597), sig. Vvii, Xviii.

⁹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, sig. Xviii.

⁹⁹⁶ Survey of Cornwall, ed. Halliday, p. 19. It should be noted that during the post-Reformation period the Arundells of Trerice were protestants whilst their near relations (and the senior branch of the family) the Arundells of Lanherne were catholics.

⁹⁹⁷ Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall*, p. 424.

⁹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹⁹ Survey of Cornwall, ed. Halliday, p. 38.

¹⁰⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 38-9.

¹⁰⁰¹ BL, Harleian 6906.

¹⁰⁰² Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall*, pp. 421-33.

stood apart from his colleagues was in the extent of his scholastic commitments. Even more so than Stradling, Carew served as an important access point for a courtier who was seeking a county identity at the end of Elizabeth's reign. Carew's intellectual stature was such that it enabled him to move more readily beyond the shire boundary whilst at the same time allowing him to stand tall in his own community. In short, it was Carew's 'national' role which made him such a revered and respected figure in south-west society.¹⁰⁰³ By reaching both upwards and downwards, he provided Locke with an important purchase point. Thus when the courtier drew up a list of twenty-two gentlemen and merchants from Devon, Dorset and Cornwall who would stand surety for his good behaviour as sub-collector, it was Carew's kinsman and fellow bibliophile, Sir Francis Godolphin, who headed (and perhaps organised) the Cornish contingent.¹⁰⁰⁴

This list gives proof that Locke's claim upon the sub-collectorship was not without local support. Other guarantors of his good behaviour included Anne Prowse's husband, Richard, his brother John and Edward Cosworth, who was the husband of Carew's sister-in-law.¹⁰⁰⁵ The list seemingly combines moderate and radical elements. Nonetheless, with the exception of Godolphin, no one of major importance appears amongst the twenty-two. Locke's supporters were sufficient rather than convincing, suggesting that he had failed to bridge the credibility gap of his court background. His rival Borough was both the sitting tenant and a local man. This may ultimately explain Sutcliffe's antipathy towards Locke. The dean was simply not prepared to risk appointing him and thus he overruled those members of the chapter who were alleged to be in favour of the courtier. Although an irascible and awkward man, Sutcliffe was here demonstrating a healthy pragmatism.¹⁰⁰⁶ Certainly Borough's progressive background made him a strange ally for a diehard conformist if ideology was the issue at stake.¹⁰⁰⁷

It may thus be the case that Locke was frustrated in his bid for the sub-collectorship by his own 'inner circle' of friends and relatives. Certainly it looks suspiciously like Borough enjoyed the backing of William Killigrew as

¹⁰⁰³ In 1594 Carew was one of two deputies chosen to go to London to treat with Burghley and the queen regarding the leasing of a number of manors of the duchy of Cornwall which threatened the rights of the customary tenants. The Killigrews and the earl of Essex were mobilized in support of the petitioners (F E Halliday, *A Cornish Chronicle: The Carews of Antony From Armada to Civil War* (Newton Abbot, 1967), pp. 23-33.

¹⁰⁰⁴ TNA, SP.12/251/45.

¹⁰⁰⁵ *Ibid.*; *Survey of Cornwall*, ed. Halliday, p. 312.

¹⁰⁰⁶ See below, pp. 143-46.

¹⁰⁰⁷ See above, p. 87.

well as Sutcliffe.¹⁰⁰⁸ Thus in December 1594 Locke was able to report to Cecil that his rival not only claimed a promise of the sub-collectorship from the dean of Exeter for the period of the see's vacancy following Woolton's demise, but he also boasted of an 'assurance from the succeeding bishop (i.e. Babington) through two councillors' for the duration of the new episcopate.¹⁰⁰⁹ Knowing what we do about Killigrew and his special relationship with Babington, it seems difficult to accept that he was not involved at some stage in the procuring of this 'assurance'. In the Elizabethan court of the 1590s the 'pleasure and past promise' of the queen, which Locke claimed to possess, could easily become a devalued unit of currency.¹⁰¹⁰

But why should Borough and not Locke enjoy Killigrew's support? And why was Locke allowed to become a serious contender for the sub-collectorship if he was from the same 'team' as Borough? It seems likely that zeal had a part to play in Locke and Borough's rivalry. We cannot be certain that Killigrew was working hand-in-glove with 'radical' elements in the south-west. But it is at least suggestive in that he so strongly associated profit with protestantism. Certainly it is difficult to understand why Borough, who was no courtier, was able to make known his wishes to Killigrew (or if not Killigrew then to others at court) unless his nearness to west country 'radicalism' gave him a means of connecting centre with locality. Yet the very heart of zeal in the south-west was Locke's own mother, Anne Prowse. Why should she wish to deny her son a chance to prosper, especially as her brother-in-law, Michael Locke, enjoyed a lease of the five prebends of Chulmleigh church?¹⁰¹¹

Here a double-standard came into play. In 1590 Anne's husband, Richard, had written to his 'very good kinsman' Sir Julius Caesar desiring that Caesar intercede on Anne's behalf in a Chancery suit which she had brought against her son Henry regarding the non-payment of a £20 annuity. Eventually a decision was made in Anne's favour and Henry was ordered to pay up.¹⁰¹² However, he had still not done so at the time of his bid for the collectorship. Consequently, three months after Richard Prowse had offered to stand surety for Locke's good behaviour as sub-collector, he was forced to have his step-

¹⁰⁰⁸ Borough's marriage into the Reynell family gave him kin ties with the Killigrews as well as with other staunch protestant clans in the Fortescues, the Coplestones and the Periams. See above, p. 86.

¹⁰⁰⁹ *HMC, Salisbury*, v. 33.

¹⁰¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹¹ BL, Lansdowne 166/14.

¹⁰¹² BL, Lansdowne 163, fo. 379.

son arrested for debt.¹⁰¹³ This episode can only have impressed upon Anne how unreliable Locke could be where money matters were concerned. The courtier was a potential embarrassment to the cause of further reform in the south-west. Accordingly he would receive only tepid support from his near relatives.

But why support Locke at all? There was more than just family pride at stake here. Indeed, it was important that a person like Locke could think that he might stand a chance of achieving his objective. As was suggested earlier, it may be unwise to view the 'radical' proponents of zeal in the late Elizabethan period as being isolated from more 'moderate' opinion.¹⁰¹⁴ Puritans still hoped to 'capture' the Church of England from within. This required influence which in turn demanded strong court ties.¹⁰¹⁵ Here the fluid situation at court in the 1590s gave cause for hope not despair. It might yet be possible to gain a fair hearing. There was thus every incentive to behave as a faction and not as a party. To this extent profit was indeed a necessary ally of protestantism.¹⁰¹⁶ It was important for the cause of further reform in the south-west that material as well as spiritual benefits should be seen to proceed from godliness. Locke provided a case in point. So, too, did Babington. His appointment to Exeter in the spring of 1595 not only sustained the local rivalry between conformists and progressives; it also enabled the two competing views of Church and State – pluralist and unitary – found respectively at Exeter and at the centre of government to co-exist. In more senses than one, therefore, Babington's episcopate represented a triumph for the forces of moderation.

William Cotton (1598-1621)

Babington officially quit Exeter in October 1597.¹⁰¹⁷ As in 1594, the Exeter spiritualities were entrusted to the care of Sutcliffe.¹⁰¹⁸ Once again the interregnum lasted a year.¹⁰¹⁹ The bubble of Some's candidature was quickly burst, notwithstanding the support of Essex and Whitgift. Late August 1597,

¹⁰¹³ HMC, Salisbury, v. 334. Locke alleged that Prowse had had him arrested 'out of malice' because Prowse's brother, John, could not have the collectorship. But this was evidently an argument designed to dissuade Cecil from thinking that Locke was a financial liability. John Prowse had been one of Locke's guarantors in Feb. 1594-5.

¹⁰¹⁴ See above, p. 111.

¹⁰¹⁵ G R Elton, 'Tudor Government: the Points of Contact: the Court', *TRHS*, 5th Series, 26 (1976), pp. 211-28, at p. 227.

¹⁰¹⁶ See above, p. 114.

¹⁰¹⁷ Le Neve, *Fasti*, iii. 66.

¹⁰¹⁸ LPL, Reg. Whitgift, ii. fos. 233, 307.

¹⁰¹⁹ *Ibid.*, ii. fo. 240v; iii. Fo. 205.

at the time of Babington's nomination to Worcester, was the last that was heard of the master of Peterhouse.¹⁰²⁰

The author of Some's downfall was most probably Robert Cecil. It was he whom Essex had entrusted with the task of procuring the queen's signature upon the *conges d'elire* for Babington's translation and Some's promotion.¹⁰²¹ But whilst the former progressed, the latter had languished. We can only assume that Cecil was determined to administer a snub to his great rival, Devereux. Certainly he did not have an alternative immediately in mind. A full ten months were to elapse between Babington's departure and the nomination of William Cotton the following August.¹⁰²²

A Londoner by birth, Cotton was descended from an ancient Staffordshire gentry family and claimed cousinship with the famous antiquary, Sir Robert Cotton.¹⁰²³ After attending Guildford grammar school, William went up to Queen's College Cambridge in 1568 as a scholar.¹⁰²⁴ Proceeding B.A. and M.A., he was incorporated at Oxford in July 1578.¹⁰²⁵ Subsequently he became D.D., but when is not recorded.¹⁰²⁶ Meanwhile, in May 1577, Cotton was ordained priest by Bishop Aylmer of London.¹⁰²⁷

Aylmer proved central to Cotton's early career. Having been recently promoted to the episcopal bench, Aylmer made it his policy to recruit promising graduates from Cambridge to combat the rising tide of nonconformity in the capital.¹⁰²⁸ Cotton proved an immediate choice.¹⁰²⁹

¹⁰²⁰ *HMC, Salisbury*, vii. 376; LPL, Reg. Whitgift, ii. fo. 97v.

¹⁰²¹ *HMC, Salisbury*, vii. 376.

¹⁰²² ECA, D&C.3498/148.

¹⁰²³ T Fuller, *The Worthies of England*, ed. J Freeman (1952), p. 366; H G Owen, 'The London Parish Clergy in the Reign of Elizabeth I', London PhD thesis (1957), p. 98, n. 3; Sir J Maclean, *The Parochial and Famoly History of the Deanery of Trigg Minor in the County of Cornwall* (3 vols., London and Bodmin, 1873), i. 642; BL, Cottonian Julius C.iii, fo. 121.

¹⁰²⁴ *Fasti*, i. 211, n. 5; *AI Cant*, I. i. 104. For more on Cotton's early life see I Cassidy, 'The Episcopate of William Cotton, Bishop of Exeter, 1598-1621; with Special Reference to the State of the Clergy and the Administration of the Ecclesiastical Courts', Oxford BLitt thesis (1963), p. 5.

¹⁰²⁵ *AI Cant*, I. i. 104; *AI Ox*, i. 334.

¹⁰²⁶ He was certainly so by Sept. 1581 (*Novum Repertorium Ecclesiasticum Parochiale Londinense*, comp. G Hennessy (1898), p. 156).

¹⁰²⁷ Owen, 'London Parish Clergy', p. 98, n. 3.

¹⁰²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

¹⁰²⁹ Very likely William Chaderton, the president of Queens' and bishop of Chester played an important role in promoting Cotton. Aylmer was a former student of Queens'. Chaderton's nephew, William Parker, served as archdeacon of Cornwall under Cotton (*AI Cant*, I. i. 313; iii. 309; DHC, Chanter 21, fo. 108).

Even before he had obtained full orders and within three weeks of Aylmer's consecration, Cotton was collated to the prebend of Sneating in St Paul's Cathedral and became a canon residentiary of that foundation.¹⁰³⁰ The day following his own ordination, Cotton was examining ordinands in the capacity of episcopal chaplain.¹⁰³¹ In January 1577/8 Aylmer collated him to the rectory of St Margaret's, New Fish Street.¹⁰³² Three months later he was installed as archdeacon of Lewes.¹⁰³³ This was followed in June 1581 by institution to the crown living of West Tilbury in Essex which was exchanged at the end of September for the episcopal rectory of St Mary's Finchley.¹⁰³⁴ In early 1582, Cotton was appointed official of the archdeacon of St Albans.¹⁰³⁵ He relinquished this post at the beginning of 1584, the year in which he preached before Convocation.¹⁰³⁶

Thus far Cotton's rise had been swift. But now problems set in. In particular, Aylmer withdrew his patronage. The bishop had delegated to Cotton the somewhat thankless task of licensing preachers for Paul's Cross.¹⁰³⁷ But Cotton had fallen down on the job. 'Wearied by the refusal of the preachers appointed', he had 'grow[n]....at ease in Samaria'.¹⁰³⁸ Aylmer, for whom such chores were the stuff of church government, could not understand Cotton's behaviour. Not even 'admonitions and commandments given by my lord of Canterbury' and the other High Commissioners could persuade Cotton to show more diligence. Instead, complained Aylmer, he 'contemptuously throweth the case thereof from him, [leaving me to] provide for it as I can'. This was poor recompense for one 'who ha[d] been his setter up'.¹⁰³⁹

Aylmer thus began to turn his attentions towards another of his chaplains, William Hutchinson. Hutchinson had been a virtual contemporary of Cotton's at Queens'.¹⁰⁴⁰ In about 1579 Aylmer ordained him priest and in 1581 he became episcopal chaplain, the year also in which he was collated to the

¹⁰³⁰ *Novum Repertorium*, comp. Hennessy, pp. 49-50.

¹⁰³¹ J Strype, *Historical Collections of the Life and Acts of the Right Reverend Father in God, John Aylmer, Lord Bishop of London* (Oxford, 1821), p. 23.

¹⁰³² *Novum Repertorium*, comp. Hennessy, p. 18.

¹⁰³³ *Le Neve, Chichester*, comp. Horn, p. 18.

¹⁰³⁴ *Fasti*, i. 211, n. 5; *Novum Repertorium*, comp. Hennessy, p 156.

¹⁰³⁵ R Peters, *Oculus Episcopi: Administration in the Archdeaconry of St Albans 1580-1625* (Manchester, 1963), pp. 12-13.

¹⁰³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 13; Strype, *Life of Whitgift*, i. 399.

¹⁰³⁷ Cassidy, 'Episcopate of William Cotton', p. 8.

¹⁰³⁸ Strype, *Life of Aylmer*, p. 23.

¹⁰³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴⁰ *Al Cant*, I. ii. 441.

archdeaconry of St Albans.¹⁰⁴¹ Cotton and Hutchinson were close friends. As we have seen, Cotton served as Hutchinson's official at St Albans. Later, when Cotton became bishop of Exeter, Hutchinson acted as chancellor of the diocese and became archdeacon of Cornwall.¹⁰⁴² But in the later 1580s and early 1590s this seemed a long way off. It was Hutchinson who was occupying the centre of the stage, acquiring city livings and a prebend in St Paul's.¹⁰⁴³ Indeed, only Aylmer's death in 1594 stemmed the tide of misfortune for Cotton and made possible his rehabilitation.

The event which marked Cotton's return to favour was his appointment as guardian of the London spiritualities following Richard Fletcher's demise in 1596.¹⁰⁴⁴ The significance of this can best be appreciated by noting that no less a cleric than Lancelot Andrewes had managed the vacancy of the see two years earlier upon Aylmer's death.¹⁰⁴⁵ Evidently Cotton had used the opportunity of Fletcher's brief episcopate to mend fences with Whitgift with whom the choice of *sede vacante* commissioners ultimately resided. Perhaps the future bishop had sought to benefit from his cousinship with Sir Robert Cotton who was himself a coming man in the later 1590s. The antiquarian gained entrance to the royal court through Lord Hunsdon and the earl of Northampton.¹⁰⁴⁶ At this time Northampton was closely allied to both the earl of Essex and Cecil.¹⁰⁴⁷ Later, William Cotton would extol Henry Howard as 'my most honoured lord'.¹⁰⁴⁸

Whatever the means of his rehabilitation, Cotton soon found that his re-emergence into public life was very much a mixed-blessing. The twenty years that he had spent as a canon and non-resident archdeacon meant that his chances of obtaining a richly-endowed see were small. If he were to gain something worth having, he would first have to prove himself against more youthful (and less tarnished) competition.¹⁰⁴⁹ Cecil, of course, was aware of this and was determined to exploit it. Cotton would be the ideal candidate for a lower-ranking see like Exeter. He would dutifully obey orders because

¹⁰⁴¹ Owen, 'London Parish Clergy', p. 98, n. 14; *Le Neve: St Paul's*, comp. Horn, p. 15.

¹⁰⁴² DHC, Chanter 785, *sub* 23 Sept. 1605; Chanter 21, fo. 78.

¹⁰⁴³ *Novum Repertorium*, comp. Hennessy, pp. 32, 111, 282, 331; *Le Neve: St Paul's*, comp. Horn, p. 61.

¹⁰⁴⁴ LPL, Reg. Whitgift, ii. fo. 275v.

¹⁰⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, ii. fo. 247.

¹⁰⁴⁶ Sharpe, *Sir Robert Cotton*, pp. 113-14.

¹⁰⁴⁷ *Ibid.*; Peck, *Northampton*, pp. 13-18.

¹⁰⁴⁸ BL, Cottonian Julius C.iii, fo. 121. For more on Hunsdon and Northampton see below, pp. 156, 167.

¹⁰⁴⁹ See above, p. 121.

he had hopes of better things and was reluctant to face the reality of the situation. Cecil, certainly, was not above deception. By the end of the summer of 1598 he had prevailed upon Whitgift, who had perhaps brought Cotton to Cecil's attention as a possible candidate for Exeter, to suggest to Cotton that further promotion would not be far off: 'that I should not warm my stool before I should be removed'.¹⁰⁵⁰ This decided the issue, though in truth there was no alternative for Cotton if he wanted to join the episcopal bench. Not surprisingly, he soon discovered that he was 'nailed to [his] stool' for ever.¹⁰⁵¹

Cotton has gone down in history as an implacable opponent of zeal. He was, wrote Fuller, a 'stout and prudent prelate who plucked up puritanism by the roots before it grew to perfection'.¹⁰⁵² It might therefore be supposed that Cecil's ploy had worked and that with the carrot of translation dangling before him, Cotton had become sufficiently motivated to confront the problem of nonconformity in the south-west. Yet the evidence scarcely seems to confirm the bishop as a puritan-hater. The 1604-5 subscription crisis should have provided the acid test of episcopal resolve. But in the event Cotton proved only too willing to compromise. Only four ministers in the diocese suffered deprivation, whilst a further three were suspended.¹⁰⁵³

These seven belonged to a group of thirty-nine 'resolute puritans' that Cotton had unearthed at Christmas 1604.¹⁰⁵⁴ The bishop reported to the government that 'the most part' had proved 'conformable and [had]....subscribed'.¹⁰⁵⁵ In fact only twelve of the thirty-nine can definitely be said to have accepted the articles.¹⁰⁵⁶ A further thirteen ministers merely promised to conform.¹⁰⁵⁷ Moreover, Cotton dealt with the recalcitrant in a discreet manner. Despite the procuring of a diocesan ecclesiastical

¹⁰⁵⁰ BL, Cottonian Julius C.iii, fo. 121.

¹⁰⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵² Fuller, *Worthies of England*, ed. Freeman, p. 366.

¹⁰⁵³ Gowers, 'Devon Puritanism', pp. 56, 60-2, 68, 71, 76-8; DHC, Chanter 761, *sub* 22 Oct. 1602 and 26 Oct. 1604; PR.Basket C.52/16.

¹⁰⁵⁴ TNA, SP.14/10A/81; DHC, Chanter 761, *sub* 26 Oct. 1604.

¹⁰⁵⁵ TNA, SP.14/10A/81.

¹⁰⁵⁶ *Ibid.*; DHC, Chanter 761, *sub* 14 Dec. 1604.

¹⁰⁵⁷ Gowers, 'Devon Puritanism', pp. 54-6, 58, 60, 62-4, 72-6, 82. The seven resolute not accounted for probably included Samuel Hieron and William Minterne who were hardliners. Indeed, Hieron led the clerical opposition to subscription in the diocese. Yet Cotton reported that he and Minterne were not giving cause for concern. The bishop was subsequently obliged to suspend Hieron five times, though influence exerted by Hieron's ally, Sir William Strode of Newenham, led to the puritan's reprieve on each occasion (Gowers, 'Devon Puritanism', p. 105; see above, p. 85 n. 683; see below, pp. 140-41).

commission to bring to order 'the intolerable wildness and wickedness' of the see, it seems that much of the business of enforcing conformity was conducted privately either through discussion and persuasion or perhaps through the episcopal audience court.¹⁰⁵⁸

In being conciliatory Cotton may well have been obeying orders. The royal proclamation that had initiated the subscription campaign in the summer of 1604 had urged the episcopate to spare no pains to win round refractory clergy.¹⁰⁵⁹ Furthermore, just before Christmas Bancroft wrote to his suffragans requiring them only to remove from office those clergy who refused both subscription and ceremonial conformist. A distinction was thus to be made between moderate and radical puritans.¹⁰⁶⁰ Yet it could equally be argued that Cotton's behaviour was conditioned by self-interest. Although the figures are by no means easy to interpret, it seems likely that puritan resistance in the south-west to the Bancroftian drive for conformity was potentially of greater force than the bishop's report to the government on the 'thirty-nine' indicated.¹⁰⁶¹ Some forty Devon ministers may have signed the millenary petition.¹⁰⁶² A contemporary source claimed that twenty-three preaching ministers from the county were silenced by Cotton.¹⁰⁶³ Neal, writing in the eighteenth century, totalled fifty-one non-subscribers for the diocese.¹⁰⁶⁴ Certainly Cotton seems to have anticipated widespread opposition. In addition to organising a conference with leading local zealots in Exeter Cathedral, the bishop spent 'many days for a whole year and upward' persuading those ministers and others 'who privately dissented from the present state and government of the Church' to accept the articles.¹⁰⁶⁵ Some seventy incumbents, curates and schoolmasters within the diocese

¹⁰⁵⁸ HMC, *Salisbury*, xi. 26; TNA, C.66/1659, mm. 40d-36d. Only 3 of the '39' came before the commission court in 1604-5; 2 others appeared at earlier and later dates. Probably the commission court was used as a last resort against the recalcitrant (DHC, *Chanter 761, sub 14 Dec. 1604, Off c. Anthony Newton*). Similar instances of episcopal caution in the handling of zealous clergy can be found at Chichester, Ely and Wells (K C Fincham, 'Ramifications of the Hampton Court Conference in the Dioceses, 1603-1609', *JEH*, 36 (1985), pp. 208-27, at pp. 210-11, 218-19).

¹⁰⁵⁹ *Stuart Royal Proclamations, I*, eds. J F Larkin and P L Hughes (Oxford, 1973), pp. 87-90, 583).

¹⁰⁶⁰ K Fincham and P Lake, 'The Ecclesiastical Policy of King James I', *JBS*, 24 (1985), pp. 169-207, at p. 178.

¹⁰⁶¹ Gowers, 'Devon Puritanism', p. 104.

¹⁰⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 103.

¹⁰⁶³ BL, Additional 38492, fo. 43.

¹⁰⁶⁴ D Neal, *The History of the Puritans* (2 vols., 1754), ii. 434.

¹⁰⁶⁵ Gowers, 'Devon Puritanism', pp. 107-21; T Hutton, *The Reasons for Refusal of Subscription...with an Answer at Several Times returned Them* (Oxford, 1605), p. 5. See also Fincham, 'Ramifications of Hampton Court', p. 210.

eventually subscribed.¹⁰⁶⁶ But an unspecified number merely 'yield[ed] conformity in their practices', whilst others who had apparently entertained doubts were allowed to escape without any promise as to their future conduct.¹⁰⁶⁷

Despite his latter-day reputation, Cotton evidently did have some sympathy for the puritan standpoint. His wife, Mary, was of a godly disposition being the sister-in-law of Jasper Swift, a Marian exile whose son, also called Jasper, Cotton would later collate to the archdeaconries of Cornwall and Totnes.¹⁰⁶⁸ But puritans in the south-west tended to regard Mary as an intermediary between themselves and her husband. It is, for example, likely that she helped Walter Wilshman, one of the 'resolute ministers', survive the 1604-5 crisis. Later she enabled him to gain a benefice in the diocese.¹⁰⁶⁹ Zealots evidently found Cotton difficult to trust and certainly he appeared to be a contradiction between the bishop's outbursts against 'rattle-headed preachers', 'schismatics' and 'devils wrapped in Samuel's mantle' and his willingness to tolerate a known presbyterian radical like Edmund Snape.¹⁰⁷⁰

The Snape affair began in 1600, when the Exeter city fathers, upon the recommendation of the countess of Warwick and Lady Paulet, appointed the divine to their lectureship.¹⁰⁷¹ Pressure was soon exerted upon Cotton to allow Snape to deliver his sermons in the cathedral, other potential venues being deemed too small to accommodate the expected audiences. The bishop duly complied, though he did so against his better judgement (or so he later claimed). Not surprisingly, this 'improbable arrangement' quickly foundered. Snape exceeded his brief by preaching about divine judgement and predestination which (again according to Cotton) bred contention, tumults, conventicles and factions. After private admonitions and an interview with the canons of the cathedral, Cotton personally and privately inhibited Snape from preaching in Exeter. The divine's response was to give a sermon in the cathedral to fifty or sixty of his followers at the unusual hour

¹⁰⁶⁶ DHC, Chanter 151a, pp. 84-100.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Hutton, *Reasons for Refusal*, p. 5.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Maclean, Deanery of Trigg Minor, i. 653; Garrett, Marian Exiles, p. 301; DHC, Chanter 21, fo. 108. Swift jnr briefly flirted with Catholicism spending a short time at Douai College in Flanders. Apprehended upon his return in 1599 but showing himself to be 'penitent for his offence' he was sent for a period of correction to Cotton before resuming his studies at Oxford (HMC, *Salisbury*, ix. 383).

¹⁰⁶⁹ W Wilshman, *The Sincere Preacher, proving that in whom is Adulation, Avarice, or Ambition, he cannot be Sincere* (1616), sig. A3v-4.

¹⁰⁷⁰ HMC, *Salisbury*, x. 451; TNA, SP.14/95/24.

¹⁰⁷¹ The following is based upon Collinson, 'Puritan Classical Movement', ii. 1190-3.

or six in the evening. This led to his suspension from preaching anywhere in the diocese.

Not done with, however, Snape proceeded to preach at nearby Crediton and Budleigh and catechised in private house in Exeter, during which he cast doubt upon the validity of anglican orders. Cotton thereupon decided to make Snape's suspension public. However, his chancellor, Evan Morrice, refused to comply because the correct legal procedures had apparently not been observed.¹⁰⁷² Even after Cotton had sent articles to Morrice for Snape's examination no action was taken. Only when a petition reached the bishop from an anti-puritan faction amongst the Exeter clergy and citizenry did the chancellor publish the suspension. This was in May 1603. Snape appealed successively to the archbishop's court of audience, the privy council and parliament, complaining of the irregularity of his suspension and of the hardship now faced by his family. The council was sufficiently moved as to require Cotton to allow Snape to preach anywhere in the diocese outside the city of Exeter.

Cotton's account of these events was evidently designed to present himself in the best possible light. He was a victim of circumstance, an innocent bystander whose main aim was to please. But this is not the only construction that can be placed upon the events of the Snape affair. Indeed, it might be argued that Cotton's behaviour towards the presbyterian divine was distinctly ambiguous. The bishop's resort to private admonitions in dealing with Snape may have had less to do with the common bond of Calvinism which united bishop and divine than with Cotton's instinct for self-preservation. It may be that in 1600, when the Snape affair began, Cotton was prepared to hedge his bets. On the eve of Essex's rebellion, tacit support for the progressive interest at court could still be thought likely to pay dividends in terms of furthering ecclesiastical careers. Subsequently, however, the pendulum of opportunity had swung in favour of conformism. As we have argued, the Whitgiftian Church enabled Cotton to make this adjustment with the minimum of intellectual difficulty.¹⁰⁷³ But the bishop may not have been overly concerned with ideological niceties. Indeed, his

¹⁰⁷² Morrice may have had ulterior motives for obstructing Cotton. He may have been intimidated by the strength of support for Snape in Exeter (though the existence of an anti-puritan faction ought to have encouraged him to stand firm). More probably, he had progressive sympathies himself: his widow subsequently remarried into the Prideaux family whilst his son, William, Charles II's secretary of state was a presbyterian (Collinson, 'Puritan Classical Movement', ii. 1190-3; Vivian, *Visitations of Devon*, p. 621; Al Ox, iv. 1034). For more on the Prideauxs see below, pp. 149, 208.

¹⁰⁷³ See above, pp. 120-23.

willingness to temporise both with Snape and the 'resolute ministers' of 1604-5 was perhaps indicative of a pragmatic approach to the issue of religious allegiance. In order to show that he was in control (and thus maintain his position), the bishop was more than ready to subscribe to the view that puritanism was much too ingrained into the fabric of the post-Reformation Church ever to be brought to an exacting conformity.

But this did not prevent a scheming and ambitious man like Cotton suggesting otherwise to the government. The years immediately prior to James' accession were a time of uncertainty for the leaders of Elizabethan England. Prominent courtiers like Cecil and Northampton were paving the way for the Scottish king's succession. They were anxious to secure themselves places of authority in the Jacobean regime.¹⁰⁷⁴ This made them especially sensitive to reports of disorder from the localities. They could not welcome these reports, yet they could scarcely ignore them, particularly if they came from establishment figures such as Cotton. This was a lever which the bishop did not hesitate to use.

At the end of 1600 Cotton submitted a highly-charged account of the state of his diocese to Cecil.¹⁰⁷⁵ The document contained colourful stories about 'profane atheists': 'the ridiculous and profane marriage of a goose and a gander', the baptism of a youth of sixteen with the name of 'Gurlypott, at which time the font was overthrown' and baptism of a horse's head after which 'the bell [was] tolled and rung out for the death of this head'.¹⁰⁷⁶ Cotton also complained about the physical and verbal abuses offered daily to ministers, the growth of schism and the increase in disorderly behaviour at the popular level.

Many man having three wives and being punished by ordinary authority, either by standing excommunicate or by appealing, keep their wives still. incest [is] commonly committed and maintained. [There are m]any disorderly marriages in places exempt, notwithstanding the late canon, which by ordinary authority cannot be redressed. [It is a c]ommon matter to break into churches at night, and to pull up pews to dig men of their graves, as if there were no law or government.¹⁰⁷⁷

This was an undeniably partisan account. Yet it was not so far wide of the mark that it could be dismissed out of hand. Cotton was evidently anxious to appeal as a new brook sweeping clean at Exeter. He quickly and

¹⁰⁷⁴ Sharpe, *Sir Robert Cotton*, pp. 113-14.

¹⁰⁷⁵ HMC, *Salisbury*, x. 451. For the date of this document, see *ibid.*, xi. 26.

¹⁰⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, x. 451

¹⁰⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

ostentatiously prosecuted his predecessor, Babington, in the Court of Arches for allowing the episcopal palace to fall into disrepair. The court found for Cotton and Babington was obliged to pay £70 in compensation.¹⁰⁷⁸ The report of 1600 was perhaps the next stage in Cotton's grand strategy. If he wanted to cast a slur upon the allegedly lax rule of his predecessors, what better way to do so than to confront Cecil with the realities of religious life in the south-west, buttressed by a plea for an ecclesiastical commission for the diocese?¹⁰⁷⁹ The disorders recounted by Cotton were not in fact unrepresentative of the problems faced by diocesans in the oversight of their jurisdictions during the second half of the sixteen century.¹⁰⁸⁰ But they were not normally matters to get excited about. They required local rather than national treatment. But Cotton was anxious to make the most of the situation, so that he could impress his superiors in London with his industry. His claims for success were similarly inflated. Thus in 1606 he boasted to Cecil that the diocesan commission had enabled him to reform many factious preachers and reclaim many papists. 'Within these ten days I have brought eight or nine recusants to the Church; and within one year I hope to clear my diocese of that popish faction, as I have done of the peevish'.¹⁰⁸¹

Cotton's ploy was scarcely subtle. Not surprisingly, it failed to panic Cecil. The bishop, it is true, got his ecclesiastical commission. But this was only after twelve months of lobbying by himself, Sutcliffe and Whitgift.¹⁰⁸² No doubt Cecil had perceived that Cotton protested too much and that any success the bishop might have against protestant or catholic nonconformity would be by compromise rather than all-out attack. Certainly only a minority of the cases handled by the court seem to have involved puritanism or recusancy. The majority were probably concerned with more humdrum matters such as slanders against ministers and matrimonial irregularities.¹⁰⁸³ Many of these were brought as private prosecutions and might easily have been dealt with in the regular ecclesiastical courts of the see. To this extent, Bradbridge's reservations, voiced some three decades earlier, about the disadvantages of a commission court for the south-west seem to have been

¹⁰⁷⁸ DHC, Chanter 21, fos. 65-6v.

¹⁰⁷⁹ HMC, *Salisbury*, xi. 26.

¹⁰⁸⁰ K Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in Popular Beliefs in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century England* (1971), pp. 179-206. But see the qualificatory remarks contained in M Ingram, *Church Courts, Sex and Marriage in England, 1570-1640* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 84-124.

¹⁰⁸¹ HMC, *Salisbury*, xviii. 297-8.

¹⁰⁸² *Ibid.*, xi. 26, 182; DHC, Chanter 761, *sub 3 June 1602*.

¹⁰⁸³ The commission's act book does not specify the subject-matter of a large number of its cases.

justified.¹⁰⁸⁴ The tribunal merely added another legal tier to the hierarchy of courts in the diocese without, so far as it can be determined, providing a markedly improved service for the resolution of local disputes and animosities.

This may not have been an altogether unsatisfactory outcome for Cotton and Cecil. Although the commission court was disbanded in 1609, it had arguably benefitted both men during its brief existence.¹⁰⁸⁵ Cotton had gained a certain prestige: the commission's act book leaves us in no doubt that it was the bishop who was the driving force behind the court. Indeed, he seldom missed a session.¹⁰⁸⁶ The commission became a public version of the episcopal audience court, focusing attention in the south-west upon the person of the bishop.

Cecil's benefit, however, was the more profound. He perhaps appreciated that diocesan commissions were of dubious worth in the tackling of local disorder. But at the same time the court would be a useful addition to Cotton's jurisdictional armoury. The establishment of an ecclesiastical commission at Exeter might prove an important gesture of intent to zealots. Certainly the matter rankled among local puritans. Sir William Strode of Newenham, the protector of Samuel Hieron the vicar of Modbury who had been a leader of the opposition to subscription in the south-west, sought to whip up parliamentary support to secure the revocation of the commission's patent of authority.¹⁰⁸⁷ Strode's actions certainly worried Cotton who feared that Cecil might now stop supporting him.¹⁰⁸⁸ But perhaps this was the impression that the chief minister wanted to give. If the granting of the ecclesiastical commission in 1602 had been tardy, then its renewal in September 1604 at the time of the publication of Bancroft's canons was hasty in the extreme.¹⁰⁸⁹

As always, Cecil seemed to be playing a canny game. Arguably he aimed to ensure an effective system of church government in the south-west by

¹⁰⁸⁴ See above, p. 85.

¹⁰⁸⁵ DHC, CC.181/7. The following year James agreed to abolish diocesan commissions and to content himself with just the High Commissions for Canterbury and York (Fincham and Lake, 'Ecclesiastical Policy of King James', p. 180).

¹⁰⁸⁶ DHC, Chanter 761, *passim*.

¹⁰⁸⁷ HMC, *Salisbury*, xviii. 297; Gowers, 'Devon Puritanism', p. 105; and see above p. 56.

¹⁰⁸⁸ HMC, *Salisbury*, xviii. 297.

¹⁰⁸⁹ TNA, C.66/1659, mm. 40d-36d. The initial grant had been voided when the act of parliament under which the commission courts functioned (I Eliz c. 1) lapsed upon Elizabeth's death.

playing off one interest group against another. Certainly Cotton needed to be kept up to the mark. The promise of translation was one element in this strategy. Cecil's ambiguous leanings were another. Together they served to force Cotton to act out of character. One major consequence was the rekindling of old rivalries in the cathedral close.

As we saw earlier, Simon Heynes had struck back at the canons residentiary by reaffirming the dean's sole right to the officiality of the capitular peculiar jurisdiction and by weakening the canon's hold over the minor clergy of the cathedral close.¹⁰⁹⁰ Elizabeth's accession confirmed Heynes' achievement. The chapter's financial problems (which had resulted in Bishop Alley's 1561 statute limiting the number of canons residentiary to nine) and the dominance of the politiques allowed Gregory Dodds to gain the initiative.¹⁰⁹¹ He ousted Richard Gammon from the officiality (which under Mary had briefly been reclaimed by the conservatives) and he also reorganised the affairs of the vicars choral.¹⁰⁹² In 1563 Dodds limited their numbers to sixteen (six priest and ten lay vicars).¹⁰⁹³ Like the chapter, the vicars choral had suffered financial hardship as a result of the spoliation of Edward's reign.¹⁰⁹⁴ Dodds' reform sought to ease their worries on this score. Yet it also fortified the vicars' sense of independence from the chapter.¹⁰⁹⁵

The balance of power in the Exeter Cathedral close continued to favour the deans until the final years of Elizabeth's reign. This was because the chapter remained weak. Its finances were still insecure and it continued to be split on religion. Not until the later 1580s did a solidly 'anglican' chapter begin to emerge at Exeter. A spate of deaths allowed Grindalian and conformist divines to enter into residence.¹⁰⁹⁶ Such were Thomas Barrett, Woolton's son-in-law and archdeacon of Exeter (1583-1633), John Leache, the cathedral chancellor (1583-1613), Robert Lawe, Woolton's cousin and treasurer (1584-1629), William Tooker, the archdeacon of Barnstaple (1585-1605), Francis Godwin, Woolton's son-in-law and sub-dean (1587-1603) and Matthew Sutcliffe, the dean of Exeter (1588-1629).¹⁰⁹⁷ None of these could

¹⁰⁹⁰ See above, pp. 31-32.

¹⁰⁹¹ See above, pp. 33-35.

¹⁰⁹² See above, p. 66.

¹⁰⁹³ J F Chanter, *The Custos and College of the Vicars Choral of the Choir of the Cathedral Church of St Peter Exeter* (Exeter, 1933), p. 16.

¹⁰⁹⁴ See above, p. 33.

¹⁰⁹⁵ See above, pp. 31-33.

¹⁰⁹⁶ See above, p. 68.

¹⁰⁹⁷ ECA, D&C.3707, fos. 57r-v, 58v, 60, 61r-v; DHC, Chanter 21, fos. 3v, 8, 19v, 21v, 32, 37-8, 76, 82v-3, 101; Chanter 22, fos. 9v, 12-16, 35; BL, Lansdowne 45/43; DNB, *sub nomine*, Francis Godwin.

fairly be described as radicals of the left or right.¹⁰⁹⁸ They provided a firm, broad intellectual foundation for the Church in the south-west during the coming decades.

Not, of course, that this prevented rivalries and antagonisms from emerging.¹⁰⁹⁹ But such differences were in themselves symptomatic of the new-found strength of the Exeter chapter. During Woolton's episcopate capittular finances also received a boost. In 1585 the bishop did a deal with the crown on behalf of the canons. He secured the passage of an act of parliament which safeguarded all the leases and alienations of episcopal and capittular property made during Heynes' tenure of the Exeter deanery.¹¹⁰⁰ In return the crown restored to the chapter and vicars choral lands and estates which had been confiscated (or which were liable to confiscation) under the terms of the 1547 Chantries Act.¹¹⁰¹ Probably the inhabitants of the cathedral close gained more from this than the laity. By the end of the sixteenth century the gentry tenants of church estates were beginning to seek renewals of their leases. At Exeter stricter terms were imposed by the lessors which resulted in the more frequent levying of entry fines.¹¹⁰² The virtues of Alley's 1561 statute now became apparent. As the chapter's income began to rise, so also did the wealth and power of those canons who occupied places of residence.¹¹⁰³ The chapter suddenly found itself the target for ambitious clerics seeking a comfortable niche in the upper reaches of the Church.¹¹⁰⁴ Ideological and economic stability were combining to promote factional politicking in the Exeter Cathedral close. The chapter was coming into its own again.

In these circumstances the role of the bishop was vital. He alone could dampen down the flames of controversy between dean and chapter. Woolton had given an excellent demonstration of this by refusing to allow the canons to capitalise upon his rift with Townsend, even though the dean had opposed a series of reforming statutes which the bishop had drawn up for the cathedral.¹¹⁰⁵ But Woolton's successors were less able to play the part of honest broker. The more competitive, fluid environment of the later 1590s

¹⁰⁹⁸ Lest Sutcliffe be thought an exception see below, pp. 145-58.

¹⁰⁹⁹ See below, pp. 202-08.

¹¹⁰⁰ See above, p. 50.

¹¹⁰¹ TNA, C.66/1254, mm. 29-37. The Exeter chapter had concealed various 'chantry' lands: see above, p. 34.

¹¹⁰² DHC, Chanter 1171; Bodl Lib, Rawlinson D.1138, fos. 1-16.

¹¹⁰³ See above, pp. 34-35.

¹¹⁰⁴ See below, pp. 206-09.

¹¹⁰⁵ See above, p. 101 n. 241; ECA, D&C.7155/1, fo. 221v; DHC, Chanter 1117; see below, p. 148.

compromised the rule of Babington and Cotton. Less desirable qualities were brought to the fore in these bishops. They were the prisoners of faction and ambition. The Locke affair may have awakened the Exeter chapter.¹¹⁰⁶ All that was needed was for some skilful politician to promote the canons' interest. This came in 1599 when William Hellyer joined the chapter.¹¹⁰⁷ No less ambitious and acquisitive than Cotton, Hellyer lost little time in becoming legal and business adviser to his colleagues.¹¹⁰⁸ This was a most influential position: it gave its occupant the free hand that was necessary for self-advancement. Hellyer had his sights set on the leases of certain capitular lands. The farming out of chapter property to individual canons was a well-established practice at Exeter.¹¹⁰⁹ What better way for Hellyer to gain the confidence of his fellow residentiaries than to seek to overturn the verdict of the Reformation by releasing them from the tutelage of their dean?

The task was made all the more straightforward by the evident dislike that Cotton and Sutcliffe had for one another. Very probably the dean had been annoyed by his failure to be nominated to the see of Exeter. This was by no means wishful thinking on his part. In the early 1590s Sutcliffe had appeared as a vigorous and eloquent defender of *iure divino* episcopacy.¹¹¹⁰ Out-maneuvred at court when the see fell vacant in 1594, Cotton's 'surprise' appointment four years later may well have proved the final straw.¹¹¹¹ Certainly the style of Sutcliffe's polemical writings changed after 1598. From a strongly anti-presbyterian stance, the dean became a virulent anti-catholic underlining this by joining projects for the colonization of Virginia and New England.¹¹¹² These deeds placed Sutcliffe outside the ambit of royal favour, for James' religious initiatives tended in the direction of peace and reconciliation.¹¹¹³ In 1621 Sutcliffe suffered a spell of imprisonment for his opposition to the Spanish Match. Later he spoke out against the threat of Arminianism.¹¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰⁶ See above, pp. 124-131.

¹¹⁰⁷ ECA, D&C.3707, fo. 65.

¹¹⁰⁸ ECA, D&C.3553, fos. 1v, 2v-3.

¹¹⁰⁹ Bodl Lib, Top. Devon c.17, fo. 1.

¹¹¹⁰ W D J Cargill Thompson, 'Anthony Marten and the Elizabethan Debate on Episcopacy', in *Essays in Modern British Church History in Memory of Norman Sykes*, eds. G V Bennett and J D Walsh (1966), pp. 44-75, at p. 58. For more detailed consideration of Sutcliffe as a 'radical anti-puritan', see P Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans? Presbyterianism and English Conformist Thought from Whitgift to Hooker* (1988), pp. 111-13, 115-18.

¹¹¹¹ See above, p. 134.

¹¹¹² *DNB, sub nomine*, Matthew Sutcliffe.

¹¹¹³ J Platt, 'Eirenical Anglicans at the Synod of Dort', *SCH, Subsidia* 2 (1979), pp. 221-43, at p. 226; Sharpe, *Sir Robert Cotton*, p. 27.

¹¹¹⁴ *DNB, sub nomine*, Matthew Sutcliffe.

As with Robert Some, it would be wrong to suppose that Sutcliffe's anti-papal polemics indicated a drastic change of outlook.¹¹¹⁵ Rather, having failed in his bid to catch the eye of the government, the dean now gave vent to a different facet of his religious character. However, because Sutcliffe was by nature a combative and competitive individual, the change appeared especially violent.¹¹¹⁶ Certainly it was in keeping with the dean's personality that he should now, from the late 1590s, become an increasingly isolated and embittered figure in the cathedral close at Exeter. But this was not simply a case of sour grates. Arguably Sutcliffe had good reason to behave as he did. Cotton's appointment as bishop not only dented his ego, it also served to undermine his authority in the chapter house. The medieval statutes of the cathedral tied Sutcliffe closely to his diocesan, whilst at the same time affording him substantial disciplinary powers over his fellow canons residentiary.¹¹¹⁷ Any difficulties between the dean and his bishop could not easily be forgotten when the latter was also a member of the chapter. In 1599 Cotton was granted the cathedral precentorship as a *commendam*.¹¹¹⁸ Later, the bishop's sons, William and Edward, gained places of residence in the chapter house.¹¹¹⁹

The evidence suggests that Cotton did little to ease the awkwardness of Sutcliffe's position. On the contrary, he seems to have relished the dean's discomfiture. Certainly he could not afford to allow Sutcliffe free rein: the dean might well do something to discredit him in the eyes of the court. Hellyer naturally seized upon this latent rivalry. Cotton's complaisance was necessary for the success of his plan. By the end of 1604 Sutcliffe's alienation from his fellow canons was sufficiently acute for Hellyer to strike. At a meeting of the chapter attended by Cotton, Barrett, Lawe and Leache, a vote was taken to depose Sutcliffe from the officiality of the capitular peculiar jurisdiction and to appoint Hellyer in his place.¹¹²⁰ Cotton's involvement deprived Sutcliffe of the avenue of local arbitration. Given an unbiased bishop, Sutcliffe could be confident of defeating his opponents in the chapter house because he clearly had precedent on his side.¹¹²¹ But Cotton's hostility

¹¹¹⁵ See above, pp. 119-20.

¹¹¹⁶ *CSPD* 1625-6, p. 520.

¹¹¹⁷ K Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals in the Middle Ages: a Constitutional Study with Special Reference to the Fourteenth Century* (Manchester, 1949), p. 147.

¹¹¹⁸ DHC, Chanter 21, fo. 17v.

¹¹¹⁹ ECA, D&C.3551, fos. 1, 33. This was in 1606 and 1611.

¹¹²⁰ ECA, D&C.4515. At the same time the canons deprived Sutcliffe's sons, John and William, of their stipends and commons as secondaries of the cathedral, alleging that they had not been properly admitted into office.

¹¹²¹ ECA, D&C.4527.

forced the dean to seek help outside the diocese and this at once weakened his case, for the resolution of jurisdictional wrangles lay squarely with the bishop.¹¹²²

Indeed, Sutcliffe was forced to launch personal attacks on Hellyer and his chief accomplice, Leache, in the courts of High Commission and Arches.¹¹²³ When these failed, the dean resorted to the archbishop's Court of Audience where he accused Hellyer of simony, claiming also that when the canon had accepted the Devonshire living of Dunchideock in 1581 he had been under age, not in orders and had contravened the laws governing pluralism.¹¹²⁴ Not content, Sutcliffe thereafter commenced an action in Chancery which alleged that Hellyer had set up 'divers idolatrous and superstitious pictures and images' in the cathedral, notably 'of St Peter and St Paul and of God the Father and Holy Ghost and of our Lady'.¹¹²⁵ Hellyer was apparently addicted to ritual and ceremony. He would later be accused of attempting to curry favour with Archbishop Laud by beautifying and adorning the cathedral altar.¹¹²⁶ But whether this amounted to crypto-popery as Sutcliffe seemed to be suggesting was another matter. Significantly, Hellyer held a fellowship at Chelsea College, the anglican seminary which Sutcliffe had founded.¹¹²⁷ Nonetheless, it was convenient for the dean that the canon should appear as an arch-conservative when he himself was striking such a strongly protestant pose.

But the court was unimpressed. Sutcliffe lost the case: the canons retained control over the officiality for the next sixty years.¹¹²⁸Flushed by his success, Hellyer, who was appointed archdeacon of Barnstaple by Cotton in 1605, turned his attention towards the vicars'choral.¹¹²⁹ He had an added

¹¹²² See below, pp. 237-44.

¹¹²³ ECA, D&C.7155/1, fo. 217v. The record is too fragmentary to reveal what the precise nature of Sutcliffe's accusations were and why they failed.

¹¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, fo. 212v

¹¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, fo. 213.

¹¹²⁶ A G Matthews, *Walker Revised* (Oxford, 1948), p. 114.

¹¹²⁷ *A/ Ox*, ii. 691. Although Chelsea College did contain a broad spectrum of protestant opinions, some of it was of an avowedly conservative nature (Fincham and Lake, 'Ecclesiastical Policy of King James', p. 187). It is possible that Hellyer did have popish sympathies. He was a local man who had married into the Devon Carys, some of whose members were later convicted as recusants (Matthews, *Walker Revised*, p. 114; G Oliver, *Collections, Illustrating the History of the Catholic Religion in the Counties of Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Somerset, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire* (1857), pp. 11, 19-20; W G Hoskins, *Devon* (Newton Abbot, 1972), p. 236). See also below, pp. 149-52.

¹¹²⁸ ECA, D&C.4527.

¹¹²⁹ DHC, Chanter 21, fos. 82v-3.

incentive to do so, for their affairs were currently dominated by Robert Withers, an ally and protégé of Sutcliffe.¹¹³⁰ The dean had in fact been responsible for introducing Withers, now a priest vicar, into the cathedral close.¹¹³¹ Judging from his later actions, it seems likely that Withers had behaved provocatively towards the chapter, emphasising the vicars' independence from the canons.¹¹³² Now that Sutcliffe was in difficulties, Hellyer had his opportunity to teach Withers a lesson. With Cotton behind him, the archdeacon had a relatively straightforward task. Since the 1560s the vicars-choral had kept vacant two of the six stalls reserved for priest vicars.¹¹³³ This had eased their financial worries as the common fund of the college now only had to be split four ways once the salaries of the ten lay vicars had been paid. Successive bishops and canons (including Cotton and Hellyer) had connived at this practice, thus frustrating outside attempts to fill the vacant stalls. But in the autumn of 1606 a new attitude prevailed.

Anthony Facye and Hugh Geare, two ordained ministers who occupied lay vicars' places in the college, petitioned Cotton to be admitted as priest vicars.¹¹³⁴ Very probably they had been encouraged to do this (or at least had gone ahead knowing that they would be well-received). Cotton passed their petition on to the chapter, asking the canons to consult their records and to discuss the matter in a friendly manner with the vicars-choral.¹¹³⁵ Not surprisingly, Withers and Thomas Irishe, a fellow priest vicar, would have nothing to do with the petition.¹¹³⁶ When commanded by the chapter to say why Facye and Geare should not be admitted to the vacant stalls, Withers retorted that as the vicars-choral comprised a corporation by royal letters patent they could do as they pleased and were not bound to follow the orders of the canons.¹¹³⁷ Subsequently the chapter appointed Facye and Geare. But Withers and his fellow priest vicars refused to pay them their stipends. Hellyer responded by having Irishe deprived by the canons for serving as a parish priest whilst still a member of the college, this being an infringement of the statutes of the college.¹¹³⁸ Meanwhile, Withers was deprived by Cotton

¹¹³⁰ ECA, D&C.7155/1, fo. 217v.

¹¹³¹ *Ibid.*, fo. 221.

¹¹³² *Ibid.*, fo. 172.

¹¹³³ *Ibid.*, fo. 173.

¹¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, fo. 48.

¹¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, fo. 49.

¹¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, fo. 50.

¹¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, fo. 51v. Under Elizabeth priest-vicars had often held Exeter city livings in order to augment their meagre stipends. Again successive bishops and canons had turned a blind eye (*ibid.*, fo. 174).

because his continued membership of the vicars-choral was deemed to be against the best interests of that society¹¹³⁹.

However, Withers was not be so easily defeated. He ignored the bishop's sentence and proceeded to wage a campaign in the courts against his antagonists. The struggle was long and acrimonious. Not until 1613 was he finally overcome and forced to quit the cathedral close.¹¹⁴⁰ By then the dispute had escalated into a major legal battle involving the archbishop of Canterbury, the High Commissioners and the Judges Delegate.

Wither's case was not altogether insupportable. Ambiguity surrounded the procedure for appointing to places in the college.¹¹⁴¹ Possibly the chapter had acted *ultra vires* by admitting Facye and Geare without first submitting them to scrutiny by the vicars.¹¹⁴² Certainly Withers had recent precedent on his side with regard to the number of priest vicars at Exeter. The absence of earlier complaints about the vacant stalls might well be interpreted as consent. Ironically, the upshot of the dispute was to give official recognition to the reduced size of the body of priest vicars: from 1614 onwards there were to be only four stalls in the college.¹¹⁴³ To some degree this reflected the parlous financial situation of the vicars following Withers' use of their funds to underwrite his legal battle with the chapter.¹¹⁴⁴ But it also, perhaps, confirmed that the real issue at stake was not the size of the college, but its control. Facye and Geare were clearly opposed to Withers' rule. Withers, therefore, had little choice other than to adopt an extreme (and ultimately indefensible) position with regard to the chapter. A compromise deal over the constitutional relationship of the college to the canons could only undermine his regime.

Once begun on this course Withers was forced to pursue it to the bitter end. He initially defended himself by arguing that the statutes, which allegedly subjected the vicars-choral to the chapter, were no longer observed and that Bishop Woolton had officially reduced the number of priest vicars from six to four during his episcopate.¹¹⁴⁵ When these assertions seemed likely to fail, Withers shifted his ground and claimed that he had never been obliged to

¹¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, fo. 55v.

¹¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, *passim*.

¹¹⁴¹ See above, p. 32.

¹¹⁴² ECA, D&C.7155/1, fo. 74v.

¹¹⁴³ ECA, D&C.3601, fos. 2-3.

¹¹⁴⁴ TNA, C.3/318/48.

¹¹⁴⁵ ECA, D&C.7155/1, fos. 217v, 220. Woolton's measure belonged to the statutes that Dean Townsend had opposed (see above, p. 101 n. 241).

swear an oath of fealty to the chapter when he was admitted to the vicars-choral.¹¹⁴⁶ This was manifestly untrue, but Withers had a trick up his sleeve. He persuaded an unsuspecting clerk in the Court of Arches to let him borrow the transcript of his appeal.¹¹⁴⁷ Withers' appeal had been unsuccessful and so he was now resorting to the Judges Delegate.¹¹⁴⁸ In order to save money (or so he claimed), he would himself make a copy of the Arches' record (which included transcripts of various documents from the archives of the Exeter chapter and vicars-choral) for the Judges Delegate. But this was only a ruse to enable Withers to alter his name in a list of vicars who had sworn to obey the commands of the chapter into that of a fellow vicar, Robert Withall.¹¹⁴⁹

This proved sufficient to mislead the Judges Delegate, who thus reversed the decision of the Court of Arches.¹¹⁵⁰ Fortunately for Cotton and the Exeter chapter the fraud was quickly discovered. The Judges Delegate annulled their verdict and the case was sent before the High Commissioners.¹¹⁵¹ There further evidence of Withers' misbehaviour came to light. With the costs of his legal battles draining the resources of the vicars, Withers had been forced to make an illegal and unfavourable (from the point of view of the college) lease of Woodbury manor.¹¹⁵² Christopher Mainwaring, the lessee, had paid Withers £60 as an entry fine, which the latter had promptly pocketed for his own use.¹¹⁵³

The arbitrary way in which Withers had sought to defend himself lost him a good deal of support, not least amongst his fellow vicars, who now had to forgo an increase in their stipends because of the leasing of Woodbury manor.¹¹⁵⁴ More to the point, the sorry tale of dishonesty had a most damaging effect upon Sutcliffe's reputation. The dean had openly supported Withers when the latter had defied Hellyer.¹¹⁵⁵ Now Withers appeared little better than a common trickster. Sutcliffe's world had crumbled about him. He was a defeated man. Yet the subduing of the dean did not bring peace to the cathedral close. On the contrary, the conflict now intensified as Hellyer's acquisitiveness got the better of him.

¹¹⁴⁶ ECA, D&C.7155/1, fo. 330.

¹¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, fo. 331.

¹¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, fo. 296.

¹¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, fo. 299.

¹¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, fos. 311, 317.

¹¹⁵² *Ibid.*, fo. 318v.

¹¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, fo. 319.

¹¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, fo. 320.

¹¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, fos. 181v, 220v.

Even at the height of the Wither's affair, the archdeacon had been busy furthering his own interests. In 1608 William Bruton, the chapter clerk, died.¹¹⁵⁶ During his lifetime Bruton had acquired several leases of capitarian property almost all of which now passed to his son, John, a minor.¹¹⁵⁷ (The main exception was the rectory of East Coker in Somerset which went to Bruton's daughter, Margaret).¹¹⁵⁸ One particular item attracted Hellyer and that was the house in the cathedral close currently occupied by Sir Thomas Prideaux who had been given its custody by Bruton senior for the remaining years of its lease.¹¹⁵⁹ Notwithstanding this, Hellyer called into question the lease's validity and forced an entry into the premises to evict Prideaux. The latter responded by bringing a Star Chamber action for riot.¹¹⁶⁰

Frustrated, Hellyer sought to blackmail Prideaux into dropping his suit by harassing his brother-in-law, John Sprott (or Specott), the sub-dean of the cathedral.¹¹⁶¹ At the end of 1608, Hellyer accused Sprott in open chapter of having committed simony in order to obtain his place of residence in the cathedral. Hellyer, who at this time held the office of chapter steward, began to withhold Sprott's stipend. The sub-dean thereupon sued the archdeacon in the Court of Chancery, complaining of Hellyer's avowed intention to harass him until he got his way: 'swords are drawn and.....your orator will have no peace until they put up'.¹¹⁶² As good as his word, Hellyer subsequently intensified his campaign against Sprott by spreading a story that the sub-dean 'in a moment of levity' had performed impersonations of his fellow canons describing them as 'all asses and blockheads'.¹¹⁶³

Sprott was still being pursued by the archdeacon in 1615 when he was forced to defend himself in the Court of High Commission against a charge of

¹¹⁵⁶ *The Registrars of Baptisms, Marriages and Burials of the City of Exeter, I; the Registers of the Cathedral*, eds. W U Reynell-Upham and H Tapley-Soper (DCRS, 1910), p. 57.

¹¹⁵⁷ TNA, PROB.11/112, fo. 58.

¹¹⁵⁸ TNA, C.2/Jas.I/C12/44.

¹¹⁵⁹ TNA, STAC.8/95/7.

¹¹⁶⁰ TNA, C.2/Jas.I/S7/6.

¹¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*; DHC, Chanter 21, fo. 76. Sprott had been collated to the sub-deanery in 1603. He was a relative of the radical Humphrey Specott (Vivian, *Visitations of Devon*, p. 306; see above, p. 106). Prideaux and Bruton were also progressively inclined especially the former who was held in high regard by the puritan Samuel Hieron (S Hieron, *The Remedy of Securitie: the Ruine of God's Enemies* (1619), epistle dedicatory; TNA, PROB.11/83, fos. 284v-5).

¹¹⁶² TNA, C.2/Jas.I/S7/6.

¹¹⁶³ TNA, STAC.8/95/7.

embezzlement.¹¹⁶⁴ By this stage Hellyer had succeeded in dividing the chapter. Sutcliffe, the Cotton brothers and Nicholas Marston were all allegedly implicated in the case against Sprott.¹¹⁶⁵ This broadening of the dispute was entirely predictable given Hellyer's uncompromising nature and the marriage of Margaret Bruton to Edward Cotton, the cathedral chancellor.¹¹⁶⁶

With Sprott defying him, the archdeacon had decided to wait for the expiry of Prideaux's lease in 1613. Immediately this occurred, he claimed that a reversionary grant of the property now made him the tenant.¹¹⁶⁷ But the chapter, presumably led by the Cottons, refused to believe him. Instead Prideaux was allowed to renew his lease. The archdeacon was to be placated with £40 from the renewal fine. He could also change the lives upon which a reversionary grant of the rectory of Heavitree (part of the Bruton inheritance) rested.¹¹⁶⁸ But Hellyer had other ideas. With the help of Edward Sainthill the new chapter clerk, whom it was later alleged the archdeacon had got elected to office contrary to the wishes of the majority of his fellow canons, Hellyer had the record of the agreement changed.¹¹⁶⁹ Now the archdeacon was given a reversionary interest in Prideaux's house and another dwelling in Exeter High Street to add to his Heavitree lease.¹¹⁷⁰ A substantial part of the Bruton inheritance would thus one day become joined to Hellyer's patrimony.

Nor did the archdeacon rest here. Having succeeded in gaining a foothold in Bruton's estate, he turned his attention to Margaret's inheritance. Hellyer was much involved at East Coker. He was seeking to purchase the manor there.¹¹⁷¹ Reversion of the tithes of the rectory would complete the lordship. He thus sought to cast doubt upon the validity of the lease by which Margaret held the rectory. In particular, he argued (ironically in view of his own deeds) that Margaret's father had used his position as chapter clerk to alter the terms of the lease, inserting new lives without the canons' permission and covering his tracks by amending the relevant capitular records.¹¹⁷² When this failed to yield results, Hellyer resorted to intimidation.

¹¹⁶⁴ ECA, D&C.3601, fo. 7.

¹¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶⁶ TNA, C.2/Jas.I/C12/44; DHC, Chanter 21, fo. 101.

¹¹⁶⁷ TNA, STAC.8/95/7.

¹¹⁶⁸ ECA, D&C.3551, fos. 38, 41, 45v; TNA, STAC.8/95/7.

¹¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷⁰ ECA, D&C.3553, fo. 39.

¹¹⁷¹ Matthew, *Walker Revised*, p. 114.

¹¹⁷² TNA, C.2/Jas.I/C12/44.

He encouraged the tenants on the manor of East Coker (which by now was his) not to pay tithe to the Cottons.¹¹⁷³

At the same time the archdeacon attempted to oust Cotton from the cathedral chancellorship by promoting a rival candidate, Roger Bates.¹¹⁷⁴ Bates arrived at Exeter in 1616 equipped with royal letters patent which announced that through lapse the right of presentation to the chancellorship had fallen to the crown.¹¹⁷⁵ Despite Cotton's protestations (he had been occupying the office since 1613), Bates was duly admitted and only a letter from Archbishop Abbot to the chapter halted Hellyer's plans.¹¹⁷⁶ Bates thereupon brought a suit in Chancery against Cotton.¹¹⁷⁷ The bishop attempted to have the case heard privately, presumably in order to avoid further embarrassment.¹¹⁷⁸ But, although this was refused, Cotton junior managed to emerge triumphant and Bates was obliged to quit the diocese.¹¹⁷⁹

The attack on Edward Cotton was only one of a number of provocations that the bishop and his family had to withstand from Hellyer.¹¹⁸⁰ The archdeacon was a skilled manipulator of tensions. Despite acting in a blatantly selfish manner he always managed to retain some degree of support in the chapter for his actions. Just as in Sutcliffe's case Hellyer had been able to draw upon the almost traditional enmity which existed between the dean and chapter, so with the Cottons the archdeacon could successfully exploit the ambiguities inherent in the relationship of the bishop and the canons residentiary.

Cotton's desire to gain translation and thus move away from the south-west as quickly as possible had adversely affected his judgement. He had overcommitted himself. The bishop's main concern was to impress his superiors. What better way to do so than to embark upon a programme of administrative reorganisation at Exeter?¹¹⁸¹ Having drawn Cecil's attention to the wider disciplinary problems of the see, it became essential to justify that alarm by positive action. The ecclesiastical commission was one major example of this resort to arms. But there were other elements that were more profound and enduring. These involved the establishment of a new

¹¹⁷³ TNA, STAC.8/95/7.

¹¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷⁵ ECA, D&C.3553, fo. 61v.

¹¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, fo. 63.

¹¹⁷⁷ TNA, STAC.8/95/7.

¹¹⁷⁸ TNA, SP.14/92/34.

¹¹⁷⁹ DHC, Chanter 42, pp. 324-5.

¹¹⁸⁰ TNA, STAC.8/95/7.

¹¹⁸¹ For more on this see below, pp. 222-37.

working relationship with the lesser ecclesiastical authorities of the diocese, in essence the archdeacons who were invariably members of the chapter house.¹¹⁸² Evidently it was Cotton's strategy to defuse opposition by giving the canons their head over Sutcliffe. Defeat for the dean would have the added advantage of removing an awkward individual from the stage who as official of the capitular peculiar jurisdiction might well seek to stymy Cotton's plans out of spite for failing to gain the bishopric.

Unfortunately, in placing his trust in Hellyer, Cotton merely exchanged one potential enemy for another. Certainly the bishop's reorganisation did pose a significant threat to the well-being of the lesser jurisdictions of the diocese.¹¹⁸³ Legal and administrative business was being drawn away from them and this means a financial as well as a political loss for the chapter and archdeacons. As a 'lesser ordinary' there can be no doubt that Hellyer would have been feeling the pinch as much as anyone. So, too, would his chief supporter within the chapter, Thomas Barrett, the archdeacon of Exeter. Perhaps Hellyer and Barrett were already at work inciting opposition within the cathedral close when Henry Manning sought the canon's approval for appointment as diocesan chancellor in 1608.¹¹⁸⁴ This should have been a formality. Instead the canons withheld their consent until they had scrutinised the text of Manning's commission to ensure that the 'jurisdiction and liberties of the dean and chapter in their peculiars and the two archdeaconries of Exeter and Barnstaple' had not been violated.¹¹⁸⁵

This, however, could be no more than a token gesture of defiance, as it was the practical application of the chancellor's authority rather than the theoretical (and customary) statement of his jurisdictional rights contained in his patent of office which so troubled the canons.¹¹⁸⁶ The chapter gave proof of this when three years later it ordered Hellyer to defend its peculiar jurisdiction against Manning 'for granting citations and an inhibition out of the consistory [court] against the same'.¹¹⁸⁷

These clashes, however, were very small beer compared to what happened in 1614-15. For reasons best known to himself, Cotton nominated his elder son, William, currently the cathedral precentor, as Manning's successor.¹¹⁸⁸ Even

¹¹⁸² See below, pp. 237-44.

¹¹⁸³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸⁴ DHC, Chanter 785, *sub 1* Feb. 1607/8.

¹¹⁸⁵ ECA, D&C.3553, fo. 1v.

¹¹⁸⁶ See below, pp. 237-44.

¹¹⁸⁷ ECA, D&C.3553, fo. 21.

¹¹⁸⁸ DHC, Chanter 787b, fos. 288v-9.

on the basic issue of ability, William appeared a poor choice. As an M.A. he possessed only the minimum academic requirements for the post.¹¹⁸⁹ Moreover, as a beneficed clergyman, he can have had little practical experience of legal affairs.¹¹⁹⁰ Chancellorships were increasingly going to highly qualified laymen who had made the study of civil law their career.¹¹⁹¹ Indeed, Cotton was to be the last clerical incumbent of the office at Exeter.¹¹⁹² Yet it was not Cotton's amateurism which ultimately made his appointment so controversial. It was the fact that he was the son of his employer. This blatant piece of nepotism raised the issue of the impartiality of the justice on offer in the consistory court.

Whether Bishop Cotton was fully aware of the implications of his actions is unclear. But Hellyer and Barrett evidently were. When William exhibited his patent of office to the chapter at the end of August 1614, the two archdeacons immediately entered an objection requesting that 'no confirmation of the said patent might pass either now, or at any time hereafter' under the chapter's common seal unless in their presence.¹¹⁹³ But the motion was rejected, perhaps at the prompting of Sutcliffe and Sprott, so the archdeacons appealed to the Court of Arches.¹¹⁹⁴ This had the effect of staying the canons' ratification of the patent and forced Cotton to exercise his authority as chancellor by means of deputies.¹¹⁹⁵ Further trouble followed when Archbishop Abbot found in favour of Hellyer and Barrett. In a strongly worded letter to the chapter, he ordered the canons not to authorise the patent. The king was said to be most displeased, it being a thing unheard of 'in the christian world that a son should supply that place [of vicar-general] under his father'.¹¹⁹⁶

Abbot's letter ended any hopes that Cotton may have had of riding out the storm. He could not go on forever appointing surrogates to act in his name. There was the question of credibility to consider. Accordingly, at the end of February 1614/15 he resigned.¹¹⁹⁷ This was a big blow for his father. Doubtless the bishop had expected Abbot to support him. Instead he was

¹¹⁸⁹ *AI Ox*, i. 334; *Synodalia: a Collection of Articles of Religion, Canons and Proceedings of Convocations*, ed. E Cardwell (2 vols., Oxford, 1842), i. 318.

¹¹⁹⁰ DHC, Chanter 21, fos. 84v, 87, 101v.

¹¹⁹¹ B P Levack, 'The English Civilians, 1500-1750', in *Lawyers in Early Modern Europe and America*, ed. W Prest (1981), pp. 108-28, at p. 115.

¹¹⁹² *DCNQ*, 15 (1928-9), pp. 216-18.

¹¹⁹³ ECA, D&C.3553, fo. 44.

¹¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹⁵ DHC, Chanter 787b, fo. 290.

¹¹⁹⁶ ECA, D&C.3601, fo. 6.

¹¹⁹⁷ DHC, Chanter 787, *sub* 24 Feb. 1614/15.

faced with a *fait accompli*. He reacted by appointing a triumvirate of personal surrogates including two close supporters, William Parker and Jasper Swifte, to perform the chancellor's duties until a suitable replacement for his son could be found.¹¹⁹⁸

But this could scarcely disguise the humiliation that had been inflicted upon the bishop. Hellyer had shown that resistance could pay off in terms of slowing down the campaign to reform diocesan government at Exeter. Suddenly the archdeacon found that he had the majority of canons on his side. Constitutionalism had cloaked itself around Hellyer's own quarrel with the bishop and his family. There was now the prospect that two birds might be killed with one stone. Certainly Cotton's troubles seemed far from over. Barnaby Goche, the master of Magdalene College, Cambridge and currently chancellor of the diocese of Worcester received his patent of office as chancellor in mid-April.¹¹⁹⁹ But it was to be another twelve months before he had his appointment confirmed by the chapter. Not until Cotton had agreed to sign a formal composition with the canons stipulating the relationships of the various jurisdictions of the diocese, could Goche be allowed to act in person as chancellor.¹²⁰⁰

As we shall later see, Cotton lost surprisingly little in terms of authority by acceding to the chapter's demands. The battle of the jurisdictions had in fact already been decided in his favour.¹²⁰¹ Nonetheless, the exercise had not been entirely a waste of time. Cotton had been forced to accept that life as a bishop was not the easy success story that he had wanted it to be. Application and endurance were necessary qualities. Change would not occur overnight. Cecil's ploy had ultimately worked well. Cotton had responded to the bait of promotion. He had put behind him his earlier inactivity and had acknowledged that superficial involvement in the affairs of his diocese would not do.

Unfortunately, however, reward did not follow. By preoccupying himself with his see, Cotton lost contact with the royal court. By 1616 (the year of the composition) he was old and unfashionable. His court patron, Northampton, was dead and the Howard family under a cloud. Not surprisingly, disillusionment crept in compounded by declining health. Cotton became a

¹¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.* See above, pp. 132 n. 1029, 137 n. 1068.

¹¹⁹⁹ B P Levack, *The Civil Lawyers in England 1603-42* (Oxford, 1973), pp. 233-4; ECA, D&C.3601, fos. 9v-11.

¹²⁰⁰ ECA, D&C.3553, fos. 53, 58v, 59v; D&C.2473. For more on this composition see below, pp. 237-44.

¹²⁰¹ *Ibid.*

recluse at his former *commendam* of Silverton, which was now in the hands of his son William.¹²⁰² Not that this materially affected the performance of church government in the south-west. Cotton's labours had after all enabled him to find the peaceful retreat that he so much desired. Fittingly for one bred up under Aylmer, his legacy seems to have been altogether impersonal: the creation of bureaucracy. The post-Reformation Church in the south-west was reaching a certain maturity.¹²⁰³ This was ultimately as much a cause for concern as congratulation.

Valentine Carey (1621-26)

Cotton's long episcopate came to an end on 26 August 1621.¹²⁰⁴ Deprived of the power of speech some days before his death save for the one word 'amen', it was popularly reported that Cotton had 'lived like a bishop, but [had] died like a clerk'.¹²⁰⁵ He was buried at the end of the month in Exeter Cathedral.¹²⁰⁶

Meanwhile, the struggle to find his successor had begun. Both Valentine Carey, the dean of St Paul's, and Lionel Sharpe, the archdeacon of Berkshire, had been keeping a close watch on the ailing bishop. No sooner had Cotton been laid to rest than Sharpe was busy writing to Lord Keeper Williams seeking his support for the vacant see.¹²⁰⁷ But as fast as he moved, Sharpe was unable to defeat Carey. The dean's cousin, Lord Hunsdon, was with James when the news of Cotton's death reached court. Finding the king 'very pleasantly and graciously disposed', Hunsdon quickly sought Buckingham (by whom he was 'much favoured') and together they petitioned James on Carey's behalf, obtaining Exeter 'before others could hear of the vacancy'.¹²⁰⁸ All that remained was for Carey himself to appear at court and 'give thanks to his majesty and those who had done so well for him'.¹²⁰⁹ A fortnight later the royal conge d'elire was despatched.¹²¹⁰ By the end of

¹²⁰² Cassidy, 'Episcopate of William Cotton', p. 11; DHC, Chanter 21, fo. 101v.

¹²⁰³ Compare P Collinson, 'The Jacobean Religious Settlement: the Hampton Court Conference', in *Before the English Civil War: Essays on Early Stuart Politics and Government*, ed. H Tomlinson (1983), pp. 27-51, at p. 50.

¹²⁰⁴ DHC, Chanter 21, fo. 115v.

¹²⁰⁵ BL, Additional 5865, fo. 202.

¹²⁰⁶ DHC, Chanter 21, fo. 115v.

¹²⁰⁷ *The Fortescue Papers*, ed. S R Gardiner (Camden Society, New Series, 1, 1871), p. 160.

¹²⁰⁸ T Birch, *The Court and Times of James the First* (2 vols., 1848), ii. 275.

¹²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²¹⁰ Le Neve, *Fasti*, i. 380.

November Carey was in full possession of his see. The interregnum had lasted barely three months.¹²¹¹

Carey's promotion to Exeter can reasonably be viewed as an illustration of Buckingham's desire 'to satisfy the importunity of relatives and friends'.¹²¹² But was it anything more? Certainly Sharpe was out of step with the court. He disapproved strongly of James' eirenic foreign policy. He wanted war not negotiations with Spain.¹²¹³ Williams indeed found Sharpe an embarrassment. 'I dare not write [on his behalf for Exeter].....bona fide and seriously, Buckingham's secretary was told.¹²¹⁴ Under Elizabeth, Sharpe had been (temporarily) banished from court for his part in Essex's rebellion.¹²¹⁵ Later James had imprisoned him for his involvement in the affair of the Addled Parliament.¹²¹⁶ Sharpe's hotheadedness ill-fitted him to become a bishop.¹²¹⁷ But he was a Grindalian whilst Carey was, reputedly, an Arminian, 'one of the firmest against [puritanism]', according to Richard Montagu.¹²¹⁸ Certainly James was favouring conservative divines in the final years of his reign.¹²¹⁹ But it will be argued here that this was of strategic rather than doctrinal significance. Carey was not in fact an Arminian. He and Sharpe, indeed, had much in common. Certainly there was a rift in the late Jacobean Church, but it had nothing to do with anti-Calvinism because anti-Calvinism did not then exist.¹²²⁰

Carey was born at Berwick-on-Tweed towards the end of the 1560s.¹²²¹ Most probably he was the illegitimate son of Henry, first Lord Hunsdon, Queen

¹²¹¹ LPL, Reg. Abbot, ii. fos. 70v, 72v, 266v-8v.

¹²¹² R Lockyer, *Buckingham: The Life and Political Career of George Villiers, First Duke of Buckingham 1592-1628* (1981), p. 115.

¹²¹³ DNB, *sub nomine*, Lionel Sharpe.

¹²¹⁴ Fortescue Papers, ed. Gardiner, p. 160.

¹²¹⁵ TNA, SP.12/279/62. Sharpe had been Essex's chaplain.

¹²¹⁶ TNA, SP.14/80/115.

¹²¹⁷ Sharpe held two benefices in Devon. He was married to the grand-daughter of Sir John Chichester (DHC, Chanter 21, fos. 62-3; DNB, *sub nomine*, Lionel Sharpe; see above, p. 69).

¹²¹⁸ Correspondence of Cosin, ed. Ormsby, i. 60.

¹²¹⁹ Fincham and Lake, 'Ecclesiastical Policy of King James', p. 201.

¹²²⁰ For a leading contrary view see N Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinism, The Rise of English Arminianism c1590-1640* (Oxford, 1987), and more briefly, *idem*, 'Puritanism, Arminianism and Counter-Revolution', in *The Origins of the English Civil War*, ed. C Russell (1973), pp. 119-43.

¹²²¹ Biographical Register of Christ's College 1505-1905 and of the Earlier Foundation, God's House 1448-1505, comp. J Peile (2 vols., Cambridge, 1910), i. 183.

Elizabeth's cousin, who became governor of Berwick in 1568.¹²²² Carey matriculated from Christ's Cambridge in December 1585 and gained his B.A. in 1589.¹²²³ In March 1591 he was elected to a Northumbrian fellowship at St John's and received his M.A. as a member of that society the following year.¹²²⁴ During the early 1590s St John's was a troubled college riven by faction.¹²²⁵ Carey played his part in these strifes when in December 1595 he and eleven other conformist fellows petitioned Burghley against the possible appointment of Henry Alvey as a master in succession to William Whitaker.¹²²⁶

Alvey was a known zealot and those opposed to his advancement alleged that he had been responsible for pushing St John's in a progressive direction over the past decade.¹²²⁷ But was this the full story? It was a necessary part of the conformists' strategy that they should present themselves as moderates. They wanted Burghley in his capacity as chancellor of the university to intervene and appoint the new master himself. A free election would inevitably result in Alvey's nomination as puritans held a clear majority on the college's governing body.¹²²⁸ But in order to get the Lord Treasurer to do as they wish the conformists needed to avoid the impression that they were being critical of Whitaker. Burghley had been Whitaker's patron and indeed had been responsible for getting the divine elected master in 1587, much to the annoyance of the conformists who were then in the majority on the governing body.¹²²⁹ Certainly there was no love lost between Whitaker and the conformist fellows. The master had consistently backed the puritan party. The transformation of St John's into a haven for zealotry was largely his doing. The idea that he had been duped by a ruthless Alvey was nothing more than a convenient fiction on the part of the conformists. In December 1595 Whitaker was no longer alive to refute this suggestion.¹²³⁰

Nonetheless, it is easy to overestimate the extent to which St John's had become factionalised as a result of Whitaker's rule. Clearly there were

¹²²² *Notes and Queries* (3rd series, 1862-8), vi. 312; vii. 117; *DNB, sub nomine*, Henry Carey; TNA, PROB.11/149, fo. 273.

¹²²³ *Biographical Register*, comp. Peile, i. 183.

¹²²⁴ T Baker, *History of the College of St John the Evangelist, Cambridge*, ed. J E B Mayor (2 vols., Cambridge, 1869), ii. 261.

¹²²⁵ H C Porter, *Reformation and Reaction in Tudor Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1958), pp. 183-206.

¹²²⁶ BL, Lansdowne 79/69.

¹²²⁷ BL, Lansdowne 79/61.

¹²²⁸ BL, Lansdowne 79/62.

¹²²⁹ Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, pp. 170-1, 198.

¹²³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 198-200.

puritan and conformist groupings within the college. But Carey and his colleagues may not have been making an altogether propagandist point by seeking to distinguish Alvey's conduct from that of Whitaker. Noticeable it was Alvey who was the focal point for unrest amongst the fellows during Whitaker's rule. Whitaker may have ultimately been responsible for undermining the conformists' supremacy at St John's. But it was Alvey who ensured that no-one would forget this. His abrasive approach to issues contrasted markedly with the quiet, determined style of Whitaker.¹²³¹ Moreover, although Whitaker was clearly set upon altering the ideological tone of the college, the conformist faction was able to retain its identity throughout his time as master. Conformists were not only elected to fellowships under Whitaker; they also held college office.¹²³²

This may perhaps explain why so potentially explosive issue as that of choosing Whitaker's successor was resolved with the minimum of bother. Within two and a half weeks of Whitaker's death in December 1595, Richard Clayton was duly elected and admitted master by the fellows.¹²³³ Clayton was a loyal Whitgiftian.¹²³⁴ He came to St John's having served two years as master of Magdalene.¹²³⁵ It might therefore be thought that Clayton was forced upon the puritan fellows to bring them to order. Yet the progressives had themselves mentioned Clayton (among others) as a possible candidate for the mastership.¹²³⁶ One reason for this may have been the puritans' desire to retain their links with the government and thus outflank their rivals, the conformists. What may have been at issue for the progressives was their political dominance within the college. The fact that they could not choose Alvey because of his 'extremist' inclinations was of less importance than their ability to maintain their way of life. They were prepared to compromise in order to secure their main objective.

Clayton, of course, was a Calvinist.¹²³⁷ He was also 'a mild but efficient man, [who was] fair to both sides' (i.e. the progressives and conservatives).¹²³⁸ There was little evidence of controversy during the seventeen years of his rule at St John's. Clayton got the fellows to concentrate their energies on building projects and amateur dramatics.¹²³⁹ Even Alvey managed to behave

¹²³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 187, 194, 197.

¹²³² *Ibid.*, p. 191.

¹²³³ Porter, *Reformation and Reaction*, p. 205.

¹²³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 356-7.

¹²³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 203-4.

¹²³⁶ BL, Lansdowne 79/62.

¹²³⁷ Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, pp. 205, 237, 327.

¹²³⁸ Porter, *Reformation and Reaction*, p. 205.

¹²³⁹ *Ibid.*

himself. Yet at first the conformists had been reluctant to support Clayton. They had their own candidate for the mastership in Laurence Stanton.¹²⁴⁰ Stanton had stood against Whitaker in the 1587 election.¹²⁴¹ It was therefore surprising that the divine should enjoy the support of a number of progressive heads of colleges in Cambridge.¹²⁴² But this may only indicate how little there was to choose between Stanton and Clayton in terms of religious temperament. Much more important was the fact that both divines enjoyed royal approval.

Each had influential court patrons. Stanton had the backing of the earl of Rutland, whilst Clayton benefitted from the support of the earl of Shrewsbury.¹²⁴³ Rutland and Shrewsbury were bitter rivals.¹²⁴⁴ This directly affected the outcome of the mastership contest. The queen (primed by one of Rutland's relatives) had initially given her blessing to Stanton.¹²⁴⁵ Whitgift had been ordered to get Burghley to secure his election.¹²⁴⁶ This greatly troubled the Lord Treasurer because he knew that the puritan fellows would seek to resist Stanton in order to prevent the conformists appearing as the backers of the successful candidate.¹²⁴⁷ Burghley was broadly on the side of the puritans. He wanted St John's to remain an evangelical college.¹²⁴⁸ But he realised that the only sure way was for the progressives to appear as the upholders of order. In the event he did not need to carry out the queen's wishes because Elizabeth lost interest in Stanton when she discovered that he was married.¹²⁴⁹ This enabled Shrewsbury to press the claims of Clayton who was a bachelor. The queen was now in a dilemma. To choose either Stanton or Clayton would be to offend greatly one or other of the noble families. Rather than be forced into taking sides, Elizabeth decided to push the responsibility for making a decision onto others.¹²⁵⁰ She would in fact support both divines.

But this only succeeded in creating a dilemma for the conformist fellows. A free election was to be held to elect the new master. The choice was to lie

¹²⁴⁰ BL, Lansdowne 79/59, 63.

¹²⁴¹ Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, p. 171.

¹²⁴² BL, Lansdowne 79/63.

¹²⁴³ V Morgan, 'Country, Court and Cambridge University, 1558-1640: a Story in the Evolution of a Political Culture', East Anglia PhD Thesis (1983), pp. 574-5.

¹²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴⁵ BL, Lansdowne 79/59; *HMC, Salisbury*, vi. 159.

¹²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴⁷ The puritan fellows attempted to stage their own unauthorized election (BL, Lansdowne 103/83).

¹²⁴⁸ Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, p. 170.

¹²⁴⁹ BL, Lansdowne 103/84.

¹²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

between Clayton and Stanton. Equal numbers from the rival factions within the college were to cast their votes.¹²⁵¹ This means that if the conformist persisted in their support for Stanton the result would be a tie. The matter, in all probability, would be referred to the queen and Burghley. Whilst Elizabeth had unequivocably favoured Stanton there was something to be said for this. But now that she appeared to be divided in her allegiances, there was a good deal of risk attached to it. Elizabeth could very well choose Stanton. But she might just as likely select Clayton. In these circumstances political wisdom indicated that it would be better for the conformists to abandon Stanton and vote for Clayton. From the longer term perspective there was much to be said for not getting out of step with the crown. In any event Alvey had been frustrated in his bid for the mastership.

Thus the conformists followed the lead of the puritans and compromised in order to maintain their position. The fact that both groups were prepared to send a letter of thanks to Burghley for allowing them to choose Clayton underlines the point that their rivalry was strategic rather doctrinaire.¹²⁵² Of course, neither of the groupings would have existed were it not for divergent opinions on the character of the Church of England. But this is a long way from suggesting that their rivalry revolved around a Calvinist/anti-Calvinist polarity. Tempers had become frayed at St John's in the early 1590s because of the disruptive capacity of Alvey. But once Burghley had intervened to calm the situation by placing a moratorium on the progressives' wish to hold an election 'until her majesty might be better informed what were meet....for the benefit and quiet of the house', common sense had prevailed.¹²⁵³ It may well be that a major difference of opinion existed between conformists and puritans. But for the moment at least the propensity to maintain a friendly, if robust, rivalry outweighed the inclination to pull apart in mutual disgust.

Carey left St John's in 1597 and transferred to Christ's.¹²⁵⁴ This proved a controversial move. The divine had evidently been looking for an opportunity to return to his old college. But there were other contenders for the fellowship which fell vacant in the autumn of 1596. One of five candidates, Carey found himself passed over in favour of Ralph Chaitor, a Queens' graduate.¹²⁵⁵ Chaitor enjoyed the support of the puritan faction at Christ's. The progressives were in a slight majority in the college. They aimed to keep

¹²⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵² BL, Lansdowne 79/67.

¹²⁵³ BL, Lansdowne 103/83. See also BL, Lansdowne 79/63.

¹²⁵⁴ *Biographical Register*, comp. Peile, i. 183.

¹²⁵⁵ CUL, Mm.5.48, fos. 20-1; *Biographical Register*, comp. Peile, i. 188.

things this way. But they were frustrated by their master, Edmund Barwell, who refused to admit Chaitor to office because he was an absentee and not 'pauperrimus'.¹²⁵⁶ Barwell was noted for his bias towards nonconformity.¹²⁵⁷ But he drew the line at blatant irregularities. The progressives thus shifted their support to another of the five candidates, Thomas Rainbow, whom Barwell himself was prepared to recommend.¹²⁵⁸ But the claim that Rainbow would prove 'peaceable....and conformable to all statutes and orders of the university and our college' failed to satisfy two leading conformist fellows, Richard Clerke and Robert Snowden. They alleged that Rainbow was a radical who came to chapel without a surplice and took communion sitting not kneeling 'ad more schismaticorum et tum quidem cum magister ipse ministraret', a remark which was clearly calculated to embarrass Barwell.¹²⁵⁹

After much heated debate, the matter was referred to John Jegon, the vice-chancellor, who in his capacity of college visitor refused to admit Rainbow (despite Barwell having pronounced him elected) and by reason of lapse nominated Carey.¹²⁶⁰ Jegon was no obvious enemy of zeal.¹²⁶¹ He was very much part of the Calvinist consensus and was later as bishop of Norwich noted for his tact and civility towards the more progressive of his diocesan clergy. One can only assume that he thought he was playing safe by appointing Carey and that his choice would find widespread acceptance.¹²⁶² But he was mistaken. The puritans were roused to great fury. They made life intolerable for their opponents within the college. Between 1597 and 1600 there was an exodus of conformist fellows. Carey was one of the leavers, no doubt glad to be able to return to the calmer waters of St Johns'.¹²⁶³

Where had Jegon gone wrong? It is worth remembering that the fellowship contest occurred in the aftermath of the incidents involving William Barrett and Peter Baro. These had shaken the 'puritan' establishment of Cambridge and it was understandable, therefore, that progressives should have been

¹²⁵⁶ CUL, Mm.5.48, fos. 20-1; CUR/92.1, no. 10.

¹²⁵⁷ S A Bondos-Greene, 'The End of an Era: Cambridge Puritanism and the Christ's College Election of 1609', *HJ*, 25 (1982), pp. 197-208, p. 199.

¹²⁵⁸ CUL, CUR/92.1, no. 10.

¹²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²⁶¹ Collinson, *Religion of Protestants*, p. 78.

¹²⁶² Jegon was helped in making his choice by Roger Goad, the provost of King's College who was sympathetic to the progressive point of view and by Peter Baro, the Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity who was very much a conservative (CUL, CUR/92.1, no. 10).

¹²⁶³ Bondos-Greene, 'Christ's College Election', p. 201; *Biographical Register*, comp. Peile, i. 183.

wary of behaviour which could be construed as an attack on the doctrinal heritage of the Church of England.¹²⁶⁴ This was where Jegon and the puritan fellows of Christ's parted company. Under normal circumstances the progressives might well have been prepared to agree with the vice-chancellor that Carey was a safe, middle-of-the-road, choice. Admittedly, Carey was a conformist. But this 'handicap' could reasonably be overlooked because of Jegon's *imprimatur*. Carey might well have been regarded as 'peaceable and conformable': he would not be a source of unrest. But now the progressives had their doubts. The image of a self-interested divine who wanted to gain a position of academic pre-eminence at his undergraduate college failed to convince them. Instead the puritans saw a fifth columnist allied to Clerke and Snowden who was seeking to undermine their supremacy and that of true protestantism at Christ's.

Carey had not, in fact, played the game fairly. Unable to gain support amongst the fellows for his candidacy by normal means, he had attempted to bribe his way into office.¹²⁶⁵ In the puritans' view, Jegon had been misled by Carey. But this was not how the vice-chancellor saw matters when the progressives attempted to get Carey ejected for his behind the scenes manoeuvrings. In Jegon's view and that of others (including John Cowell, another progressively-inclined head), Carey had done nothing wrong. The divine's behaviour, though doubtless reprehensible, did not invalidate his selection because in the end he had been chosen by the vice-chancellor, not the fellows.¹²⁶⁶ 'Therefore I am elect without all manner of corruption notwithstanding my promise[s]', Carey proudly told the fellows. The puritans were unable to get Jegon to see that he had unwittingly been made party to a plot. For them there was more at stake than just a matter of legal propriety. Consequently they took the law into their own hands. By making like intolerable for Carey and the other conformists they succeeded in safeguarding their position. Christ's had been turned into a puritan stronghold.

Carey was readmitted to St John's in 1600.¹²⁶⁷ But his association with Christ's was far from over. In 1609 he returned to the college in triumph as its master. Certainly the accession of James proved a turning point for Carey enabling him to establish a career for himself in the Church. James' arrival on the throne was accompanied by the return to political life of Henry

¹²⁶⁴ Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, pp. 201-42.

¹²⁶⁵ Carey had even tried to persuade William Bolton, one of the progressives on the fellowship, to support him. Clearly he was not too concerned by the local politics of Christ's (CUL, CUR/92.1, no. 10).

¹²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁶⁷ *Biographical Register*, comp. Peile, i. 183.

Howard, the earl of Northampton, who was related by marriage to the Hunsdons.¹²⁶⁸ Carey now had an influential court patron.¹²⁶⁹ As a result the next decade (the period of Northampton's supremacy) saw the divine transformed from a comparatively unknown academic into one of the leading lights of the Church., Archdeacon of Salop in 1606, prebendary of Lincoln Cathedral in 1607, prebendary of St Paul's in 1608, dean of St Paul's in 1614 – these were the principal landmarks on the road to Exeter.¹²⁷⁰ Add to them benefices in Essex, chaplaincies to Lord Chancellor Ellesmere and the king, the acquisition of the manor of Great Shelford near Cambridge and a London town house in fashionable Drury Lane, then Hacket's 'prudent courtly man' becomes much more of a reality.¹²⁷¹

Nonetheless, there was no inevitability about Carey's appointment to the Christ's mastership. Samuel Ward's accusation that the divine was imposed upon the college in order to bring it to uniformity needs to be placed within the context of the events of 1596-7.¹²⁷² Ward's puritan rhetoric lacked conviction, not least because it was seeking to defend a somewhat anomalous position. Certainly James was anxious to dilute the puritan image of Christ's. But this was only insofar as that image had disturbed 'the public peace of the Church'.¹²⁷³ Things had got out of hand during the final years of Barwell's rule. The puritans had taken advantage of their master's excessive indulgence to launch an attack on Bancroft.¹²⁷⁴ It was consistent with James' even-handed ecclesiastical policy that he should attempt to use the occasion of Barwell's death to restore a greater degree of conformity to Christ's.¹²⁷⁵ But this was far from implying that the new master would be a strident disciplinarian bent upon 'the utter ruin and destruction' of the college as Ward predicted would be the outcome of Carey's rule.¹²⁷⁶ A decade of relative freedom had distorted the puritans' perception of themselves and of the Church.

¹²⁶⁸ Sharpe, *Sir Robert Cotton*, pp. 113-4; Peck, *Northampton*, pp. 18-23.

¹²⁶⁹ TNA, SP.14/66/72; Peck, *Northampton*, pp. 41-63.

¹²⁷⁰ Le Neve, *Fasti*, i. 575; ii. 215; Le Neve: *St Paul's*, comp. Horn, p. 28; *DNB*, *sub nomine*, Valentine Carey.

¹²⁷¹ *Biographical Register*, comp. Peile, i. 183; TNA, SP.14/48/100; PROB.11/149, fo. 273; C.142/458/34, 36; J Hacket, *Scrinia Reserata: A Memorial Offered To The Great Derservings Of John Williams DD* (2 vols., 1693), ii. 22.

¹²⁷² Bondos-Greene, 'Christ's College Election', p. 197.

¹²⁷³ HMC, *Salisbury*, xxi. 160.

¹²⁷⁴ Bondos-Greene, 'Christ's College Election', p. 202.

¹²⁷⁵ Fincham and Lake, 'Ecclesiastical Policy of King James', pp. 170-1.

¹²⁷⁶ Bondos-Greene, 'Christ's College Election', p. 197.

In fact James was quite prepared to let the fellows choose Barwell's successor. The only stipulation he made was that Cuthbert Bainbrigg, the senior fellow of the college, should not be elected.¹²⁷⁷ This was understandable, given that Bainbrigg had once crossed swords with Whitgift, over the treatment of zealous ministers.¹²⁷⁸ It was now that James began to discover just how far he and the puritans were at odds. Bainbrigg had been the fellows' first choice candidate. Provocatively (if predictably) they turned to William Pemberton, who was both a comparative newcomer to the college and an active puritan. When James learnt of this he wrote hastily to the fellows suggesting that they should nominate '3, 4 or 5 eligible persons, amongst which if there were any against which he had just exception for public respect, he would signify it to them, and leave them their choice of the rest'.¹²⁷⁹

James' definition of eligibility was not unreasonable. His own idea of a suitable short-list comprised Carey, Richard Clerke, George Downame and Andrew Willet, all of whom were graduates of the college.¹²⁸⁰ Whilst clearly not giving the fellows everything that they wanted, the list did offer them the next best thing: an opportunity to select a fairly moderate master who would be acceptable both to themselves and to the crown. Certainly Downame and Willet possessed a more progressive outlook than Carey and Clerke. They belonged to the 'Grindalian' school of churchmanship. Willet was currently serving as chaplain to Prince Henry. Later (like Lionel Sharpe) he suffered imprisonment for his opposition to the Spanish Match.¹²⁸¹ Downame had been a puritan at Cambridge. He had come to blows with the conformist Clerk in 1590. Joined in marriage to the Killigrew family, Downame subsequently became bishop of Derry and published an anti-Arminian tract which Charles I's government chose to suppress.¹²⁸²

It is not clear whether James ever formally presented the list to the Christ's fellows. But there is certainly evidence to suggest that Downame was viewed as a possible compromise candidate by the government.¹²⁸³ Stubbornly the fellows had proceeded to elect Pemberton, notwithstanding James' letter. They were aiming to circumvent the conditions that the king

¹²⁷⁷ *HMC, Salisbury*, xxi. 138-9.

¹²⁷⁸ Bondos-Greene, 'Christ's College Election', p. 200.

¹²⁷⁹ *HMC, Salisbury*, xxi. 138-9.

¹²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, xxi. 160.

¹²⁸¹ *Biographical Register*, comp. Peile, i. 143-4.

¹²⁸² Bondos-Greene, 'Christ's College Election', p. 200; *Biographical Register*, comp. Peile, i. 166.

¹²⁸³ See below, p. 166.

had imposed. Pemberton had only been imperfectly elected. He had not taken the customary oath of office. Therefore, the fellows had not disobeyed James. But at the same time, if the king wanted to eliminate Pemberton he would have to resort to his prerogative powers to overturn the fellows' proceedings.¹²⁸⁴ The puritans knew that James was reluctant to do this, even though royal interference in university affairs was on the increase.¹²⁸⁵ The king believed that the prerogative should be used only for matters of necessity and this was not one of them.¹²⁸⁶ Nonetheless, James managed to outmanoeuvre the fellows. The statutory time for making an election had already elapsed. The proceedings involving Pemberton were thus void. The choice of the new master had devolved upon the chancellor of the university, Salisbury.¹²⁸⁷

This suited James' purposes admirably. Salisbury shared his desire to find an amicable solution to the dispute. James could thus withdraw again into the background. The only advice that he offered was that 'somebody may be thought upon to be placed that has been yet least talked of'. This would prevent people thinking that he had 'had any scope in this business but the public'.¹²⁸⁸ Probably it was now that Downame's candidacy was actively promoted. This may best explain the somewhat cryptic remark in Samuel Ward's diary about the 'labouring' to oust Pemberton 'in pretence to bring in Dr Dunham'.¹²⁸⁹ Certainly Downame fitted the bill both in being little 'talked of' and (because of his progressive background) in allaying the impression that James was meddling in the affairs of Christ's purely for selfish reasons. Salisbury may also at this time have promised leniency towards Pemberton if the divine withdrew speedily.¹²⁹⁰ Having very probably been responsible for 'leaking' the news of Pemberton's radicalism to James in the first place, the chancellor had now come close to ending the dispute.¹²⁹¹

Yet at the eleventh hour the king went back on his word. James had decided that he would after all oversee the nomination of the new master. Not only this: James wanted Carey elected. Unlike the other contenders on his original short-list, Carey was 'a single man without charge of wife or children'. There would be less chance of the revenues of the college being

¹²⁸⁴ *HMC, Salisbury*, xxi. 138-9.

¹²⁸⁵ Morgan, 'Country, Court and Cambridge University', pp. 637-62.

¹²⁸⁶ *HMC, Salisbury*, xxi. 138-9.

¹²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, xxi. 142.

¹²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸⁹ Bondos-Greene, 'Christ's College Election', p. 197.

¹²⁹⁰ TNA, SP.14/68/8.

¹²⁹¹ Bondos-Greene, 'Christ's College Election', p. 204.

diverted to 'private uses'. There would also be less cause for 'offence and scandal' amongst the undergraduates.¹²⁹² Carey was duly appointed but not before Ward had accused Bancroft of treachery. James' explanation was disingenuous (argued Ward). There had never been any intention of appointing Downame. His name had merely been canvassed as a means of getting the fellows to abandon Pemberton. Once this had been achieved the archbishop could more easily bring in Carey.¹²⁹³

Certainly Ward was right to suspect that James had not reached his decision unaided. The king's reasoning carried conviction in that he spoke from experience being both married and in financial difficulties. But Carey did have a sponsor at court who had been active on his behalf. This was Ellesmere, his former employer.¹²⁹⁴ Ellesmere, however, was not an obvious devotee of Bancroft. He led a strongly protestant faction on the privy council.¹²⁹⁵ Interestingly, James chose to ignore the advice of Lancelot Andrewes, the 'liberal' divine who was supporting Richard Clerke.¹²⁹⁶

Of course, the fluidity of Jacobean court life may to some extent nullify these distinctions. Patronage networks, like that of Carey's kinsman, Northampton, were notable for their lack of ideological rigour and for the variety of clients to which they provided favour.¹²⁹⁷ James' skill at playing one group or courtiers off against another resulted in the blurring of important differences of outlook as individuals sought to keep open their channels of communication with the king.¹²⁹⁸ Ellesmere's support for Carey can be seen in this light. Certainly the Lord Chancellor employed conformists as his domestic chaplains, notably John Donne (who succeeded Carey as dean of St Paul's), John King (subsequently bishop of London) and Richard Field (dean of Gloucester).¹²⁹⁹ However, they were all doctrinally orthodox. This is an important point, because when Carey did eventually marry he took as his wife Dorothy Coke, the sister of the 'puritan' secretary of state Sir John Coke.¹³⁰⁰ It is possible to suppose that in the environment of the Jacobean

¹²⁹² *HMC, Salisbury*, xxi. 160.

¹²⁹³ Bondos-Greene, 'Christ's College Election', p. 197.

¹²⁹⁴ TNA, SP.14/48/100.

¹²⁹⁵ L B Knafla, *Law and Politics in Jacobean England: The Tracts of Lord Chancellor Ellesmere* (Cambridge, 1977), pp. 90-4.

¹²⁹⁶ *HMC, Salisbury*, xxi. 139.

¹²⁹⁷ Peck, *Northampton*, pp. 18, 216.

¹²⁹⁸ K Sharpe, 'Faction at the Early Stuart Court', *History Today*, 33 (1983), pp. 39-46, at pp. 41-3.

¹²⁹⁹ *DNB, sub nominibus*, John Downe, Thomas Egerton, Richard Field, John King.

¹³⁰⁰ *HMC, Twelfth Report, Appendix, Part II; The Manuscripts of the Earl of Cowper KG Preserved at Melbourne Hall Derbyshire* (3 vols., 1888), ii. 44-5.

court matrimony between conservative and progressive Calvinists might occur. A union between doctrinal adversaries seems much less likely. To this extent it may not really matter whether Bancroft was involved in Carey's appointment to Christ's. It of course mattered to the puritan fellows because they did not want a conformist to be their master. But Bancroft was an orthodox Calvinist even if he was a dogged opponent of zeal.¹³⁰¹ Carey threatened to turn the clock back at Christ's to the early 1590s. But he arguably sought to do no more.

How, then, did Carey become an Arminian by the time of his death in 1626? It is difficult to fault Montagu's judgement.¹³⁰² Carey was one of a group of five divines to which Montagu looked for support in his clash with parliament in 1626. Laud, Neile, Andrews and Buckeridge were the others.¹³⁰³ Possibly Carey dissembled. But there is an easier, if more controversial, explanation. The 'rise of Arminianism' was simply 'a puritan alibi for repeated failure to impose rigid presdestinarian doctrines on the Church of England'.¹³⁰⁴ The dispute was contained within the framework of the Calvinist consensus. All participants were Calvinists, Laud as much as, say, Pym.¹³⁰⁵ The problem was one of emphasis.

During the course of Elizabeth's reign puritanism underwent a transformation. The puritans of the 1590s were not the zealots of the 1560s. They had become experimental predestinarians.¹³⁰⁶ Credal predestinarianism represented Calvin's original message. Christ had died for all mankind, but only the elect would be saved. The individual was enjoined to have hope, for no-one could know God's will. There should thus be no morbid introspection. The visible Church was a broad, inclusive entity. Experimental predestinarianism comprised Beza's revision of Calvin's teachings. Christ had died only for the elect. This at once altered the emphasis, encouraging the individual to seek evidence of his election. Introspection became unavoidable. So, too, did the desire to define the godly community exclusively. There was a strong temptation to restrict church membership to those who could make an adequate testimony of their faith.

¹³⁰¹ Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, p. 289

¹³⁰² See above, p. 157.

¹³⁰³ Collinson, *Religion of Protestants*, p. 80.

¹³⁰⁴ P White, 'The Rise of Arminianism Reconsidered', *P&P*, 101 (1983), pp. 43-54, at p. 54.

¹³⁰⁵ See above, p. xi.

¹³⁰⁶ For the following see Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism*, pp. 1-13.

Arguably the most intriguing aspect of this development concerns the positioning of so-called Grindalian divines. If, at the beginning of James' reign, all puritans were experimental predestinarians and all conforming Calvinists were credal predestinarians, where did the alleged descendants of Grindal such as George Abbot, Arthur Lake, Toby Matthew and James Montague stand and with what degree of firmness?

'Puritan' bishops, as has already been remarked, performed a most vital function in the post-Reformation Church.¹³⁰⁷ They provided zealots with a link with establishment thinking on ecclesiastical affairs. Moreover, they demonstrated the continuing viability of the Calvinist consensus. But could Grindalians hope to survive the advent of second generation Calvinism? One line of argument is to suggest that they could because they too became experimental predestinarians.¹³⁰⁸ The point is especially pertinent because James was a credal Calvinist and did not scruple to make this fact known.¹³⁰⁹ Indeed, his ecclesiastical policy was a product of the assumptions underlying credal predestinarianism. James was 'dedicated to the principle of religious unity'.¹³¹⁰ Not only did he wish to heal the rifts within the English Church, he also ambitiously planned to reunite Christendom. At home James' strategy was to extend the hand of friendship to both puritans and catholics. He sought to appeal to moderate opinion. Only dogged radicals would refuse to participate in his broad-based Church.¹³¹¹

Assuming for the moment at least that experimental predestinarianism was the most important feature of 'Grindalianism' under James, it becomes possible to posit a vertical rift in the fabric of the early Stuart Church. The king's reaction to the Bohemian crisis of 1618 brought it to the fore. His refusal to return to what progressives (puritans and Grindalians) conceived as the golden days of English foreign policy under Elizabeth and declare war on Spain exposed the impracticability of his religious strategy. It could not work because it necessitated the reconciling of the irreconcilable, namely fervent Calvinists who saw popery underneath almost every stone, with

¹³⁰⁷ See above, pp. 99-100.

¹³⁰⁸ P G Lake, 'Calvinism and the English Church 1570-1635', *P&P*, 114 (1987), pp. 32-77, at p. 40; *idem*, 'Matthew Hutton', *passim*. Lake reinforces this point in his *Anglicans and Puritans? Where he argues that presbyterian divines expropriated the moderate theme notwithstanding their addiction to experimental predestinarianism. As the 17th century opened progressives were united under the banner of moderation. See also below, pp. 170-71.*

¹³⁰⁹ Fincham and Lake, 'Ecclesiastical Policy of King James', p. 190.

¹³¹⁰ *Ibid.*,

¹³¹¹ Lake, 'Calvinism and the English Church', p. 71; Fincham and Lake, 'Ecclesiastical Policy of King James', p. 171.

conformists who adopted a much more sanguine approach to Rome and the Habsburgs. James' support for 'Arminian' divines during the final years of his reign testified to this failure. The religious divide commonly associated with the Caroline Church had already appeared.¹³¹²

Yet it must be questioned whether the theological ties which Grindalians enjoyed with zealots under James were all-consuming. Certainly the king did not think so. He took the clashes which occurred between progressive and conservative divines at court in his stride. He refused to accept the accusations of popery and puritanism that the parties threw at each other, because the individuals concerned were part of the ecclesiastical establishment, either as bishops or prospective bishops. For James court membership excluded the possibility of deviant behaviour in matters spiritual.¹³¹³ The king's credal Calvinism, of course, helped him to take this somewhat indulgent view of events. Disputes over the theology of grace were of lesser importance, not because predestination was genuinely unimportant, but because it was so contentious an issue that it should only be dealt with cautiously and with moderation. Debate and speculation would only unsettle the political and ecclesiastical environment. It would also jeopardise James' inclusivist approach to church membership.¹³¹⁴

But the king was not just being complacent. He had a point. Grindalianism existed before experimental predestinarian teachings became prevalent in England.¹³¹⁵ It might be that Abbot and his colleagues shared a common religious perspective with zeal, but this did not mean that divines like Woolton and Babington who did not were not also in their day 'puritan' bishops. Indeed, it could be argued that the whole ethos of second generation Calvinism was anti-pathetical to the interests of Grindalianism. Grindalians and conformists shared a common goal in a broad-based visible Church.¹³¹⁶ (Admittedly Grindalians hoped that the ignorant multitude could be won over to a godly life by religious instruction, whereas conformists like Whitgift set their sights lower and aimed merely for uniformity based upon a widespread acceptance of the prayer book). Experimental predestinarians, as we have seen, focused upon the elect. But were not Grindalians also experimental predestinarians under James? Supposedly yes, but they sought

¹³¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 198-207.

¹³¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 195.

¹³¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 190.

¹³¹⁵ The 1570s would seem to have been the crucial decade though the matter would repay closer scrutiny (Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, pp. 101-55; Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, pp. 16-24).

¹³¹⁶ See above, pp. 74-78, 99-100, 117-22.

to limit the implications of second generation Calvinism to the individual rather than the group.¹³¹⁷ They would not allow a concept of godliness to become the basis for collective action which could, if taken to its logical conclusion, lead to separation from the national Church. Semi-separatism, a growth industry amongst early seventeen century puritans, was not for them.¹³¹⁸

Indeed, it is possible to take the argument a stage further and suggest that the advent of experimental predestinarianism, far from uniting zealots and Grindalians more closely, in fact thrust them apart.¹³¹⁹ The campaign for a presbyterian system of church government waged during the 1580s was a direct product of the acceptance of Bezan revisionism by puritans.

Presbyterians attacked the tradition of episcopal rule to which Grindalians were by definition wedded. It is true that conformist divines (notably Whitgift) led the counter-attack.¹³²⁰ But divine right episcopacy (the view that scripture recommended government by bishops) which was developed as a riposte to divine right presbyterianism (the belief that the bible advocated rule by presbyters, elders, classes and synods) was amply supported by 'moderate' establishment clerics.¹³²¹ Under James, Abbot and Downame no less than Neile and Andrews, adhered to its precepts.¹³²²

Moreover, the acceptance of divine right theory by the higher clergy of the Jacobean Church brought them into close alliance with the crown. Under Elizabeth relations between crown and episcopate had been tainted by uncertainty and ambiguity. James' accession swept these doubts away. The presbyterian challenge of the 1580s had also threatened the monarchy. The rising temperature of confessional strife on the continent (of which the growth of experimental predestinarianism was a major symptom) had led to the formulation of theories of resistance by both protestant and catholic extremists, which advocated the overthrow of rulers who opposed the progress of true religion.¹³²³ Royal absolutism was the response from English monarchists who recognised the potency of nonconformity at home. The

¹³¹⁷ Lake, 'Calvinism and the English Church', p. 40. For my scepticism about Grindalians and experimental predestinarianism under the early Stuarts see below, pp. 180-207.

¹³¹⁸ Collinson, *Religion of Protestants*, pp. 242-83.

¹³¹⁹ See above, pp. 90-111.

¹³²⁰ Lake, 'Calvinism and the English Church', pp. 40-1.

¹³²¹ M R Sommerville, 'Richard Hooker and His Contemporaries on Episcopacy: An Elizabethan Consensus', *JEH*, 35 (1984), pp. 177-87.

¹³²² J P Sommerville, *Politics and Ideology in England 1603-40* (1986), p. 208.

¹³²³ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

king was accountable only to God. He was above all human laws.¹³²⁴ Elizabeth had avoided speculating openly on royal absolutism. However, the scholarly James had no such inhibitions. Indeed, he wrote extensively on the subject.¹³²⁵ Leading clerics who had from the first upheld the divine right of kings now felt reassured. Both crown and episcopate were under threat. Each was recognising the other's needs. James' famous maxim, 'no bishop, no king', had a very practical and serious meaning.

Thus it may be that the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War disclosed a horizontal rather than a vertical rift in the Jacobean Church.¹³²⁶ James came under attack from Abbot and his fellow progressives at court and responded by showing favour to conservative divines.¹³²⁷ But the king had not abandoned the Grindalians. Far from it; he was merely looking around for factional support in an environment in which loyalty to the crown predominated.¹³²⁸ But this was not how progressives outside the court viewed matters. James' actions confirmed their worst fears. They had suspected that Grindalians were becoming unreliable. Now this was confirmed. Absolutist ideas to which all bishops and prospective bishops subscribed were nothing more than conformism in disguise. Divine right kingship reinforced the centre of the realm at the expense of the localities. The repeated failure of the puritans over the years to gain the confidence of the crown and thus implement a programme of religious reform led them to view royal absolutism not as a means of rebutting resistance theories but as a very device of popery.¹³²⁹ The crown had been captured by the reactionary forces of conformism. It was not longer the guardian of true religion. Zeal and anti-absolutism (which claimed that royal power derived from the people) now became natural bedfellows.¹³³⁰

This position, it should be stressed, was only fully reached under Charles. But its origins lay with James because it was he who had actively promoted royal absolutism. Divine right kingship may have brought Grindalians and conformists together at court. But it also separated centre from locality. Grindalianism was discredited. (The Christ's fellows' reluctance to nominate Downame until almost the last minute can be seen as an early, hesitant, example from an 'advanced' centre of puritanism). Zealots commenced upon

¹³²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

¹³²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

¹³²⁷ Fincham and Lake, 'Ecclesiastical Policy of King James', p. 201.

¹³²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 206 and see below, pp. 192-94.

¹³²⁹ Sommerville, *Politics and Ideology*, p. 45.

¹³³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 46, 57-80.

a revision of the religious spectrum. Grindalians were seen as conformists and conformists as right-wing extremists.¹³³¹ Ironically, between them, James and zeal succeeded in bringing the incipient or latent polarity that existed within the Calvinist consensus into play as Carey's career subsequent to 1609 reveals.

Carey's rule as master of Christ's can easily mislead. Ward predicted trouble. In fact there was very little of an overt nature. Only two fellows lost their places upon Carey's arrival. Nicholas Rushe was already in trouble for denouncing the bishops as 'gorbellied clergy' and calling court divines 'devilish parasites'.¹³³² William Ames, the future congregationalist, used a sermon to attack popular religious practices and games including the playing of dice and cards, the latter of which happened to be one of Carey's favourite pastimes.¹³³³ But it was the vice-chancellor who ejected Rushe and Ames.¹³³⁴ Carey's role was limited to trying to get Ames to conform by wearing a surplice.¹³³⁵ Yet the removal of two trouble-makers did not make life any easier for the new master. Indeed, at no stage during the 1610s did Carey feel secure. Within a few weeks of his arrival he was complaining to Salisbury about the lack of support he had in the college in 'striv[ing] against the "humorous" streams'.¹³³⁶

To some extent Carey was simply posturing (just as Cotton had earlier done over the puritan threat in the south-west).¹³³⁷ Christ's had a small fellowship of thirteen.¹³³⁸ Conformism had never been fully extinguished in the college and during Barwell's last years it had recaptured some of its former vigour. When the puritans had decided to press ahead with Pemberton's election, four fellows had written to James in protest.¹³³⁹ The removal of Rushe and Ames thus offered a good chance to reduce the zealots' majority. This was clearly Carey's aim. But the crown frustrated him by requiring him to admit a progressive to one of the vacant fellowships.¹³⁴⁰ James was pulling the

¹³³¹ See below, pp. 181-82.

¹³³² Bondos-Greene, 'Christ's College Election', p. 202.

¹³³³ *Ibid.*, p. 207; Birch, *Court and Times*, ii. 281.

¹³³⁴ Bondos-Greene, 'Christ's College Election', p. 207.

¹³³⁵ J B Mullinger, *The University of Cambridge from the Royal Injunctions of 1535 to the Accession of Charles the First* (Cambridge, 1884), p. 510.

¹³³⁶ *HMC, Salisbury*, xxi. 193.

¹³³⁷ See above, pp. 135-41.

¹³³⁸ Bondos-Greene, 'Christ's College Election', n. 7.

¹³³⁹ *HMC, Salisbury*, xxi. 139. Carey subsequently reimbursed three of the fellows for the expenses they had incurred in London 'about the election'. Did Carey attempt to drum up support for himself behind the scenes (Bondos-Greene, 'Christ's College Election', n. 52)?

¹³⁴⁰ *HMC, Salisbury*, xxi. 193.

strings. The departure of Rushe and Ames served as a warning to the puritans. Their carefree days were over. But James did not intend to go too far. His ecclesiastical policy was designed to attract not repel. Having in effect been punished for their excesses, the fellows were now to be courted by the king. This was James' way of demonstrating the efficacy of his religious strategy. Accordingly a further two fellowship vacancies were apportioned between the contending factions in the college.¹³⁴¹

Unfortunately the subtleties of James' behaviour only confused Carey. Carey was the man on the ground and he did not like what he saw. Having spent so much of his recent life at court he had forgotten what puritanism in the raw was like. The idea of the select godly community jarred against his sensibilities threatening the easy-going relationships he had forged at court.¹³⁴² It was especially hard for Carey to adjust because he was a conformist. The bonding together of the Jacobean episcopate had fostered the growth of a particular reverence for the national Church and its liturgy. 'Mother Church' was a phrase often on the lips of Grindalian and conformist divines at court. Their excessive regard for ritualism (what Laud would later call 'the beauty of holiness') marked the coming of age of Whitgift's vision of an English Church that was independent in its doctrine from the interpretation of any private individual or foreign *ecclesia*.¹³⁴³ This was all very different from the puritan wish to set 'anglicanism' within the wider context of an international struggle against the forces of Rome.¹³⁴⁴

Carey was very much into ritualism. He believed that it was necessary to commend the soul of the deceased to God. (Carey proclaimed this view during a visit to Scotland in 1617, but was quickly forced to retract it by the Scots).¹³⁴⁵ Confession to a priest could be justified on the grounds of convenience.¹³⁴⁶ The surplice was 'the armour of light'. Carey had spoken these words to William Ames in 1609.¹³⁴⁷ It was a measure of the new master's confusion (or 'culture shock') that he could think that Ames might respond favourably to mediation conducted in overtly 'conformist' language. Carey was also at sea in his blocking of Joseph Mead's attempts to become a fellow of the college in 1612-13. Mead was undoubtedly a progressive and

¹³⁴¹ *Biographical Register*, comp. Peile, i. 236, 250.

¹³⁴² Collinson, *Religion of Protestants*, p. 80.

¹³⁴³ Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, p. 221.

¹³⁴⁴ *Idem*, 'Significance of Pope as Antichrist', pp. 175-6.

¹³⁴⁵ TNA, SP.14/92/70. This was the royal visit during which James attempted to impose the conservative *Five Articles of Perth* on the Scottish Church. See below, pp. 192-94.

¹³⁴⁶ Birch, *Court and Times*, ii. 304-5.

¹³⁴⁷ Mullinger, *University of Cambridge*, p. 510.

his appointment would indeed threaten to tilt the balance of power within the college more firmly in favour of zeal.¹³⁴⁸ Yet the divine was no extremist. Indeed, his uncle, Sir Martin Stuteville, was a close friend of Carey.¹³⁴⁹ Furthermore, Mead's sponsor at court was none other than Lancelot Andrewes. Only this persuaded Carey to relent and admit Mead.¹³⁵⁰

In fact it was all too much for Carey. When the time came to leave for Exeter in 1622, he simply resigned his headship and 'went secretly away.....letting none of the college know of it'.¹³⁵¹ Wrote Mead, 'I know not whether he desired not, or whether he suspect the fellows would not accompany him out of the town, but it seems an argument of some discontent: there went nobody with him but his man that I hear of'.¹³⁵² Mead's words suggest that Carey's confusion had communicated itself to the puritans: their master had progressive connections and yet he often behaved aggressively. Thomas Fuller later encapsulated the fellows' dilemma in recounting his surprise when Carey intervened at court to save a relative called before the High Commissioners. Because of this Fuller felt obliged (much against his will) to regard the divine as 'a complete gentleman'.¹³⁵³ Just as meeting puritans disorientated Carey, so meeting a conformist unsettled the fellows. Neither was quite what the other imagined. Each could see good and bad in the other. How were they to treat one another? The outbreak of the Thirty Years' War resolved these doubts.

For Carey especially the Bohemian crisis proved a great awakening. James no longer seemed to be fence-sitting in his dealings with zeal. There was thus every incentive to seize the initiative: hence the troubled nature of Carey's rule as bishop of Exeter. It is important to stress that Carey was firstly a clericalist and only secondly an anti-puritan. He saw his mission as bishop to enhance the prestige of the clergy.¹³⁵⁴ It was the conformist/absolutist notions inherent in the 'high' church movement which brought Carey and other leading divines into disrepute with the puritans and won for them the name of 'Arminian'. Carey's failing as a bishop was that he was too much of a courtier. He only visited his see annually in the autumn.¹³⁵⁵ Admittedly he could afford to leave things to others: the

¹³⁴⁸ *Biographical Register*, comp. Peile, i. 245-6.

¹³⁴⁹ TNA, PROB.11/149, fo. 273. Stuteville had in earlier life been an adventurer with Drake. Carey acted as god-father to his daughter (*A/ Cant*, I. iv. 181).

¹³⁵⁰ *Biographical Register*, comp. Peile, i. 245-6.

¹³⁵¹ J Peile, *Christ's College* (1900), p. 130.

¹³⁵² *Ibid.*

¹³⁵³ Fuller, *Worthies of England*, ed. Freeman, p. 367.

¹³⁵⁴ See below, pp. 176-80.

¹³⁵⁵ DHC, Chanter 50, *sub* Sept. 1622, 1623 and 1624.

administrative reorganisation carried out by Cotton and earlier bishops meant that the everyday affairs of the diocese were in competent, professional hands.¹³⁵⁶ But Carey's penchant for living in London scarcely did much to dispel his image as a remote and elitist figure, though it did do a great deal to make his legal assault on interest groups in the south-west that much more ill-conceived.

Carey justified his presence in the capital in terms of loyalty to the crown. He imagined that a deal had been struck with James. In return for political service, the bishop would receive royal support for his clericalist onslaught. But this was not James' understanding of the situation. Carey was to be encouraged only insofar as it would benefit the crown. If he wanted to make use of himself in parliament by sitting on politically sensitive committees such as those dealing with monopolies, the Spanish Match and the crown's revenues, then let him do so.¹³⁵⁷ That was fine by James. No special credit was to be attached to Carey's contribution because the king did not regard the cause to which the divine was contributing as fundamentally important. The fact that a gap of sorts had opened up between 'Arminian' and Grindalian divines during the early 1620s did not worry James. (When deciding who should preach the sermon for the first day of the 1624 parliament, Lord Keeper Williams preferred Morton of Lichfield to Carey because, although the latter was the abler orator, the former was 'better esteemed by the Lords and other parliamentary men').¹³⁵⁸ The king recognised that that gap was of little practical significance. It existed more in the minds of puritans than in reality as he proceeded to show.

Carey launched three campaigns against lay interest groups in the south-west. He failed in all of them. He attacked the Killigrew family over their ownership of Crediton manor.¹³⁵⁹ (William Killigrew died just as Carey was initiating his Chancery suit. William's son, Robert, an alleged 'Arminian' sympathiser, thus became the defendant).¹³⁶⁰ The bishop also challenged the governors of Crediton Church to prove that the living of Exminster was appropriated to their care and that it was therefore not an independent rectory.¹³⁶¹ Finally, and most controversially, Carey sought to impinge upon

¹³⁵⁶ See below, pp. 218-37.

¹³⁵⁷ *LJ*, iii. 172b, 236b, 267b, 403b.

¹³⁵⁸ *Fortescue Papers*, ed. Gardiner, p. 194.

¹³⁵⁹ TNA, C.3/346/5.

¹³⁶⁰ *CSPD 1619-23*, p. 466; N Tyacke, 'Arminianism and English Culture', in *Britain and the Netherlands*, eds. A C Duke and C A Tamse (The Hague, 1981), pp. 94-117, at p. 110. I am, of course, merely repeating not agreeing with Tyacke's categorization.

¹³⁶¹ TNA, C.3/346/5.

the authority of the Exeter city fathers by intriguing to become a justice of the peace for the city.¹³⁶²

Carey's suits raised issues of a long-standing and, from the point of view of the defendants, grave nature in that the bishop seemed to be contesting the very outcome of the Reformation. The Killigrews had been substantial beneficiaries in the attack on ecclesiastical wealth in the south-west.¹³⁶³ The Crediton governors had been established by royal letters patent during Edward VI's reign to administer the possessions of the dissolved collegiate church.¹³⁶⁴ Exeter had become a county with its own bench of justices at the time of the fall of the Courtenays and had thereafter been able to claim jurisdiction over the ecclesiastical liberties of St Stephen and St Sidwell, which had hitherto resisted all attempts at lay encroachment.¹³⁶⁵

Above all, if Carey's suits were to succeed they required more than just the casual goodwill of the crown. They needed the application of absolutist principles. Given the circumstances of the Crediton manor affair, it was always going to be difficult for Carey to prove that fraud had taken place.¹³⁶⁶ Meanwhile, the Crediton governors seemed to have no case to answer at all. The royal letters patent had clearly conferred Exminster upon them as an inappropriate rectory.¹³⁶⁷ As for Carey's wish to become a justice of the peace for the city of Exeter, the royal charter which had declared Exeter a county in 1537 had explicitly stated that all eight city justices should be chosen from amongst the aldermanry.¹³⁶⁸ This had foiled Bishop Alley's attempt to join the Exeter bench at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign and it now also threatened to frustrate Carey's bid.¹³⁶⁹

But Carey thought he held the trump card of James' undying support. The Exeter city fathers evidently thought so too, for they quickly despatched an agent to London (William Prose, one of Richard Prowse's sons) to lobby the court on their behalf.¹³⁷⁰ James, seeking this, decided to make the most of it. He had a personal interest in the matter. In 1615 the Exeter magistrates

¹³⁶² *HMC, Exeter*, p. 115.

¹³⁶³ See above, pp. 88, 111-14 and Table 4.

¹³⁶⁴ *CPR 1547-8*, pp. 43-5.

¹³⁶⁵ M E Curtis, *Some Disputes between the City and the Cathedral Authorities of Exeter* (Manchester, 1932), p. 45.

¹³⁶⁶ See above, pp. 112-14.

¹³⁶⁷ *CPR 1547-8*, pp. 43-5. See below, p. 192 n. 906.

¹³⁶⁸ *HMC, Exeter*, pp. 5, 120.

¹³⁶⁹ W J Harte, *Gleanings From the Common Place Book of John Hooker, Relating to the City of Exeter 1485-1590* (Exeter, n.d.), p. 17.

¹³⁷⁰ *HMC, Exeter*, p. 115. For the Prowses see above, pp. 106, 130-31.

had outflanked William Cotton when the latter had refused to sanction their nominee for the newly-founded Bodley lectureship in the city by appealing to Archbishop Abbot.¹³⁷¹ Cotton had argued that the magistrates' choice, John Hassarde, was a radical puritan. In fact he was a moderate, but Cotton was being deliberately obstructive because he wished to strike a blow against the city following his failure to gain parliamentary approval for a bill to confer borough status upon the ecclesiastical liberties of St Stephen and St Sidwell.¹³⁷² Seven years later, James suddenly decided that the magistrates' behaviour constituted 'froward carriage' towards one of his servants.¹³⁷³ This was clearly because the king was now at odds with Abbot, not because he genuinely believed there was a major issue of principle involved. James was aiming to have some fun at everyone's expense. He would bring the magistrates to heel and thus demonstrate to his archbishop how pointless and inconsequential attacks on his ecclesiastical policy were. Jacobean England remained a one party state.

Thus Carey was given the scent of victory in his confrontation with the Exeter city fathers. Lord Keeper Williams, learning of James' alleged desire to see the bishop succeed at all costs, came up with what he thought in the circumstances would be the ideal solution. He, Williams, would issue a new commission of the peace for Exeter, with a *non obstante* clause attached.¹³⁷⁴ The provisions of the royal charter would thus be set aside by virtue of the king's prerogative authority. The city fathers' response was predictable. The clause would impeach 'the common law of this realm: wherein every good subject hath an estate of inheritance'. It was inconceivable that the ancient constitution should be subordinated to the royal dispensing power.¹³⁷⁵ At this Carey's suit ground to a halt. The bishop did not get his commission. Nor was there any confrontation between crown and city.

Why was this? Had James backed down? Surely not given his views on divine right kingship. But, as the Christ's mastership election had shown,

¹³⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 93-4.

¹³⁷² W T MacCaffrey, *Exeter 1540-1640* (1975), p. 201; HMC, *Exeter*, p. 117. See the unconvincing interrogation of Hassarde by Cotton: *ibid.*, pp. 94-6. For Cotton's anger over the mayor and his colleagues' ability to exercise jurisdiction in the episcopal liberty see Curtis, *Some Disputes*, pp. 46-52.

¹³⁷³ HMC, *Exeter*, p. 120.

¹³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 123. See also Sommerville, *Politics and Ideology*, pp. 177-8.

¹³⁷⁵ HMC, *Exeter*, p. 128. It may be that the city fathers were overreacting to James' threatened action. The royal charter had been granted by virtue of the king's prerogative authority. James was therefore perfectly entitled to seek to modify it without impugning the common law. Seemingly the Exeter magistrates were playacting as much as the king. I owe this point to my research supervisor Dr J S Morrill.

James was not an unthinking exponent of royal absolutism. His intellectual interest in *iure divino* theory was tempered by a pragmatic and cautious approach to its application.¹³⁷⁶ The present dispute between Carey and the Exeter magistracy was not the occasion for a set piece constitutional clash. James could achieve his purpose by other less turbulent means. By leaving the matter of the commission of the peace hanging in the air he could sufficiently unnerve the Exeter city fathers for them to show obedience to the crown.

Since the start of Carey's confrontation with the magistrates a further grievance had arisen between the bishop and the patricians. Carey wanted a doorway cut in the city walls so that he could pass privately from his palace to the open fields beyond for reasons of health and recreation.¹³⁷⁷ The magistrates had opposed this on the grounds of security.¹³⁷⁸ The matter was thus sent before the privy council for adjudication, but not before Carey had accused the city fathers of puritan bias and of provoking a mob to attack the bishop's servants who had already begun work on the doorway in anticipation of the outcome of the privy council's deliberations.¹³⁷⁹

William Prowse was thus obliged to spend an uncomfortable time explaining to James that his colleagues were neither religious extremists, nor rabble-rousers.¹³⁸⁰ This, of course, was precisely what the king wanted. With the city fathers concerned about their good name it would be that much easier to get them to submit to the privy council's arbitration. This found for Carey although some attempt was made to sweeten the pill for the magistrates by stipulating the dimensions of the doorway and by establishing that the bishop should surrender the key of the door to the mayor whenever absent from the south-west.¹³⁸¹ Carey thus had his blushes spared whilst the city fathers were forced to endure a small loss of face. James could fell triumphant. He had demonstrated the continuing relevance of the centre for the localities. He remained the ultimate patron for both progressives and conservatives.¹³⁸²

¹³⁷⁶ Sommerville, *Politics and Ideology*, pp. 79, 231.

¹³⁷⁷ Oliver, *Lives of Bishops of Exeter*, p. 257.

¹³⁷⁸ APC 1621-3, p. 485.

¹³⁷⁹ HMC, Exeter, p. 131.

¹³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸¹ APC 1621-3, pp. 485-6.

¹³⁸² It may be that James attempted to 'discipline' the Crediton governors in the same way. The king had helped to get Carey's case off the ground by having him presented to Exminster rectory. This enabled the bishop to bring a test case against the governors regarding the status of the living. At about the same time (1624-5), the attorney-general began a prosecution of the governors for failing to distribute the full amount that they were supposed to to the poor of their area. The fraud had been perpetuated for some 40 years. The court found against the governors and

Of course, this was James' view. It was not necessarily the real situation. Arguably the king underestimated the potency of the constitutional issues that his support for Carey over the commission of the peace had fostered. He was right to discount the seriousness of the criticisms of his foreign policy emanating from the court. But he was wrong to apply this 'local' context to the realm as a whole. James, perhaps, should have taken the anti-absolutist noises of the Christ's fellows and the Exeter magistracy more seriously. But he was too infatuated with his quest for peace (a forgivable failing in a disciple of the humanist Reformation). Certainly this was not the Exeter magistrates' view of things. They had compromised over the doorway affair. But this was an 'inessential' matter. They were still profoundly troubled by the prospect that Carey might yet be granted his commission. 'We fear [it] very much', wrote Nicholas Duck their recorder, 'but we shall do our best to withstand it for so much as shall lie in our powers'.¹³⁸³ This was an issue that was not going to go away however much James might seek to ignore it.

James had created an atmosphere of mistrust. To puritans it seemed that the king had deceived them. His ecclesiastical policy was not even-handed. James' favouring of conservative divines during the final years of his reign proved it. Of course, the blame was scarcely all the king's. Indeed, puritanism had changed profoundly. Whether zeal could have been forever tied to the court is debatable. But it was quickly alienated by the king's active involvement in church affairs. Elizabeth's insouciance had merit after all. Thus the credibility of Grindalianism was seriously damaged and trouble stored up for Charles' reign.

Joseph Hall (1627-41)

Carey died on 10 June 1626 and was buried in St Paul's Cathedral.¹³⁸⁴ It was his 'earnest and dying wish' that 'of all other men' Robert Wright, currently the bishop of Bristol, should succeed him.¹³⁸⁵ This was not a particularly inspired choice, however, for Wright was allegedly 'much given up to the

obliged them in future to render a yearly account of their disbursements to Carey (*CSPD 1623-5*, pp. 286, 289; *DHC, CC.181/91/2-3*).

¹³⁸³ *HMC, Exeter*, p. 132. The Exeter magistrates sought and secured a new charter from James' successor in 1627 which amongst other things determined that 'no other justices of the peace by association or otherwise [shall] intermeddle in the said city in that which to the office of justice appertaineth'. This may have been an attempt to prevent bishops of Exeter using their authority as members of the Devon county commission of the peace within the city (MacCaffrey, *Exeter*, p. 28).

¹³⁸⁴ *Notes and Queries*, vi. 174; *HMC, Cowper*, ii. 44-5.

¹³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, i. 271.

affairs of the world'.¹³⁸⁶ At Bristol he gained a reputation for impoverishing the episcopal patrimony in order to line his own pockets. Later, when he moved to Lichfield, he despoiled the manor of Eccleshall.¹³⁸⁷

Another potential candidate was the controversial Richard Montagu. At the beginning of 1626 when a rumour had circulated that Carey was 'very sick, and not like to escape', he had sought Laud's good offices to remind Buckingham 'of his voluntary and large offers' on the subject of preferment.¹³⁸⁸ Given that Montagu was still without a bishopric in June 1626, it must be presumed that he remained an interested party.¹³⁸⁹ Unfortunately, Buckingham was too busy avoiding impeachment by the Commons to be of much help.¹³⁹⁰ Subsequently foreign affairs intervened to distract the duke further. This probably explains the long delay in finding a replacement for Carey. Not until the autumn of 1627 was a successor named and even then the matter was only resolved when others at court seized the initiative.¹³⁹¹

The outcome proved a happy one for the south-west for it brought to Exeter one of the leading lights of the early Stuart Church, Joseph Hall, a divine renowned for his moderation. Hall was genuinely surprised by his appointment. 'How beyond all expectation it pleased God to place me in that western charge...[I]f I should fully relate the circumstances, [it] would force the confession of an extraordinary hand of God in the disposing of those events'.¹³⁹² Hall was especially conscious of Buckingham's displeasure. Absent in France when the news of Hall's impending nomination broke, the duke had hastily dashed off letters to prevent the matter going further.¹³⁹³ But it was too late. By the time the letters reached court, the royal *conge d'elire* had already been granted.¹³⁹⁴

Buckingham's opposition has commonly been seen as an attempt to deny episcopal office to a known puritan sympathiser.¹³⁹⁵ However, this is not the only interpretation that can be placed upon the duke's actions. It may be that Buckingham was simply seeking to defend his reputation as the pre-

¹³⁸⁶ *Ath Ox*, ii. 150.

¹³⁸⁷ *DNB, sub nomine*, Robert Wright.

¹³⁸⁸ *Correspondence of Cosin*, ed. Ormsby, i. 60.

¹³⁸⁹ *DNB, sub nomine*, Richard Montagu.

¹³⁹⁰ Russell, *Parliament and English Politics*, pp. 260-322.

¹³⁹¹ See below p. 191.

¹³⁹² *The Works of Joseph Hall*, ed. P Wynter (10 vols., Oxford, 1861), i. xlvi.

¹³⁹³ Lockyer, *Buckingham*, pp. 378-402; *Works of Hall*, ed. Wynter, i. xlv-vi.

¹³⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹⁵ G Lewis, *A Life of Joseph Hall DD, Bishop of Exeter and Norwich* (1886), p. 277.

eminent court patron. It is true that in 1627 the duke had more or less thrown in his lot with the 'Arminians'. Yet it was only three years earlier that he had tried to get his chaplain, the puritan John Preston, nominated to the see of Gloucester.¹³⁹⁶ But he had been frustrated by James who, coincidentally, wanted Hall to have the diocese.¹³⁹⁷ When Hall refused, the king gave it to Godfrey Goodman, perhaps to annoy zealots.¹³⁹⁸ Buckingham's movement towards Arminianism, which began in earnest following the York House Conference of early 1626, was at least in part motivated by a desire to retain his position of power with the new king, Charles I.¹³⁹⁹ Whilst the duke may possibly have had a personal grudge to work off against Hall and whilst Hall's moderate image may have provided an incentive, it is difficult to believe that Buckingham opposed the divine purely on religious grounds.

This view is to some extent reinforced by the reaction of radicals to Hall's appointment to Exeter. For them it seemed that he had changed sides.¹⁴⁰⁰ He had ceased to be a moderate and had instead become an admirer of Arminianism. This Hall stridently denied. Nonetheless, the allegation was not entirely spurious. It will be suggested here that what persuaded Hall to take up episcopal office in 1627 was his reassessment of the religious situation. Hall believed that by moving into the forefront of ecclesiastical life he would be better able to restore harmony to the Church of England. Unfortunately the public pronouncements which he made prior to and immediately after his nomination proved more to the liking of Laud and Montagu than to the puritans. This was not because Hall had thrown in his lot with the 'Arminians'. Rather it was a measure of the gap which now existed between his perception of orthodoxy and that of zealots.

The issue which forced Hall to the centre of the stage was the furore generated by the appearance of Richard Montagu's *New Gagg for an Old Goose*. Hall was greatly disturbed by the divisions which Montagu's 'tart and vehement assertions of some positions, near of kin to the remonstrants of [the] Netherland[s]' had given rise to in the Church and feared a repetition of the troubles which had plagued the Dutch.¹⁴⁰¹ Characteristically, Hall's response was not to round upon Montagu, but to seek an amicable resolution

¹³⁹⁶ G I Soden, *Godfrey Goodman, Bishop of Gloucester 1583-1656* (1953), pp. 134-8.

¹³⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹⁹ Russell, *Parliaments and English Politics*, pp. 147, 298; see below, pp. 196-98.

¹⁴⁰⁰ See below, pp. 297-98.

¹⁴⁰¹ *Works of Hall*, ed. Wynter, i. xlivi.

of this potentially dangerous quarrel. Upon closer scrutiny Hall discovered that 'mistaking was more guilty of dissension, than misbelieving (since it plainly appeared.....that Mr Montagu meant to express, not Arminius, but Bishop Overall, a more moderate and safe author, however he sped in delivery of him)'.¹⁴⁰² Consequently, Hall 'wrote a little project of pacification', *Via Media: the Way of Peace*, which drew upon both Overall's writings and the views of 'our English divines at Dort', taking 'such common propositions concerning these five busy articles [of Arminianism], as wherein both of them are fully agreed'.¹⁴⁰³ Unfortunately for the author, although Montagu and divines 'that were contrarily minded', were ready to subscribe to the book's contents 'the confused noise of the misconstructions of those who never saw the work.....meeting with the royal edict of a general inhibition, buried it in a secure silence'.¹⁴⁰⁴

Hall's recourse of the opinions of John Overall, the former regius professor of divinity at Cambridge and successively bishop of Lichfield and Norwich, is instructive. Overall was viewed as an arch-conservative by zealots at Cambridge.¹⁴⁰⁵ His election to the regius professorship in succession to William Whitaker allegedly represented 'a blow to the Calvinist cause'.¹⁴⁰⁶ Hall himself acknowledged this disturbed background when remarking that Overall in his 'Articles of Controversy in the Low Countries' 'went a midway betwixt the two opinions which he held extreme [namely those of the remonstrants and the counter-remonstrants] and must needs, therefore, differ somewhat from the commonly received tenet in these points [of Arminianism]'.¹⁴⁰⁷

It was because of Overall's willingness to deal with Arminianism compassionately that Hall also drew upon the views of the English delegation at Dort in writing his *Via Media* in order to achieve what he considered to be a proper balance. In other words, whilst Hall had no quarrel of substance with Overall's analysis, he felt that the arguments being advanced by the regius professor could be more judiciously put, which in essence was the criticism he was making of Montagu's *New Gagg*. For Hall, upon reflection,

¹⁴⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰³ *Ibid.*, i. xliv.

¹⁴⁰⁴ *Ibid.* The inhibition was the royal proclamation of 16 June 1626, 'for the establishing of the peace and quiet of the Church of England' (J P Kenyon, *The Stuart Constitution 1603-1688: Documents and Commentary* (Cambridge, 1969), pp. 154-5).

¹⁴⁰⁵ Porter, *Reformation and Reaction*, p. 417; Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, pp. 236-9.

¹⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 236.

¹⁴⁰⁷ *Works of Hall*, ed. Wynter, i. xliv.

the English situation was 'far different from the Netherlandish'.¹⁴⁰⁸ Whereas Dort was a matter of opposed doctrinal positions, the Montagu affair concerned a question of rival emphases within the Calvinist consensus. Montagu's crime was one of intemperance, not heresy.

Of course, this was Hall's view of the situation. Others might take a different stance. Yet it was disturbing for zealots to find that a divine who had 'almost imbibed Calvinism with his mother's milk' and who had spent an undergraduate career at Emmanuel under Laurence Chaderton, should fail to identify Montagu as an Arminian and moreover should seek to construct a test of credal orthodoxy based largely upon the writings of a man who had incurred William Perkins' wrath.¹⁴⁰⁹ It was not surprising, therefore, that Hall should come to be regarded as a partisan rather than an arbiter. For in the circumstances of the 1620s this was indeed what he was. Hall's rejection of the supralapsarian understanding of predestination, the view that God had determined the elect and reprobate before the Fall, and his belief (consequent upon his rejection) that Christ had died for all men, went counter to contemporary puritan teachings.¹⁴¹⁰ Hall's further assertions that the Church of Rome was a truly visible Church, despite its many corruptions, and that protestants were in effect reformed Roman Catholics merely added insult to injury.¹⁴¹¹

Hall's views made him a credal rather than an experimental predestinarian.¹⁴¹² But how had these views been acquired? After all, Hall's upbringing pointed in the opposite direction. His mother was very much into experimental divinity, being a member of the congregation of Anthony Gilby, the former Marian exile and by Hall's own identification 'one of the godfathers of the Geneva discipline' in England.¹⁴¹³ Moreover, when Hall went up to Cambridge in 1589, it was under the guidance of Gilby's son, Nathaniel, who held a fellowship at Emmanuel.¹⁴¹⁴ Six years later Hall himself became a senior member of that foundation.¹⁴¹⁵ However, it would be a mistake to assume that Hall thereafter changed course. Certainly the divine never exhibited the sort of contempt for the experimental predestinarian tradition that one might expect from someone who had come to know better. On the

¹⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, i. xliv-v; Lewis, *Life of Hall*, p. 286.

¹⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6; Porter, *Reformation and Reaction*, p. 385.

¹⁴¹⁰ Lewis, *Life of Hall*, pp. 231-3.

¹⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 252-3.

¹⁴¹² See above, pp. 167-72.

¹⁴¹³ *Works of Hall*, ed. Wynter, ix. 272-3.

¹⁴¹⁴ *Ibid.*, i. xxii-iii.

¹⁴¹⁵ *DNB, sub nomine*, Joseph Hall.

contrary, Hall's mature position was one of respect for Perkins and his brand of divinity.¹⁴¹⁶ Such an absence of rancour was of course typical of the eirenical Hall. Yet it may also indicate that the divine had never at any stage been an adherent of Beza and his teachings.

Evidently the education that Hall received at his local grammar school acted as a counter-attraction to the distinctly esoteric pursuits of his 'saint-like' mother. The earl of Huntingdon, the employer of Hall's father, had founded the school at Ashby-de-la-Zouch in 1567.¹⁴¹⁷ Gilby, the minister of Ashby, was one of its governors.¹⁴¹⁸ His influence may be detected in the requirement that scholars attend not only public prayers and sermons but also the prophesying held in the parish church.¹⁴¹⁹

However, the primary objective of the grammar school's curriculum was to instil into its students a knowledge of Latin and Greek. A range of classical works for study was listed by the founding statutes together with Calvin and Alexander Nowell's catechisms.¹⁴²⁰ Constant repetition, translation and examination were the keys to academic success. In the top form twice-weekly exercises were devised to test the boys' style of writing, command of language, and treatment of subject-matter. A particular favourite was the writing of letters according to the models of Cicero and Erasmus, but the more difficult art of verse composition was not neglected. The boys were expected to keep commonplace books to record, and then to learn phrases, synonyms, proverbs, quotations, or figures useful in composition and declamation.¹⁴²¹

Clearly the humanistic qualities of the curriculum struck a chord within Hall. Whereas for some a classical education was simply a means to an end, for him it became almost an end in itself. Henceforth, it would be impossible for Hall to accept scriptural fundamentalism of the sort practised by Bezans. Certainly the bible contained the necessary truths by which to lead a religious life. But those truths required interpretation and investigation. Having been made aware of the diversity of opinion amongst scholars and famous men over the centuries, the idea that such uncertainty could be dismissed out of hand as popery was unthinkable. If the early church fathers disagreed about

¹⁴¹⁶ Lewis, *Life of Hall*, p. 366; *Works of Hall*, ed. Wynter, i. xxi.

¹⁴¹⁷ *Ibid.*, i. xix; L Fox, *A Country Grammar School: a History of Ashby-de-la-Zouch Grammar School through four centuries, 1567-1967* (1967), p. 5.

¹⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹⁴²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

¹⁴²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

the meaning of the scriptures, it was the latter-day scholar's duty to say so and to show in what areas of belief a broad consensus of opinion existed. By paring down religion to its essentials, Hall was able to espouse, in true Grindalian fashion, the cause of social reform. Profound theological issues should be left to those best qualified to deal with them. It was much more desirable that religious fervour be used for the amelioration of the present world than for the contemplation of the next.¹⁴²²

This 'social conscience' stayed with Hall throughout his long ecclesiastical career. It proved to be both his strength and his weakness. On the one hand, Hall's moderation gave him a certain dignity in an age of growing intolerance. On the other hand, his determination to uphold the 'Grindalian' tradition at a time when that tradition had ceased to have any practical significance flawed his episcopate. Ambitious individuals were able to exploit the inherent weakness of his position to drive a wedge between himself and Laud and thus threaten his credibility as a diocesan. The problem was that whilst Hall never deviated from the theological and doctrinal stances that he had adopted in his youth, he nonetheless did change course. Like Alley, Woolton and Babington before him, Hall was drawn inexorably into the camp of conformism. Ironically, this was precisely because he underplayed the danger posed by radical puritanism. If it is difficult to accuse Hall of naked ambition, then certainly he was guilty of a kind of wilful self-righteousness predicated upon a belief that he had the solutions to the problems of the day. Ultimately it was Hall rather than the Laudians or the puritans who was divorced from reality.

It cannot be denied that Hall had a strong sense of destiny. His parents were determined that he should enter the ministry and he was equally determined that he should not disappoint them.¹⁴²³ But Hall did not want to end up as just another backwoods clergyman, even if the poverty of his family made such a fate seem likely.¹⁴²⁴ Indeed, it was originally planned that upon finishing school Hall should be indentured for a term of seven years to William Pelset, 'the public preacher of Leicester', 'then lately come from Cambridge'.¹⁴²⁵ In his autobiographical sketch written towards the end of his life, Hall makes it plain how much he dreaded this: 'there and now were all the hopes of my future like upon blasting...[they were] to be drowned in a shallow country channel'.¹⁴²⁶ But help was at hand. The arguments of

¹⁴²² Lewis, *Life of Hall*, pp. 244-76.

¹⁴²³ *Works of Hall*, ed. Wynter, i. xxi.

¹⁴²⁴ *Ibid.*, i. xxii.

¹⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*, i. xxi.

¹⁴²⁶ *Ibid.*, i. xxii-iii.

Nathaniel Gilby and later the munificence of an uncle persuaded Hall's parents to send their son to university. 'Certainly never did I in all my life more clearly roll myself upon [God's] divine providence than I did in this business', wrote Hall. 'And it succeeded accordingly'.¹⁴²⁷

Hall was at Cambridge from 1589 to 1601.¹⁴²⁸ During this time he came into contact with the leading lights of contemporary puritanism. Being at Emmanuel with Gilby as his tutor and Chaderton as the head of the college, this was unavoidable. Hall met and engaged in theological debate with William Perkins.¹⁴²⁹ He also fell under the spell of 'that saint of ours', Richard Greenham, the celebrated preacher of Dry Drayton and a pioneer of sabbatarianism.¹⁴³⁰ Yet Hall was an intellectual force in his own right. His reputation for scholarship was universally acknowledged and for two consecutive years he was chosen to the rhetoric lectureship in the university.¹⁴³¹ Shortly Hall was to make a name for himself in the field of divine meditation, an area where Greenham was especially prominent.¹⁴³² Yet the influence of the latter upon the former cannot be assumed to have been direct. The style of divinity practised by Hall even while at Cambridge was of a far more extrovert kind than anything attempted by 'experimental' writers such as Greenham.

The *Virgidemiarum* of 1597-8, Hall's first literary work, are very much a case in point. They are, in fact, a set of verse satires, a belated testimony to the academic exercises of the author's schooldays. Their tone is one of moral outrage: dramatists, lawyers, doctors and clerics are all targets for Hall's spleen.¹⁴³³ Pretension and avarice are roundly condemned, the latter finding extended treatment in a diatribe on the evils of enclosure and the rapacious conduct of the gentry.¹⁴³⁴ Enclosure, of course, was still an emotive issue in England. The 1590s were difficult times for the poor and underprivileged. Harvests were deficient, food prices high and epidemic disease raged.¹⁴³⁵ Hall's Leicestershire upbringing well-qualified him to comment upon the iniquities of enclosure. The Midlands had borne the brunt of the sixteenth century enclosing movement. Certainly there is little reason to doubt the sincerity of Hall's concern. On more than one occasion in later life the divine

¹⁴²⁷ *Ibid.*, i. xxii.

¹⁴²⁸ *DNB, sub nomine*, Joseph Hall.

¹⁴²⁹ R A McCabe, *Joseph Hall: A Study in Satire and Meditation* (Oxford, 1982), p. 7.

¹⁴³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁴³¹ *DNB, sub nomine*, Joseph Hall.

¹⁴³² McCabe, *Joseph Hall*, p. 7.

¹⁴³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 30-71; *Works of Hall*, ed. Wynter, ix. 597-618.

¹⁴³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁴³⁵ McCabe, *Joseph Hall*, pp. 53-71.

returned to the theme of 'devouring depopulators'.¹⁴³⁶ Nonetheless, the *Virgidemiarum* cannot simply be dismissed as the work of an angry young man. Hall had deliberately set out to shock. By 'going over the top' and thus exposing himself to the charge of youthful impetuosity, he was also inviting his audience to applaud his genius. Hall was seeking social acceptance by being a critic of the establishment.

The audience, of course, was the important thing. The satires, replete with their classical allusions, would find a ready market at court, and it was at court that any aspiring cleric would be most likely to realise his ambitions. Again, it is important not to oversimplify the connection between career and convictions in Hall. The latter led the former, not *vice versa*. Hall's early education gave him a certain view of the world. Like any zealot he was anxious to proselytise. What he had to say made greatest sense to certain groups in society. Hall's mistake was to assume that his message had a universal application. By reaching upwards, he believed that he was also, as it were, addressing a wider audience. Success for him also meant success for his cause. Moreover, the process was self-generating. The more Hall became tied to the court, the more he came to see puritanism as a benign influence within Church and State. For him presbyterianism was nothing more than a political movement which had died a death at the beginning of the 1590s. Its wider ramifications were something that he never fully grasped. As a result Hall was caught unawares by the religious troubles of James' reign.

The *Virgidemiarum* achieved their purpose of creating a stir in high places. The pungent and scurrilous verse led Whitgift and Bancroft to consider burning the work.¹⁴³⁷ Only at the last minute was there a reprieve.¹⁴³⁸ Hall had made his mark, although he had to wait a while for its full impact to register. In 1600 he entered the ministry.¹⁴³⁹ The next year he was on the point of taking up the headmastership of Blundell's, when the wife of Sir Robert Drury offered him the family living of Hawstead (Suffolk).¹⁴⁴⁰ Hall was quick to seize an opportunity for study and practising divinity. The fruits soon appeared. In 1605 the first two 'centuries' of *Meditations and Vowes, Divine and Morall* were published. They were followed twelve months later by *The Arte of Divine Meditation* which 'consolidated its author's position at the head of the great contemplative

¹⁴³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴³⁷ *DNB, sub nomine, Joseph Hall.*

¹⁴³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁴³⁹ McCabe, *Joseph Hall*, p. 8.

¹⁴⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

revival'.¹⁴⁴¹ Soon afterwards, the *Characters of Vertues and Vices* (1608) and the *Epistles* (1608-11) 'assured [Hall's] place in literary history by adding two new genres to English letters'.¹⁴⁴² Then in 1612 the divine began his most ambitious project to date, the enormously popular *Contemplations upon the Principall Passages of the Holy Storie*. It was to take until 1634 to finish.

It would be wrong to suppose that in turning his pen towards the production of sacred works Hall put his somewhat rumbustious, secular past completely behind him. That this was clearly not the case can be seen from the first sermon he delivered at Paul's Cross, *Pharisaisme and Christianity* (1608). Here the rapacious church patron came in for the sort of criticism reminiscent of Woolton's *An Armoure of Proufe*.¹⁴⁴³

Woe to you spiritual robbers! Our blind forefathers clothed the Church,
You despoil it; their ignorant devotion shall rise in judgement against
Your ravening covetousness. If robbery, simony, will not carry you to hell,
Hope still you may be saved.¹⁴⁴⁴

Even the more mild-mannered *Meditations* and *Contemplations* can be seen as upholding Hall's belief that 'a man's best monument is his virtuous actions'.¹⁴⁴⁵ They were works of moral criticism no less than the satirical *Virgidemiarum*.

Nonetheless, it cannot be denied that Hall's perspective did undergo a certain change of emphasis at the beginning of the seventeenth century. If human folly and vice continued to bulk large in his writings, especially his sermons, then they did so increasingly in terms of the individual rather than the group. The *Meditations* and *Contemplations* contrived 'to include [their] moral criticism within the pattern of [their] moral criticism within the pattern of [their] private speculations thereby arriving at a personal moral resolution'.¹⁴⁴⁶ This was very different from the *Virgidemiarum* which 'turn[ed] outwards to assail the follies of the world directly'.¹⁴⁴⁷ Even the sermons came to be regarded by their author as extensions of his devotional writings. They were dialogues between the preacher and listener. Sometimes they were simply monologues examining the divine's own

¹⁴⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

¹⁴⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹⁴⁴³ See above, p. 96.

¹⁴⁴⁴ *Works of Hall*, ed. Wynter, v. 12.

¹⁴⁴⁵ McCabe, *Joseph Hall*, p. 143.

¹⁴⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

conscience. In short, Hall had been 'captured' by the establishment. It increasingly seemed to him that order – the maintenance of the political and religious *status quo* – was the prerequisite for moral improvement. The historicism inherent in Hall's humanistic outlook thus locked onto the Church of England turning it for him as indeed for other progressive court divines into a 'Mother Church' for which no praise was too great.¹⁴⁴⁸

Yet Hall's sojourn with the establishment cannot be described as especially happy. This in itself indicates that he did not 'sell out' to hard-line conformism under James. Certainly his position, as indeed that of the other Grindalians, was extremely delicate and became more so with the passage of time. They were not at ease with trend-setting 'liberal' divines like Andrewes, nor despite their protestations to the contrary were they in tune with experimental predestinarians. Indeed, Hall's meditational writings were intellectually at odds with ostensibly works by Greenham. It was not just that Hall's pieces were strewn with references to the church fathers and the classics, borrowings which experimental divines condemned as impure and popish.¹⁴⁴⁹ Rather they conveyed a message that was instructive as much as didactic, remedial as much as punitive.

The writings of the puritan casuists lacked the warmth and humanity of Hall's personal counsellings. Hall may have believed that the world was a profoundly evil place, yet he nonetheless presented a smiling face to his readers. Christians were encouraged to look outwards and upwards, not inwards and downwards. Yet this stance also forbade a true alliance with the 'liberal' theologians. For whilst Andrewes and his colleagues garlanded their works with patristic and classical references, they used them merely as oratorical devices. For them the beauty of holiness was everything. Learning contributed to that beauty. The words of the text mattered more than the issues arising from them. This was religion for the aesthete, not for the man in the street.¹⁴⁵⁰

The work which openly signalled Hall's acceptance of the values of the Jacobean court was his first full-length controversial tract, *A Common Apologie of the Church of England, against the Unjust Challenges of the Over-Just Sect, commonly called Brownists*.¹⁴⁵¹ Published in 1610 and

¹⁴⁴⁸ Collinson, *Religion of Protestants*, p. 80, n. 59.

¹⁴⁴⁹ McCabe, *Joseph Hall*, pp. 262-4.

¹⁴⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

dedicated to Abbot, it was a defence of all things established including the apostolic order of episcopacy.¹⁴⁵²

By now Hall had become one of Prince Henry's chaplains.¹⁴⁵³ The prince had been impressed by the *Meditations* and had asked to hear their author preach. The chaplaincy was the reward. With his place at court secure, Hall had the opportunity to leave Hawstead.¹⁴⁵⁴ He was dissatisfied with the salary paid him and when Sir Edward Denny offered him the living of Waltham Cross, he wasted no time in accepting. Denny, who was created earl of Norwich in 1626, was an influential man with powerful connections.¹⁴⁵⁵ His son-in-law, James Hay, was a particular favourite of James I, whilst his wife was the daughter of Thomas Cecil, the eldest son of Lord Burghley.¹⁴⁵⁶ Together Denny and the Cecils may have been responsible for keeping Hall in the forefront of the early Stuart Church following the untimely death of Prince Henry in 1612 and may ultimately have been responsible for getting Hall appointed to Exeter in 1627.¹⁴⁵⁷

For much of the period 1612-16 Hall resided at Waltham, making only the occasional foray onto the national stage. The contrast between his 'private' and 'public' personae is instructive. At home, Hall appeared the dedicated scholar recharging his intellectual and emotional batteries. It was a quintessentially 'puritan' existence. 'I would ever awake with God', he told Denny. 'My first thoughts are for Him who hath made the night for rest and the day for travel, and as He gives so {he} blesses both'.¹⁴⁵⁸ Meditation then followed. Thereafter Hall turned to his 'masters and companions', his books.¹⁴⁵⁹ He would pick upon 'those ancients whom the Church hath honoured with the name of Fathers' and also 'those latter doctors which want nothing but age to make them classical'.¹⁴⁶⁰ But he had a special regard for the former: he could not open their volumes 'without a secret reverence of their holiness and gravity'.¹⁴⁶¹

Hall viewed daily study as a duty. Interruptions by his family and mealtimes were necessary evils in that they allowed him to relax briefly before resuming

¹⁴⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

¹⁴⁵⁴ *Works of Hall*, ed. Wynter, i. xxxiii.

¹⁴⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁵⁶ McCabe, *Joseph Hall*, p. 9.

¹⁴⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁵⁸ Lewis, *Life of Hall*, p. 158.

¹⁴⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶¹ *Ibid.*

his devotions.¹⁴⁶² But on Sundays even these moments of domesticity were sharply curtailed, for 'prayer, meditation, reading, hearing, preaching, singing, good conference, [were] the business of' the Sabbath.¹⁴⁶³ 'The whole week [was] sanctified by Sunday'. A blemish here would tarnish the entire seven-day cycle of study.¹⁴⁶⁴

But when Hall preached at Paul's Cross his emphasis was rather different.¹⁴⁶⁵ Here political calculation came into play. An opportunity was at hand to renew ties with the court. Queen Elizabeth was identified as the mother of the nation, the nurse of the Church, the glory of womanhood and the envy and example of foreign powers. But this was merely to set a high standard with which to credit James. The king was portrayed as the quintessence of moderation. Let there be no fear of persecution for one's beliefs here, proclaims Hall, quietly ignoring the recent burnings of two radical protestants. In short, the sermon was an *apologia* for (and a vindication of) royal government. Soon Hall would be making more obviously enthusiastic noises about Jacobean absolutism.

Closely associated with this were the three embassies that Hall found himself employed upon during the years 1616-18. None of them, in truth, were especially happy occasions for the divine. The first involved accompanying James Hay, now Viscount Dorchester, to France. But severe food poisoning forced Hall to return home prematurely.¹⁴⁶⁶ He perked up somewhat upon the news that James had nominated him to the deanery of Worcester, but was then prevented from taking possession of that office by the royal command to join the king in Scotland.¹⁴⁶⁷

This was in 1617 at the time when James seemed to be abandoning the 'moderate' politico-religious stance that he had hitherto espoused.¹⁴⁶⁸ It was now also that Hall's re-education began. The divine was forced to confront, if not yet fully to comprehend, the naivety of his belief in the reality of a 'moderate puritan' Church of England. By some curious irony, Hall had only just completed a tract – *Quo Vadis? A Censure of Travel* – which warned against the dangers of foreign travel for Englishmen especially with regard to the encountering of alien religious opinions, when he received the call to go

¹⁴⁶² *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 161.

¹⁴⁶⁷ *DNB, sub nomine*, Joseph Hall.

¹⁴⁶⁸ See above, pp. 171-72.

to Scotland.¹⁴⁶⁹ Of course, Hall had in mind the disputation that he had had with the Jesuits in Germany in 1605 when he had accompanied Sir Edmund Bacon to Spa.¹⁴⁷⁰ What he was now obliged to face in 1617 was a major rift between 'hotter protestants' north of the border and the king who wished to impose upon the Scottish Church the *Five Articles of Perth*.¹⁴⁷¹

When James first came to England in 1603 he promised to visit his native Scotland every three years.¹⁴⁷² But in truth he was well-pleased to be free of a country that was economically backward and politically unruly. His decision to return to his homeland in 1617, albeit briefly, was thus most likely prompted by more than simple 'longing to see the place of his breeding, a salmon-like instinct'.¹⁴⁷³ Noticeably James took with him an array of divines who, with the exception of Hall, were 'Arminians'. We earlier saw that Valentine Carey was one of these.¹⁴⁷⁴ So, too, were Andrewes, Neile and Laud. The *Five Articles* comprised an attempt to impose upon the Scottish Church certain key rituals and ceremonies observed in the Church of England.¹⁴⁷⁵ These included kneeling to receive communion, the private administration of holy baptism and confirmation by bishops. Not surprisingly Scottish puritans reacted with alarm and anguish over the planned reforms. James was expecting this. Arguably his intention was not to overturn the progressively-inclined Scottish Church (and thereby bring it into conformity with its more conservative southern neighbour), but rather to assert his authority at a time when negotiations for a Spanish Match were just beginning.

James knew that his overtures to the Habsburgs would raise hackles at home, and especially so in Knoxian Scotland. He, therefore, believed it vital to get some acknowledgement of his absolutist claims. As always James was anxious to show who was in charge. By heading for presbyterian Scotland and asserting himself there, he would send a clear message to all his subjects, wherever they might be, that he meant business. Hence his inclusion of Hall in his party. Hall was to be the token 'progressive'. His presence would signify to doubters that the old days of 'moderation' had not been entirely forgotten. Current royal policies were perhaps not so

¹⁴⁶⁹ Lewis, *Life of Hall*, pp. 173-87.

¹⁴⁷⁰ *DNB, sub nomine*, Joseph Hall.

¹⁴⁷¹ Lewis, *Life of Hall*, pp. 187-92.

¹⁴⁷² *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷⁴ See above, p. 174.

¹⁴⁷⁵ R Lockyer, *Tudor and Stuart Britain 1471-1714* (2nd edn., 1985), p. 407.

dangerous and abnoxious after all. This would also act as a restraint upon the 'Arminians'.

Certainly Hall was well-received by the Scots people. His autobiographical fragment records the 'great love and respect' he found north of the border and also the 'no small envy' which this occasioned amongst his fellow courtiers.¹⁴⁷⁶ Perhaps it was because of this that Hall returned home early thereby giving others the chance to complain to James about his 'over plausible demeanour and doctrine to that already prejudicate people'.¹⁴⁷⁷

This was the clash that the king had been anticipating. He moved to exploit it. William Struthers, one of the preachers of Edinburgh who had bitterly denounced the Five Articles, was known to be writing a letter to Hall seeking the latter's support.¹⁴⁷⁸ This threatened to put Hall on the spot. He knew that he would have to take sides and that he would ultimately be obliged to favour the king. James, of course, was well aware of this and was thus anxious that Hall should respond to Struther's letter. The divine did his best to charge a middle course. But this seemed no more than temporising to 'hotter protestants'. Hall avoided speaking of the intrinsic worth of ceremonies. Nonetheless, it was necessary to display a 'holy decency' in approaching a transcendent God. In any event, civil obedience had to be practised. 'One king may.....prescribe to two Churches, whereof he is head.....[A]uthority may press the use of things indifferent'.¹⁴⁷⁹

This was the victory that James had been seeking. Significantly, he did not insist upon the rigid enforcement of the Five Articles. They were to be kept 'on ice' as indeed was the prayer book which was drawn up for use in the Scottish Church in 1619.¹⁴⁸⁰ As in his dealings with Valentine Carey, James had made his point and that was sufficient. The trouble was that no true settlement had been reached. Uncertainty prevailed, though Hall had little time to reflect upon this, for at the end of 1618 he was again on his travels, now the destination was Dordrecht in the United Provinces. He and certain other divines were sent thither by James to reconcile the supporters of Arminius and Gomarus.¹⁴⁸¹ The English delegation was, in fact, stridently 'moderate' in its religious outlook. Besides Hall, there was Bishop George

¹⁴⁷⁶ *Works of Hall*, ed. Wynter, i. xl.

¹⁴⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, ix. 117.

¹⁴⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, ix. 117-23.

¹⁴⁸⁰ Lockyer, *Tudor and Stuart Britain*, p. 407.

¹⁴⁸¹ *Idem, Habsburg and Bourbon Europe 1470-1720* (1974), p. 426.

Carleton, John Davenant and Samuel Ward. Hall, it could be said, was among friends.¹⁴⁸²

Yet, in retrospect, the Dutch mission was no more satisfactory for the divine than the Scottish expedition. Certainly, to outsiders at least, it was comforting to see James fielding a 'centre-left' team at Dort. When the chips were down (or so it seemed), the king knew what to do. But events once more showed him to be a misguided meddler. Peace and unity were James' perennial watchwords. However, he had failed to appreciate the extent of the divisions in Holland. James chose moderates to represent him because he wished to side with the Counter-Remonstrant party.¹⁴⁸³ Hall and his colleagues' main task would be to get a fair deal for the Arminians. The aim was to prevent the growth of intolerance. But the Counter-Remonstrants were far from reasonable men. They were ardent biblical fundamentalists. James had assumed that he would be dealing with open minds. But, as we have seen, the king's understanding of mainline Calvinism was not shared by zealots.¹⁴⁸⁴ James believed that he and the Counter-Remonstrants could be at one. In reality, of course, they were far apart.

James was largely immune from these matters, because he chose to remain at home in England. Thus it was the members of the delegation who were forced to endure the 'culture shock' of Dort. The upshot was the loss of any hope they may have had of influencing the synod's course. Suddenly the English divines found themselves in the deep and uncertain waters of theological debate. The second of the five articles which the Arminians put forward for discussion – that Christ died for all men – caused especial problems for the English.¹⁴⁸⁵ Davenant and Ward insisted that the 31st of the 39 Articles of 1563 implied that the merits of Christ's death were not confined to the elect.¹⁴⁸⁶ Carleton, a kindred spirit of the argumentative George Abbot and to whom he probably owed his presence on the mission, disagreed. He 'pressed it to the company to change some things, which offended the president, but [Davenant] answered that he would rather have his right hand cut off, than change anything'.¹⁴⁸⁷ Eventually this latter view prevailed (thus suggesting a lack of conviction on Carleton's part). Soon

¹⁴⁸² Platt, 'Eirenenical Anglicans', pp. 221-43.

¹⁴⁸³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸⁴ See above, pp. 167-72.

¹⁴⁸⁵ White, 'Rise of Arminianism Reconsidered', p. 43.

¹⁴⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸⁷ *Ibid.*; K Fincham, 'Prelacy and Politics: Archbishop Abbot's Defence of Protestant Orthodoxy', *HR*, 144 (1988), pp. 36-64.

Davenant was sending Abbot a memorandum headed 'Reasons of enlarging Grace beyond Election' signed by them all.¹⁴⁸⁸

All that is except Hall. For once again he had been forced home early by illness. This was not a strategic withdrawal, despite what some observers alleged.¹⁴⁸⁹ Nonetheless, Hall cannot have been sorry to be away from the synod, given the ruthless manner in which the ultra Calvinists were pursuing their adversaries. He had preached a keynote sermon at the start of proceedings which emphasised the virtues of reconciliation. *The Dove of Peace* was clearly aimed at taking the heat out of the situation. Its resonant phrases and emotive language asked its audience to set 'aside all prejudice and party feeling that we may be happily united in the enjoyment of the common truth'.¹⁴⁹⁰

But these words fell upon deaf ears. Perhaps significantly, Hall's career now began to languish. Given the fact of the offer of the see of Gloucester, this may well indicate a loss of confidence rather than a failure of patronage.¹⁴⁹¹ Certainly Hall was reluctantly drawn into the Richard Montagu affair. Privately he may well have hoped that the controversial divine would receive his come-uppance for his temerity in disturbing the peace of the Church. Yet Hall's abiding sense of fair play obliged him to adopt a mediating role. And, as we saw earlier, the more that Hall became involved in the affair, the more he came to realise that Montagu was only overstating a set of agree principles.¹⁴⁹²

Of course, Hall was not alone amongst moderate churchmen in his perplexity. But he may have been especially aware of the nature of the current difficulties. Certainly the disunity shown by the English delegation at Dort found a resonant echo at the York House Conference which was convened at the start of 1626.¹⁴⁹³ The puritans naturally expected the conference to vindicate their abhorrence of Montagu's views. But it did not.¹⁴⁹⁴ Admittedly the outcome was a draw: neither side won. But this was not enough for zealots. They felt betrayed, the more so as their strident denunciations of Montagu went unheeded by Buckingham and Charles. Yet

¹⁴⁸⁸ White, 'Rise of Arminianism Reconsidered', p. 43.

¹⁴⁸⁹ Lewis, *Life of Hall*, p. 210.

¹⁴⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 207.

¹⁴⁹¹ Hall's memoirs move rapidly from his return from Dort to the Montagu affair six years later (*Works of Hall*, ed. Wynter, i. xlivi).

¹⁴⁹² See above, pp. 182-84.

¹⁴⁹³ Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, p. 165.

¹⁴⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 180; Tyacke, 'Puritanism, Arminianism and Counter-Revolution', in *Origins of Civil War*, ed. Russell, pp. 129-30.

the puritans only had themselves to blame. Their case was poorly presented, which was not altogether surprising given that their principal spokesman was Thomas Morton, the bishop of Coventry and Lichfield.¹⁴⁹⁵

No less than Hall, Moreton felt compromised by events. He did his best to convince the conference that Montagu's writings 'open[ed] a great gap for popery to be let in'.¹⁴⁹⁶ But his words lacked conviction. The absence of any 'puritan' account of proceedings suggests that the bishop made a poor showing and this is borne out by John Cosin's report.¹⁴⁹⁷ From the outset Morton had difficulty presenting his case. It was as if Montagu had stolen the ground of moderation from under his feet. Morton was reduced to making vague accusations of treason and popery. This prompted Buckingham to remark, in the manner of James at Hampton Court two decades earlier: 'if these be the greatest matters you be grieved with, I can see no reason but Mr Montagu should be defended'.¹⁴⁹⁸

The conference was on the point of breaking up when Lord Saye, who together with the earl of Warwick had been responsible for organising the debate, raised the core issue of predestination.¹⁴⁹⁹ How the reason for Morton's ineffectual performance became clear. Saye evidently wanted the strict supralapsarian viewpoint of Dort reaffirmed. Montagu's supporters, Buckeridge and Francis White, the dean of Carlisle, were quick to exploit this extremism. They argued that by limiting Christ's redemption to the elect, Dort had overthrown the sacrament of the communion. How, therefore, could ministers continue to say to communicants 'The Body of our Lord which was given for thee'? 'Let the opinion of the Dortists be admitted'. White contended, 'and the tenth person in the Church shall not have been redeemed'.¹⁵⁰⁰

All that Morton could say in reply was: 'will you have the grace of God tied to sacraments?'¹⁵⁰¹ The bishop had set out to condemn Arminianism but like Hall was finding the Dutch and English situations rather different. The supralapsarian viewpoint was not one that he could readily support. Suddenly finding himself tainted with the brush of extremism, Morton's will to

¹⁴⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

¹⁴⁹⁶ White, 'Rise of Arminianism Reconsidered', p. 49.

¹⁴⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

¹⁴⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

¹⁴⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰⁰ Tyacke, 'Puritanism, Arminianism and Counter-Revolution', in *Origins of Civil War*, ed. Russell, p. 133.

¹⁵⁰¹ *Ibid.*

resist collapsed. All he could do was to request that Montagu's books be called in. But Buckingham was no longer open to persuasion. "Teach you this divinity?", quoth my lord duke [addressing Morton], "God defend us from following it".¹⁵⁰²

This, of course, did not mean that Buckingham had made 'a commitment to Arminianism'.¹⁵⁰³ He had merely been alarmed by the nature of puritan thinking (and was thus probably regretting his earlier support for John Preston).¹⁵⁰⁴ That the position Morton now found himself in was false can be seen from the strong backing he gave to royal absolutism during the 1630s and beyond.¹⁵⁰⁵ His reputation as a 'moderate' remained intact, but like Hall he ceased to be a major power broker at court. His standing came to rest upon his achievements in his see. But even her problems might well arise as Hall's experience at Exeter showed.

Hall was consecrated bishop in December 1627.¹⁵⁰⁶ As was by now customary, he was allowed to augment his income by holding a *commendam*, the Cornish rectory of St Breock.¹⁵⁰⁷ Hall relates in his memoirs that he took up the reins of church government in the south-west 'not without much prejudice and suspicion on some hands; for some that sat at the stern of the Church had me in great jealousy for too much favour of puritanism'.¹⁵⁰⁸ This was clearly a reference to the ultra conformists. But we should remember that Hall was also at this time much distrusted by zealots.¹⁵⁰⁹ Having ruffled a good man feathers with *Via Media* and his acceptance of episcopal office, Hall endeavoured in 1628 to clear his name. Yet the more he wrote, the more he became embroiled in controversy. Even the publication of letters of support from Morton and Davenant, John Prideaux professor of divinity at Oxford and Dr Primrose preacher of the French Church in London failed to stem the tide of vilification.¹⁵¹⁰

It was at this stage that Laud became alarmed. Unlike the puritans, who believed that Hall had not gone far enough in condemning Rome, Laud believed that Hall was being overly critical of Arminianism and he thus sought to have the letters written to Morton censored before their

¹⁵⁰² White, 'Rise of Arminianism Reconsidered', p. 49.

¹⁵⁰³ Russell, *Parliaments and English Politics*, p. 298.

¹⁵⁰⁴ See above, p. 181.

¹⁵⁰⁵ Sommerville, *Politics and Ideology*, p. 224.

¹⁵⁰⁶ *DNB*, *sub nomine*, Joseph Hall.

¹⁵⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰⁸ *Works of Hall*, ed. Wynter, i. xlvi.

¹⁵⁰⁹ See above, p. 182.

¹⁵¹⁰ *Works of Hall*, ed. Wynter, viii. 736-55; TNA, SP.16/141/81.

publication, a foretaste this of the editorial veto he would exercise over Hall's *Episcopacie by Divine Right*. Unfortunately, the royal stationer proceeded to print the unexpurgated version, an initiative which landed him in the Fleet prison.¹⁵¹¹

William Prynne made much of this at Laud's trial in 1644.¹⁵¹² There the archbishop justified his action on the grounds that the peace of the Church, as defined by the 1626 royal proclamation, was threatened.¹⁵¹³ And in truth there was more sound than fury in the letters, especially those of Hall. For it was here that the divine made his celebrated remark about the dissimilarity of the religious situations in England and Holland.¹⁵¹⁴ Laud can only have welcomed this, but he refused to be disarmed. He would remain wary of Hall and his fellow progressives. Not surprisingly Laud wanted them to confine their comments to the evils of puritanism, thereby avoiding difficult of ambiguous statements about Arminianism. Laud rightly saw in Hall a useful propaganda tool. But he also recognised the dangers inherent in allowing the bishop unbridled rights of expression: hence, therefore Hall's belief that he was being spied on as diocesan. A fragile relationship existed between the two men which was always liable to be disrupted by events.¹⁵¹⁵

And so it proved, for Hall's rule at Exeter was punctuated by a series of incidents that attracted the attention of the royal court. The bishop simply could not keep out of the news. This was all the more ironic because Hall had set out to pacify his diocese. Zealous ministers worried about persecution were to be reassured. 'Orthodox and peaceable lectures' were to be encouraged.¹⁵¹⁶ The problem was that these gestures were open to misinterpretation. It was the situation that Hall had faced with his writings. The bishop needed to be a free agent for his policy to work. But like Carey before him, his authority rested upon an alliance with the state. This did not disturb Hall, for he believed that he was assuming the mantle of James in a local context. Hall expected to rise above petty rivalries and dominate. But, sadly, he was not even master in his own house. Social, economic and

¹⁵¹¹ Lewis, *Life of Hall*, p. 247.

¹⁵¹² *Ibid.*, p. 286.

¹⁵¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 287.

¹⁵¹⁴ See above, p. 183.

¹⁵¹⁵ The 'spies' may well have been neurotic 'Arminians' like Cosin and Montagu. Laud was ready to believe the worst of Hall and was always surprised when the reality turned out differently as when in 1634 the archbishop reported to the king that despite 'many complaints made' about Hall's rule there was 'very good order' at Exeter (*The Works of William Laud*, eds. W Scott and J Bliss (7 vols., Oxford, 1854), v. 325; see also below, p. 217).

¹⁵¹⁶ *Works of Hall*, ed. Wynter, i. xlvi.

governmental pressures had greatly strengthened diocesan bureaucracies. More will be said about this later; here it is sufficient to appreciate the extreme improbability of Hall upsetting the system, even if he had wanted to.¹⁵¹⁷

The analogy with Carey is instructive, given the present tendency to distinguish between the two men. Certainly Hall did little to ease relations with the Exeter city fathers. It will be remembered that Carey (and indeed other bishops before him) had crossed swords with the magistrates over jurisdiction.¹⁵¹⁸ The rivalry was centuries-old and whilst the precise subject of dispute varied from time to time, the underlying tension endured. On this occasion it was the issue of a free grammar school for the city which animated the minds of the oligarchs. Exeter had long had a grammar school.¹⁵¹⁹ However, it provided an education only for those able to pay for it. The master of the school was appointed by the cathedral authorities and he paid rent to them for the premises. He made a living by charging fees to his pupils.¹⁵²⁰

By the start of the seventeenth century this was no longer acceptable to many in the Exeter merchant community. Other cathedral cities had managed to establish free grammar schools, why not Exeter? Clerical pride was identified as the obstacle. Resentment eventually boiled over in 1622 when William Perryman, the master of the High School, was set upon by apprentices in the Southernhay district of the city.¹⁵²¹ Perryman immediately accused the mayor and alderman of complicity. He petitioned the privy council and Bishop Carey was deputed to intervene. Soon the city fathers were attempting to win Carey over to the idea of establishing a second, free, grammar school.¹⁵²² But the bishop stalled. He would make up his mind upon his return from London. Not until the end of 1623 did Carey reveal his hand, by which time he had come to believe in the justice of Perryman's position.¹⁵²³

Naturally Perryman was fervently opposed to any move to diminish the flow of pupils (and thus fees) to his establishment. Further intimidatory skirmishes followed. Perryman found himself faced with local tax and rate

¹⁵¹⁷ See below, pp. 244-61.

¹⁵¹⁸ See above, pp. 176-79.

¹⁵¹⁹ H Lloyd Parry, *The Founding of Exeter School* (Exeter, 1913), pp. 1-9.

¹⁵²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁵²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

¹⁵²² *Ibid.*, pp. 17, 24.

¹⁵²³ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

demands which he alleged were extortionate.¹⁵²⁴ Archbishop Abbot was dragged into the affair.¹⁵²⁵ In the end, the city fathers pinned their hopes on the new bishop, Hall. But they were to be sadly disappointed. Exeter eventually got its free grammar school, but it was achieved only in the teeth of opposition from the cathedral authorities. Presumably the city fathers had expected Hall to be less partisan than Carey. But they reckoned without Hall's anxiety to establish dominance over his dean and chapter. Interests of church unity came first, so that whilst Hall might not disapprove of the city father's plans, he could not openly side with them. It was all a matter of priorities.

Unfortunately for Hall the attempt to present the local ecclesiastical hierarchy as a model of good order was fraught with problems. Hall might enjoy the support of the diocesan administration when it came to resisting the encroachments of lay authority. But it was another matter when the issue of internal reform was touted. Hall was aware that all was not what it should be with the local Church. No sooner had he set foot in his diocese than a royal commission was convened to investigate allegations of corruption in the Exeter courts.¹⁵²⁶ There was a good deal of truth in these accusations, as the next chapter will show.¹⁵²⁷ Certainly the matter was too far gone for one man to resolve. Possibly Hall expected the royal commissioners to do the job for him. But they were factionalised and ineffectual. Consequently Hall had to live with the taint of corruption throughout his rule. Manifestly it was a poor base from which to deal with the unruly Exeter chapter.

We saw earlier the rivalries which had beset capitular life during Bishop Cotton's rule.¹⁵²⁸ Passions had been high at the start of the seventeenth century for a number of reasons. The canons wanted to reassert themselves against their dean. The diocesan wanted to curb the activities of the lesser jurisdictions of his see. There was feuding amongst the canons over the increasing wealth of the chapter. Tensions had subsided somewhat under Carey because the bishop was frequently absent from the south-west, the then dean Matthew Sutcliffe had been humiliated by the canons, and a deal had been done regarding the capitular estates. William Hellyer had been the driving force behind the last. In defiance of the cathedral statutes, each canon residentiary was to be allowed to lease out a proportion of the chapter's manors and retain for his own use the fines paid by the lessees.

¹⁵²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 26-8.

¹⁵²⁶ TNA, E.215/1329.

¹⁵²⁷ See below, pp. 244-61.

¹⁵²⁸ See above, pp. 141-55.

Consequently few if any reserves were accumulated in the cathedral exchequer to meet the costs of repairs and other daily needs.¹⁵²⁹

Hall's arrival threatened this cosy arrangement. For a start the new bishop would be resident. This meant that he would try to appoint friends and relatives to the major ecclesiastical offices of the diocese, which in turn meant that these persons would seek to become members of the chapter. Coincidentally, the opening years of Hall's rule saw a number of deaths among the residentiaries.¹⁵³⁰ The vacancies would have to be filled. It is true that the remaining canons decided whom to admit. But the vote was not necessarily free. The residentiaries were far from popular, least of all with the fifteen prebendaries who, because of Alley's 1561 statute, could not reside as of right and who therefore could not receive a share of the profits arising from the capitular estates.¹⁵³¹ The prebendaries were agitating for a more equitable distribution of the chapter's wealth.¹⁵³² What if Hall should now throw in his lot with their cause and revoke the 1561 statute? The cosy world of the residentiaries would be at an end. Yet there was also danger if the canons admitted Hall's nominees. For once inside might they not do the bishop's bidding and undermine the chapter's independence? Caught in this cleft stick, the residentiaries were obliged to tread carefully. They earnestly prayed that a rift might develop between Hall and his superiors in London.

The Martin Nansogg affair gave them hope for it called into question the bishop's judgement. Nansogg was an Oxbridge graduate who had joined Hall when it became clear that the latter was about to become a bishop.¹⁵³³ Nansogg evidently had his eye on the archdeaconry of Cornwall which the aged William Parker occupied.¹⁵³⁴ Nansogg enjoyed the backing of Buckingham and Hall was understandably reluctant to annoy the duke further.¹⁵³⁵ Consequently Nansogg became Hall's chaplain and a promise was made that when Parker died he should have the archdeaconry.¹⁵³⁶ Unfortunately Parker refused to die. Nansogg became impatient and began to argue that the archdeaconry was already vacant because Parker had allegedly made 'a private resignation.....to another man; though never legally published [n]or exhibited'.¹⁵³⁷ Hall had his doubts, but under pressure from

¹⁵²⁹ TNA, C.2/Chas.I/H.98/62.

¹⁵³⁰ See below, pp. 203-08.

¹⁵³¹ See above, p. 35.

¹⁵³² TNA, SP.16/327/138; 355/81; ECA, D&C.3601, fos. 99v-100.

¹⁵³³ *Al Cant*, I. iii. 232; TNA, SP.16/166/40.

¹⁵³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵³⁵ *Ibid.*; see above, p. 181.

¹⁵³⁶ TNA, SP.16/166/40.

¹⁵³⁷ *Ibid.*; DHC, Chanter 57, fos. 5-6.

Nansogg gave in. He would ensure that Parker was financially compensated and thus 'win him to be content at the act'.¹⁵³⁸

But apposition soon emerged. Parker had his allies in the chapter and the residentiaries refused to install Nansogg.¹⁵³⁹ Other of Parker's friends sought an inhibition from the luckless Abbot.¹⁵⁴⁰ It was now that Hall learned of the invalidity of Nansogg's appointment. At this the latter unleashed a torrent of abuse against the bishop and his family.¹⁵⁴¹ Shaken, Hall summoned Nansogg before him and disowned him.¹⁵⁴² 'I would henceforth take off my hand from him, and be a stranger to him'.¹⁵⁴³ Nansogg subsequently wrote a vitriolic letter of rebuke to the bishop, claiming that he had given up a promising career at Cambridge in order to follow him.¹⁵⁴⁴ But this only led to Nansogg's formal deprivation in March 1629, a bare two months after his collation and a year after his first encounter with Hall.¹⁵⁴⁵

Hall was able to ride out this affair. But he was not so lucky two years later. Shortly after Nansogg's departure two vacancies arose in the chapter. They were filled by Hall's eldest son, Robert, and by William Hutchinson, the son of Bishop Cotton's close friend.¹⁵⁴⁶ These were effectively balancing appointments, for the opposition to Hall in chapter was led by William and Edward Cotton. In their father's day they had suffered at the hands of capitular colleagues because of their kinship with the bishop.¹⁵⁴⁷ Now, at the start of the Personal Rule, the tables had been turned. They were now the old order, capable of posing as defenders of the liberties of the cathedral, and ever fearful of a threat to their hard-won pre-eminence.

When Hall's episcopate began, the Cottons had the backing of Laurence Burnell, the cathedral chancellor and John Sprott, the sub-dean.¹⁵⁴⁸ Hutchinson's arrival was very welcome, for they now controlled a majority of the chapter's 'voices'. Outside their orbit (or at least difficult to control) were

¹⁵³⁸ TNA, SP.16/166/40.

¹⁵³⁹ *Ibid.* Parker was most likely a close friend of Bishop Cotton. See above, p. 132 n. 468.

¹⁵⁴⁰ TNA, SP.16/166/40.

¹⁵⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁴² *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁴³ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁴⁵ *Ibid.*; CRO, ACP/W/B/772/1.

¹⁵⁴⁶ ECA, D&C.3555, pp. 106-8; *DNB, sub nomine*, Joseph Hall; *A/ Ox*, p. 778; *A/Cant*, I. iii. 440-1.

¹⁵⁴⁷ See above, pp. 151-55.

¹⁵⁴⁸ Oliver, *Bishops of Exeter*, pp. 282, 296.

the geriatric couple, Thomas Barrett and William Hellyer.¹⁵⁴⁹ This left William Peterson and Robert Hall, who because of their kin ties were to provide the focus for an alternative capitular faction.

Peterson had been a residentiary since 1621.¹⁵⁵⁰ It was Hall's arrival at Exeter which brought him to prominence. Like Nansogg, there was a strong hint of opportunism about his rise. Thus in the summer of 1629 he received the royal nomination to the Exeter deanery, vacant by reason of Sutcliffe's death.¹⁵⁵¹ Within a matter of weeks Peterson had married Hall's daughter.¹⁵⁵² The new dean was clearly the bishop's man. Moreover, he aimed to recover his office's power which had been so drastically reduced during the preceding twenty-five years.

Ominously a series of orders regulating the affairs of the chapter was issued shortly after Peterson's election.¹⁵⁵³ Repairs to the cathedral were to be initiated. A rail was 'to be made about the communion table' to 'keep it decent'. The capitular records were to be properly sorted and stored. Furthermore, they could only be borrowed by those who had the chapter's consent and the borrowers were to give a written undertaking to return the documents to the exchequer room (an implicit criticism here of William Hellyer).¹⁵⁵⁴ The cathedral statutes were to be gathered together and copied down 'fairly in a parchment book'. Finally, a review was to be made of the arrears of rent outstanding on capitular estates. Evidently Hall was attempting to come to terms with the legacy of the recent past. He was seeking to get the canons to acknowledge that a hierarchy of authority existed within the diocese.

Though modest in themselves, the orders of 1629 can only have alarmed the residentiaries. The chapter's wealth was now under scrutiny. This strengthened the Cotton's hand. They could legitimately pose as defenders of capitular liberties and thus consolidate their power base within the chapter house. But the position was no straightforward. The 'laissez faire' atmosphere fostered by the way in which the capitular estates had previously been administered made for selfishness and disunity as Peterson appreciated.

¹⁵⁴⁹ See above, pp. 142-43, 153.

¹⁵⁵⁰ ECA, D&C.3553, fo. 95.

¹⁵⁵¹ ECA, D&C.3555, p. 108.

¹⁵⁵² Matthews, *Walker Revised*, p. 120.

¹⁵⁵³ ECA, D&C.3555, pp. 112-14.

¹⁵⁵⁴ See above, p. 151.

At the end of 1629 the dean dramatically seized the initiative by petitioning the royal court about the financial affairs of the chapter.¹⁵⁵⁵ Peterson was evidently alive to the 'new' Laudian temperament which frowned upon leasing strategies geared solely to short-term gain. He found himself supported by Burnell and Hutchinson, presumably because they hoped to do a deal with the crown whilst the opportunity existed.¹⁵⁵⁶ This turn of events clearly surprised the Cottons: they were forced to seek a copy of the petition from their colleagues.¹⁵⁵⁷ Meanwhile, Charles I threw his weight behind the dean. All that remained to be done was to negotiate a settlement which would compensate those affected by the ending of the current system of leasing. This Charles wisely left to Hall.¹⁵⁵⁸

In fact, it took until the spring of 1631 to get all concerned to agree.¹⁵⁵⁹ Even then it was a begrudging affair. During the preceding twelve months Hall had persuaded the chapter to disgorge £2000 of its wealth towards the repair of the cathedral fabric.¹⁵⁶⁰ The refurbishment was successfully accomplished and this allowed the bishop to sanction an *ex gratia* payment of £1700 to eight of the prebendaries.¹⁵⁶¹ Special provision was made for Hellyer because of the complexity of his affairs.¹⁵⁶² The 'arbitrament' also guarded against future misbehaviour. A tenth part of the fines levied on leases of capitular estates was to be paid over to the cathedral exchequer 'to make a stock for the Church'.¹⁵⁶³ Lands were henceforth not to be leased out at irregular times: there were two set occasions in the year for letting and these were to be strictly adhered to.¹⁵⁶⁴ Further, a scale of charges was to be established for determining the size of fines levied on leases for one, two and three lives' duration.¹⁵⁶⁵

If this was not yet full-blooded Laudianism, it nonetheless served as a sharp rebuke to the chapter. More importantly, Peterson had gained an ascendancy over the Cottons. It was especially galling for the latter to discover that the dean was to receive the largest single slice of compensation. And if this were not enough, Peterson was beginning to

¹⁵⁵⁵ TNA, C.2/Chas.I/H.98/62; ECA, D&C.3555, p. 127.

¹⁵⁵⁶ TNA, C.2/Chas.I/H.98/62.

¹⁵⁵⁷ ECA, D&C.3555, p. 127.

¹⁵⁵⁸ TNA, C.2/Chas.I/H.98/62.

¹⁵⁵⁹ ECA, D&C.3601, fos. 72v-3v.

¹⁵⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶² *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

agitate for his brother, Robert, a royal chaplain, to be given the next place of residence that should fall vacant in the chapter.¹⁵⁶⁶ The Cottons' response was to promote their own candidate, Samuel Travers.¹⁵⁶⁷

Now Travers had a puritan ancestry. His father had been in trouble with Woolton and Cotton, whilst his uncle, Walter, was one of the leading lights of the classical movement under Elizabeth.¹⁵⁶⁸ None of this, however, prevented Charles I from giving his blessing to Travers' candidature by writing to the Exeter chapter.¹⁵⁶⁹ From this we might suppose that the progressive cause remained strong at court even at this comparatively late stage.¹⁵⁷⁰ And evidently this is what zealots themselves wanted to believe. Having invested much time and effort in getting themselves established at court following the collapse of their reform movement, they wished to fell that they still stood a chance of bringing about the sort of religious change which might yet rescue the Church from the jaws of 'Arminianism'. Of course, the Cottons were self-seekers rather than idealists. But like Henry Locke before them, their manoeuvrings indicated an implicit faith in the continuing viability of a court-centred strategy of political activity.¹⁵⁷¹

Yet almost immediately they received a rebuff. At the beginning of June 1631 William Peterson petitioned the court in favour of his brother referring darkly to Travers' 'unfitness'.¹⁵⁷² Charles reacted to this by abandoning Travers and supporting Robert Peterson.¹⁵⁷³ The king's revised instructions were not well-received by the Cottons. They now began to emphasise the blood ties that united the Peterson with Robert Hall and his father.¹⁵⁷⁴ This, of course, was a valid criticism: excessive nepotism might well discredit the good name of ecclesiastical government, a point that William Cotton would have been well aware of given his own troubles earlier on.¹⁵⁷⁵

Bishop Hall now entered the fray. He wrote a long letter to Laud that was full of praise for Robert Peterson: 'a worth eminent preacher; an approved

¹⁵⁶⁶ TNA, SP.16/193/69.

¹⁵⁶⁷ *Reports of Cases in the Courts of Star Chamber and High Commission*, ed S R Gardiner (Camden Society, New Series, 39, 1886), p. 153.

¹⁵⁶⁸ Collinson, *Puritan Movement*, pp. 107-8, 326, 388, 398; see above, p. 108.

¹⁵⁶⁹ ECA, D&C.3601, fo. 77.

¹⁵⁷⁰ R M Smuts, 'The Puritan Supporters of Henrietta Maria in the 1630s', *EHR*, 93 (1978), pp. 26-45.

¹⁵⁷¹ See above, pp. 124-31.

¹⁵⁷² *Reports of Cases*, ed. Gardiner, p. 153.

¹⁵⁷³ ECA, D&C.3601, fo. 77v.

¹⁵⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, fos. 77v-8; TNA, SP.16/193/69.

¹⁵⁷⁵ See above, pp. 153-55.

scholar, a grave well-governed, mortified, honest, peaceable man; faction hath no greater enemy, nor goodness an heartier friend'.¹⁵⁷⁶ Hall was deeply committed to Peterson's cause. So, too, was the earl of Carlisle who used his influence on Peterson's behalf.¹⁵⁷⁷ A defeat here would constitute a major set-back for Hall's campaign of pacification. The bishop thus did not scruple to alert Laud to the jealousy of the Cottons and 'their cousins'. 'In truth my Lord, it is nothing but a secret heart-burning to the dean'.¹⁵⁷⁸

Charles' response to this was to advise the canons to elect whomsoever they pleased.¹⁵⁷⁹ He had initially reacted to the Cottons' petition by once more supporting Travers, but now, presumably on the advice of Laud, he sought to distance himself from the affair.¹⁵⁸⁰ Perhaps Laud himself was uncertain what to do. He did not wholly trust Hall. Had the latter been a member of his inner circle then a firm and final recommendation in Peterson's favour might have emerged. But it did not and consequently local tensions burst forth. A royal injunction to abandon all 'factious combinations' against the dean was cavalierly dismissed by the Cottons, for whom the king's temporising proved totally unacceptable.

Denied a clear signal from court, they decided to take the law into their own hands. Combining with Travers they hatched a plot to discredit the dean. The chapter was due to meet in September to fill the vacant place of residence.¹⁵⁸¹ Not long before this a story broke which alleged that the dean had made a former servant and kitchen maid pregnant.¹⁵⁸² Travers did the spade work, riding to Cullompton to get the unfortunate girl to sign a prepared confession.¹⁵⁸³ He then sought to make the libel public. Taking it first to George Parry, the diocesan chancellor, Parry refused to have anything to do with it. It was thus left to Joseph Martyn, the official of the archdeacon of Exeter and a client of the Cottons, to make an entry of the alleged crime in his office act book.¹⁵⁸⁴ Meanwhile, William Cotton hurried to Peterson, ostensibly to warn him of the accusation, but in reality to distract him from attending the chapter-meeting.¹⁵⁸⁵ The ploy worked well. Peterson was so

¹⁵⁷⁶ TNA, SP.16/193/69.

¹⁵⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁷⁹ ECA, D&C.3601, fo. 78.

¹⁵⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, fos. 77v-8.

¹⁵⁸¹ *Reports of Cases*, ed. Gardiner, p. 154.

¹⁵⁸² *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸³ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

¹⁵⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

perturbed by the news that he put all else from his mind, thereby enabling Travers to gain the nomination.¹⁵⁸⁶

However, the victory was short-lived, for it was not long before the servant-girl told all.¹⁵⁸⁷ Peterson rushed to bring a charge of defamation in Star Chamber.¹⁵⁸⁸ There the girl and her father, who had aided and abetted her, were harshly dealt with.¹⁵⁸⁹ Travers was heavily fined, but the Cottons escaped virtually scot free.¹⁵⁹⁰ Laud was especially condemnatory about Travers because the latter had besmirched the good name of the clerical profession.¹⁵⁹¹ Yet he was strangely silent about the Cottons. There was a general apprehension amongst the judges that William and Edward were prime movers in the conspiracy, but an equally widespread reluctance to punish them.¹⁵⁹² Possibly Laud was unanxious to open deep wounds to the public gaze. The case against the Cottons was to remain 'non liquet', not proven.¹⁵⁹³ A veil was to be drawn over the whole sorry incident and a general warning was issued to the canons to behave, for 'when they come to bite one another, they are in danger to be devoured one of another'.¹⁵⁹⁴

Laud's embarrassment was also shared by the leaders of Devon county society, though for different reasons. Prominent, zealous protestants like Sir John Drake, Sir Edward Seymour and Sir Thomas Prideaux had been dragged up to London to testify on behalf of the defendants.¹⁵⁹⁵ They had not liked it. They had been obliged to make the best of a bad job. The recorder of Exeter, who was representing the principal defendants, was clearly guilty of exaggeration when he suggested that William Cotton's honesty and integrity were beyond doubt.¹⁵⁹⁶ Drake, Seymour and Prideaux similarly tried to imply that the affair had all been a dreadful mistake. They argued that as the libel had been widely talked about at Assizes and Quarter Sessions, there were obvious grounds for making a thorough investigation of its validity.¹⁵⁹⁷

¹⁵⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 173.

¹⁵⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 172-3.

¹⁵⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 173.

¹⁵⁹² *Ibid.*, pp. 171, 173.

¹⁵⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 171.

¹⁵⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 173.

¹⁵⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 162-3.

¹⁵⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

¹⁵⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

These protestations failed to convince and it is likely that the authors themselves were unimpressed by them. The plain fact was that a factional conspiracy had been defeated. This, of course, had happened before to the progressives. But the Henry Locke affair had been sufficiently obscure to be swept under the carpet.¹⁵⁹⁸ Travers and the Cottons had gone for publicity and the ploy had backfired upon them. With the dean of Exeter's case now a *cause célèbre* who would be prepared to listen to 'respectable' zealots in the south-west? It was perhaps more than mere coincidence that the early 1630s saw an upsurge of separatist sentiment in the diocese.

We can get the flavour of this by looking at the experience of Martin Blake, the vicar of Barnstaple. Once again Hall was closely involved, for Blake was very much a man after his own heart. The vicar had endured a strict godly upbringing among the merchant elite of Plymouth. He had then gone up to Exeter College where he fell under the influence of John Prideaux.¹⁵⁹⁹ Upon his return Blake was called upon to preach 'in several congregations thereabout' his home town.¹⁶⁰⁰ The encouragement he received from 'many very grave and godly divines' greatly strengthened him in his desire to pursue a career in the Church, and to this end his father purchased the right of next presentation to the north Devon livings of Fremington and King's Nympton.¹⁶⁰¹ Soon afterwards, in 1620, Blake married the daughter of John Delbridge, one of the leading inhabitants of Barnstaple.¹⁶⁰²

At this time Barnstaple was a prosperous town.¹⁶⁰³ But it suffered from deep religious divisions.¹⁶⁰⁴ A strong adherence to the old order had fostered the growth of zeal. This, in turn, had prompted a determined rearguard action by conservatives to stave off the advance of protestantism. Their cause was substantially assisted by the death of Sir John Chichester in 1586.¹⁶⁰⁵ Chichester had been the earl of Bedford's lieutenant in the south-west.¹⁶⁰⁶ His home at Hall just outside of Barnstaple put him in an ideal position to influence the course of events in the town.¹⁶⁰⁷ But Chichester's death

¹⁵⁹⁸ See above, pp. 130-31.

¹⁵⁹⁹ J R Chanter, *The Life and Times of Martin Blake BD (1593-1673)* (1910), pp. 1-15.

¹⁶⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

¹⁶⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

¹⁶⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 21.

¹⁶⁰³ W G Hoskins, *Devon* (Newton Abbot, 1972), p. 328.

¹⁶⁰⁴ *Sketches of the Literary History of Barnstaple...to which is appended the Diary of Philip Wyot, Town Clerk of Barnstaple 1586-1608*, ed. J R Chanter (Barnstaple, n.d.), pp. 91-119.

¹⁶⁰⁵ See above, pp. 115-16.

¹⁶⁰⁶ TNA, SP.12/6/17.

¹⁶⁰⁷ Hoskins, *Devon*, p. 338.

coupled with that of Bedford threw the issue of religious change into the melting pot.¹⁶⁰⁸ As we have seen, Bedford's successor in the south-west, William Bourchier the earl of Bath, was by no means an avid supporter of zeal; he much preferred to promote adherence to the 1559 prayer book.¹⁶⁰⁹ Ultimately, bath found himself at odds with the former Chichester faction in north Devon. This, in turn, led radicals to campaign more openly for the godly cause which further incited the conservatives.

Delbridge was at the forefront of the zealous, but respectable protestant cause in Barnstaple. During a long public career, he served as mayor of the town on three occasions and M.P. on five.¹⁶¹⁰ He was well-connected. His wife was the daughter of Henry Downe, the head of another prominent protestant family in the town, whilst one of his own daughters was married to George Hakewill, the learned archdeacon of Surrey, who, as rector of Heanton Punchardon, was to exercise an important influence over Martin Blake.¹⁶¹¹

Other kinfolk allies of Blake were John Downe the rector of Instow (a former fellow of Emmanuel) and Jonathan Hanmer the rector of Bishop's Tawton.¹⁶¹² Sharing a commitment to the gospel and to the established Church, they epitomised the sort of ministry that Hall believed would 'pacify' his diocese. Blake's own appointment to Barnstaple in 1628 promised to be the crowning achievement as far as that part of the south-west was concerned: a wedding together of the decent and the principled. Yet almost immediately things began to go wrong.

The office of vicar of Barnstaple was certainly important. Unfortunately its prestige had latterly been tarnished by John Trender, a boozy incumbent whose tempestuous private life – he was married three times – scandalized 'the anabaptistical and precise brethren' of the town.¹⁶¹³ Delbridge and his colleagues on the council were scarcely more satisfied by Trender's behaviour, especially when the vicar had Richard Smith, the corporation lecturer, suspended for nonconformity in 1600.¹⁶¹⁴

¹⁶⁰⁸ See above, pp. 115-16.

¹⁶⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹⁰ Chanter, *Life and Times*, p. 22.

¹⁶¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

¹⁶¹² *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹³ Gowers, 'Devon Puritanism', p. 127.

¹⁶¹⁴ *Ibid.*

In truth the council was taking a chance with Smith, who was the first full-time preacher to be appointed at Barnstaple.¹⁶¹⁵ Delbridge and his allies were seeking to appease the radical elements in the community. Trender knew this and acted accordingly. When Smith regained Bishop Cotton's confidence and resumed his preaching duties, the vicar upped the stakes by getting his parish clerk, Robert Langdon, ordained deacon.¹⁶¹⁶ If assistant clergy were to operate in the town, Trender argued, they were to be of his choosing and no-one else's. The voice of the pre-Reformation Church was once more in evidence.

Ultimately the situation was stalemate. Trender, despite his frequent brushes with authority, remained firmly ensconced in office. Smith, meanwhile, went about his business. Bishop Cotton hung fire, doubtless too worried about his own career to seek to intervene decisively.¹⁶¹⁷ All this made the corporation increasingly desperate. They needed to juggle radicals, conservatives and the earl of Bath. Things came to a head in 1611 when Smith died.¹⁶¹⁸ Cotton had by now washed his hands of the business. Archbishop Abbot was thus called upon to choose a successor.¹⁶¹⁹ But the archbishop's choice proved unpopular with the radicals, and so the corporation was forced back upon the expedient of hiring occasional or 'running' lecturers.¹⁶²⁰

Only with the failing health of Trender in the 1620s did the position change significantly. The vicar effectively abandoned his resistance and allowed the council to appoint Benjamin Coxe on a permanent basis.¹⁶²¹ But Coxe was almost immediately tempted away by the prospect of the perpetual curacy of Sandford adjacent to the puritan centre of Crediton, and so he was replaced by William Crompton, a graduate of Brasenose College, Oxford.¹⁶²²

This was in 1628. By now Trender had died and the way stood open for Delbridge to get his son-in-law, Blake, admitted to the living.¹⁶²³ Blake, understandably, was by no means ecstatic at the prospect. He knew all about the troubles of the town and feared that he was being offered a poisoned chalice. Hall was called in to twist Blake's arm. The bishop

¹⁶¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

¹⁶¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

¹⁶¹⁷ See above, pp. 135-42.

¹⁶¹⁸ Chanter, *Life and Times*, p. 35.

¹⁶¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 37-8.

¹⁶²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

¹⁶²² *Ibid.*, p. 39.

¹⁶²³ *Ibid.*

presented the vacancy as an opportunity. Perhaps drawing upon his own experience, he emphasised the extent to which Blake could be a means to healing the rifts in the town.¹⁶²⁴ But (again like Hall) Blake was no afraid to name his price. Barnstaple was a poorly endowed living. He would do the job only if he could keep the valuable rectory of King's Nympton.¹⁶²⁵

Thus under these somewhat unsatisfactory circumstances Blake arrived at Barnstaple. Despite the ruinous condition of the vicarage, this tenure began encouragingly enough. He 'received much contentment from the love of the people in their zeal' and established a working relationship with Crompton, allowing the preacher to act as his coadjutor in matters ecclesiastical.¹⁶²⁶ On the domestic front, the corporation made Blake a loan to refurbish his home.¹⁶²⁷

But action needed to be taken to stem the drift towards congregationalism cause by Trender's long years of mismanagement.¹⁶²⁸ And it was here that Blake began to run into trouble. A regular system of worship needed to be established. Trender had done the bare minimum to get the populace used to the rhythms of a prayer book-based religion, whilst Crompton's remit was insufficiently wide to address the problem adequately. Morning prayers and two Sunday lectures were simply not enough to create a distinctive ethos of 'anglicanism' in the local context.¹⁶²⁹

Thus Blake inaugurated daily lectures and evening prayers.¹⁶³⁰ The litany was to be said on Wednesday and Friday mornings, whilst catechising was set for two on Sunday afternoons.¹⁶³¹ An especially welcome development, judging from the response of the townspeople, was the establishment of monthly celebrations of the eucharist.¹⁶³² The mayor and corporation played their part by processing fully-robed from the council chamber to church on Sunday mornings.¹⁶³³ Blake himself preached on these occasions.¹⁶³⁴

¹⁶²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

¹⁶²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

¹⁶²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

¹⁶²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

¹⁶²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹⁶²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 43-4.

¹⁶³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶³¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶³² *Ibid.*

¹⁶³³ *Ibid.*

¹⁶³⁴ *Ibid.*

Civic pride in the guise of 'honest' godliness was being kindled amongst the populace. But its credibility was open to question. The divisions of the last twenty-five years were not to be so easily healed. Soon John Can, who lectured at nearby Pilton and who adhered to the principles of Brownism, launched a bitter attack.¹⁶³⁵ Can disliked Crompton, but 'especially his stomach rose against Blake'.¹⁶³⁶ Having railed against the latter in his pulpit at Pilton, Can despatched circulars to the Barnstaple godly warning them of their 'stinted' morning prayers.¹⁶³⁷ The ploy had its desired effect: Blake's congregations diminished in size. Especially susceptible to Can's missives were women and children.¹⁶³⁸ Blake found himself obliged to use the church courts against his opponent, and in June 1629 Archdeacon Hellyer pronounced Can excommunicate.¹⁶³⁹ In the event this had little practical effect for the preacher had already fled to Amsterdam taking with him several of his hard-core supporters.¹⁶⁴⁰

Can's departure did not quieten Barnstaple, for a rift now developed between Blake and Crompton. Hitherto they had been obliged to present a united front. Yet they were divided on a number of key issues. Prior to Blake's arrival at Barnstaple, Crompton had forbidden the singing of hymns and the collection of Easter offerings during church services.¹⁶⁴¹ Almost at once Blake restored them.¹⁶⁴² Crompton also had reservations about Blake's retention of King's Nympton.¹⁶⁴³ Pluralism was an undoubted evil. Should there therefore be one rule for some ministers and another for others who laid claim to godliness? Blake for his part was unhappy about Crompton's ability to attract large audiences to his sermons. Such 'gadding' threatened the integrity of the parochial system.¹⁶⁴⁴ It also diminished the size of the revenues Blake might collect as vicar.¹⁶⁴⁵

The flashpoint occurred in 1629 when Blake was elected rural dean for Barnstaple.¹⁶⁴⁶ The vicar was now especially vigilant for signs of sectarianism, just indeed as Hall himself was.¹⁶⁴⁷ Blake, therefore, had few

¹⁶³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

¹⁶³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

¹⁶³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁶³⁸ Gowers, 'Devon Puritanism', p. 131.

¹⁶³⁹ DHC, Chanter 43, p. 133.

¹⁶⁴⁰ Gowers, 'Devon Puritanism', p. 131.

¹⁶⁴¹ Chanter, *Life and Times*, pp. 47-8.

¹⁶⁴² *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

¹⁶⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴⁷ TNA, SP.16/193/69.

qualms about implementing an archiepiscopal order requiring him to scrutinise the orthodoxy of the local clergy and in particular the 'running' lecturers which corporations and laymen tended to employ.¹⁶⁴⁸ Trouble ensued when he went as far as to present a number of preachers.¹⁶⁴⁹ Crompton rebuked him, whereupon he was also presented.¹⁶⁵⁰ Blake had formed the opinion that Crompton had been corrupted by anabaptistical teachings, and certainly Crompton had been in receipt of a nonconformist tract from a friend in Amsterdam.¹⁶⁵¹ In many ways this was the acid test. Crompton lived at the radical edge of the Church of England. But like many Elizabethan presbyterians before him, he understood, rather than countenanced, the actions of still hotter brethren who decided that they could no longer 'tarry for the magistrate'.¹⁶⁵² Crompton might read their works but he did not necessarily approve of all they had to say.

The problem, of course, was that Crompton and Can had a common intellectual basis which had been put into sharp relief by Blake's authoritarian drift. The dividing line between the vicar and preacher was thin. Yet it nonetheless existed and it was small differences such as this that mattered most during the 1630s. Earlier the belief that moderation might bring dividends in the shape of further reform had yielded what now proved to be an artificial unity. The rise of 'Arminianism' had made Grindalianism seem a liability to committed zealots. Recriminations boiled to the surface. Thus Crompton denounced Blake's actions from the Barnstaple pulpit on Sunday afternoons, whilst Blake responded in kind on Wednesday evenings.¹⁶⁵³ The subjects of debate were weighty: original sin in children and the power of scripture to impute grace for salvation. Crompton's ripostes evidently confirmed Blake in his suspicions, whilst Blake's own pronouncements made Crompton doubt the minister's commitment to zeal. As Crompton caustically remarked: 'A leaden pipe may convey sweet waters of life to others and yet never be the better for them'. It was but a small step for Crompton to accuse Blake of Arminianism.¹⁶⁵⁴

Not surprisingly, this most public of confrontations caused a great stir in Barnstaple. Both men gained loyal followings and the local ruling class was

¹⁶⁴⁸ Chanter, *Life and Times*, pp. 49-50.

¹⁶⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁵¹ Gowers, 'Devon Puritanism', p. 132.

¹⁶⁵² P Lake, 'The Dilemma of the Establishment Puritan: the Cambridge Heads and the Case of Francis Johnson and Cuthbert Bainbrigg', *JEH*, 29 (1978), pp. 23-36.

¹⁶⁵³ Chanter, *Life and Times*, p. 51.

¹⁶⁵⁴ Gowers, 'Devon Puritanism', pp. 133-4; Chanter, *Life and Times*, p. 61.

split down the middle.¹⁶⁵⁵ No longer could Blake's patron, Delbridge, be assured of political power in the town. Indeed, in 1633-34 he was ousted as mayor by Alexander Horwood who quickly proved himself to be a supporter of Crompton.¹⁶⁵⁶

Prior to this Blake and Delbridge had been working to dilute the lecturer's influence by getting Thomas Langford appointed town bookseller.¹⁶⁵⁷ The aim was to prevent the circulation of radical religious tracts. But Horwood's election upset these plans. The new mayor was soon in contact with the leading London activist, Henry Burton.¹⁶⁵⁸ And it was upon Burton's advice that a radical preacher by the name of Thomas Smith, was imported to become Barnstaple's bookseller.¹⁶⁵⁹ One of Smith's first actions upon arrival was to set up a weekly prayer meeting and this further eroded support for Blake's anglican services.¹⁶⁶⁰

Fortunately for the vicar, Smith outstayed his welcome. His firebrand tactics alienated many of the more respectable townsmen who had been prepared to back Crompton.¹⁶⁶¹ There was a boycott of Smith's bookshop and the preacher's income fell sharply.¹⁶⁶² Despite an attempt to raise a county-wide collection to sustain him, Smith saw that the writing was on the wall and departed.¹⁶⁶³ This gave Blake and Delbridge the opportunity to get Langford appointed.¹⁶⁶⁴ But the damage had been done. Separatism had been rekindled. John Cole and later Miles Chalden emerged to establish conventicles in the area, the former being a notorious and unscrupulous proponent of antinomian teachings.¹⁶⁶⁵ Their presence only underscored the central fact that puritanism was no longer a united force even at the superficial level of public propaganda. Presbyterianism was being reborn, not so much in the minds of men like Crompton, but more in the thoughts of truly sober and contemplative individuals such as Jonathan Hanmer.

¹⁶⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

¹⁶⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 53-4.

¹⁶⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁶⁰ Gowers, 'Devon Puritanism', p. 135.

¹⁶⁶¹ Chanter, *Life and Times*, p. 57.

¹⁶⁶² *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁶⁵ Gowers, 'Devon Puritanism', pp. 136-7; TNA, SP.16/278/97.

Hanmer, we saw, was a kinsman of Blake.¹⁶⁶⁶ How did he react to the troubles with Crompton? In fact he withdrew from the public arena. When Hall called on him to preached on the 1636 episcopal visitation, he politely refused.¹⁶⁶⁷ Hanmer wished to avoid being seen to take sides. To appear on the visitation would be to taint himself with the brush of conformism, just when he was beginning to have doubts about the efficacy of 'reform from above'. Yet Hanmer wished both parties well. Like Hall, indeed, he hoped for an amicable resolution of the dispute and to some extent this came in 1637, when the bishop summoned Blake and Crompton to Exeter and persuaded the latter to leave for the town living of Launceston in Cornwall.¹⁶⁶⁸

Yet if Hall and Hanmer hoped that this might be the end of the matter, they were mistaken. It was a manifest failing in the bishop that he could suppose a few comforting words might seal over issues of great substance. Activists such as Crompton and Benjamin Coxe (who had preceded Crompton as preacher at Barnstaple and whom Hall was forced to correct for denouncing episcopacy on the eve of the Long Parliament) were not to be so readily dealt with.¹⁶⁶⁹ And because the flames of principled opposition continued to burn, so they gathered up more substantial fuel in the shape of quiet men like Hanmer. Crompton, in fact, died in 1641: his commitment to parliament was therefore untested, though his son became a staunch presbyterian.¹⁶⁷⁰ Hanmer also joined the presbyterian camp in the 1640s and remained attached thereto throughout the Interregnum and beyond into the Restoration era.¹⁶⁷¹

What I have tried to suggest here, is that a group of clerical intellectuals in Hall, Blake, Hanmer and Crompton, gradually fragmented during the 1630s, as each member reacted against the deeds of the others. Hall came to the south-west with a plan of action. Unfortunately that plan could never work because it comprised the misplaced dreams and ambitions of the godly alliance of the Jacobean age. The belief that moderate ecclesiastics might in the end 'see the rank and file of the godly all right' proved woefully mistaken. This was not, of course, because Hall wished to do the godly harm. Rather it was because his understanding of what was expected of him was so markedly at variance to the expectations of zealots who were increasingly obsessed with the alleged rise of Arminianism. In short, Hall's instincts were

¹⁶⁶⁶ See above, p. 209.

¹⁶⁶⁷ Chanter, *Life and Times*, pp. 59-60.

¹⁶⁶⁸ Gowers, 'Devon Puritanism', p. 134.

¹⁶⁶⁹ Lewis, *Life of Hall*, pp. 315-16; see above, p. 155.

¹⁶⁷⁰ Gowers, 'Devon Puritanism', p. 134.

¹⁶⁷¹ A G Matthews, *Calamy Revised* (Oxford, 1934), p. 247.

too honed to the court to cope with the implicit radicalism of local divines. The appointment of Blake brought all this into the open. For Blake personified the Grindalian experiment at the grass roots level. But because he was the Church's man, he could not also be God's man, at least not for true zealots.

In his memoirs Hall remarks that his diocese was settled until the summoning of the Long Parliament.¹⁶⁷² His indulgent rule enabled puritanism to find a home in the south-west whilst he himself kept court-based conservatives at bay. To some extent Hall had a point. His diocese did appear reasonably peaceful and he did seem central to that tranquillity. But it may be argued that Hall's alleged success as bishop resulted more from what he failed to do than from what he actually accomplished. It was because he found his hands so tied as a diocesan that local puritans were prepared to continue to believe in him. Hall never effectively subdued his chapter; he was always dominated by his administrative staff (notwithstanding his use of the episcopal audience court to resolve matters of clerical indiscipline).¹⁶⁷³ Ironically, the growing impersonality of church government worked to Hall's advantage. Because he never had the sort of local presence that Blake had, he never appeared the courtier prelate that his more perceptive critics outside the south-west recognised him to be. Hence the myth of his 'pacification'. Hall did not command; he only achieved obedience because of the willingness of those involved to pay lip service to the dream.

Ironically, it was the ineffectualness of the bishop's rule which encouraged conservatives to complain to Laud about the dangers of a tolerationist strategy. The price which Laud thereupon exacted to assure himself of Hall's loyalty, the writing of *Episcopacie by Divine Right*, effectively brought the bishop's career to an end.¹⁶⁷⁴ This was Hall's own reckoning. He was here forced to take sides and to come to terms with his pro-court sympathies. And although his local credibility remained intact awhile, like Hanmer the parting of the ways had begun and there could be no turning back.

¹⁶⁷² *Works of Hall*, ed. Wynter, i. xlvii.

¹⁶⁷³ DHC, Chanter 57, *passim*.

¹⁶⁷⁴ Lewis, *Life of Hall*, pp. 316-24.

Chapter 4: Church Government 1560-1640

I

Financial hardship and a desire to have a trustworthy and experienced deputy about him had led Coverdale to dispense with the commissary system in the south-west.¹⁶⁷⁵ One law officer would clearly be cheaper to employ than the three who had formerly served bishops of Exeter. Yet in taking this important step Coverdale was depriving himself of a convenient means of overseeing his diocese. Of course, there was always the episcopal visitation. But it was not quite the same thing. Visitations occurred once every three years.¹⁶⁷⁶ They could not by themselves hope to provide the continuous monitoring of the localities which the commissaries had done. Coverdale was thus obliged to rely on his archdeacons.¹⁶⁷⁷ Yet, as we have seen, archdeacons were not inevitably loyal subjects. They had minds of their own, which of course explains why the commissary system was established in the first place. The Reformation made this problem all the more acute. Reliability and efficiency at a time of doctrinal change were of fundamental importance.¹⁶⁷⁸ Coverdale attempted to make the most of a poor situation by getting Rowland Taylor appointed archdeacon of Cornwall.¹⁶⁷⁹ The reformist John Pollard held Barnstaple.¹⁶⁸⁰ But two conservatives, Adam Travers and William Fawell, occupied Exeter and Totnes respectively.¹⁶⁸¹

What this might have brought in the longer term can only be guessed at. Coverdale was out of office barely two years after his appointment to the south-west.¹⁶⁸² Turberville, meanwhile, seems to have lacked the will or opportunity to contemplate any serious revival of episcopal authority. Certainly he was content to follow the idea of a multi-purpose chancellor: as far as we can tell there was no attempt to bring back the commissaries.¹⁶⁸³ Possibly Turberville was satisfied with the archdeacons he had. They

¹⁶⁷⁵ See above, pp. 42-44.

¹⁶⁷⁶ DHC, Chanter 217-18.

¹⁶⁷⁷ See above, p. 44.

¹⁶⁷⁸ R A Houlbrooke, *Church Courts and the People during the English Reformation 1520-1570* (Oxford, 1979), pp. 24-7.

¹⁶⁷⁹ See above, p. 45.

¹⁶⁸⁰ See above, pp. 25, 31.

¹⁶⁸¹ G Oliver, *Lives of the Bishops of Exeter and A History of the Cathedral* (Exeter, 1861), pp. 286, 292.

¹⁶⁸² See above, p. 46.

¹⁶⁸³ See above, p. 43.

comprised a more united team doctrinally and presumably were thus more inclined to pull together, especially given that Turberville was not in the forefront of the Marian persecution.¹⁶⁸⁴

Alley, of course, brought moderation of a different kind to the south-west. Equally importantly he brought drive and determination to diocesan government. There can be little doubt that the litany of grumbles he delivered to Convocation in 1563 reflected a real and difficult situation at Exeter.¹⁶⁸⁵ In particular, the bishop may well have had in mind the tribulations of William Triscombe, a curate of Tiverton, when he sought the speedier execution of writs *de excommunicato capiendo*.¹⁶⁸⁶ The previous year Triscombe had written to Robert Louther, the diocesan chancellor, about a troublesome parishioner who refused to acknowledge the sentence of excommunication pronounced against him in the consistory court. If this man were allowed to defy the law, wrote Triscombe, it would be 'vain for us in Tiverton to declare and excommunicate any. The people are so stout and careth so little what they do and how evil they live [that] they will laugh out the matter and say it is but a money matter so little they regard it'.¹⁶⁸⁷

Triscombe was doubtless over-dramatising events. Nonetheless, the notion that the law might be circumvented by parting with money found a strong echo in the parish of Cornwood where the village elders had been excommunicated for refusing to dismantle their church's roodloft. Some were now of the opinion that it would be better to comply with Alley's command. But they were dissuaded from doing so by Walter Hele who was prepared to wager his cloak and twenty shillings that 'he would obtain all their estates for money although [they did] never pluck [the roodloft] down'.¹⁶⁸⁸ Both the Tiverton and Cornwood cases arose from the metropolitical visitation which Alley had conducted for Archbishop Parker in 1561.¹⁶⁸⁹ Twelve months earlier Alley had made his primary visitation of the see.¹⁶⁹⁰ Together these tours seem to have made a strong impression on the bishop. Certainly he could not allow the belief that spiritual justice was susceptible to bribery to endure. This may well explain the close interest he took in the affairs of his consistory court. He was very choosy about whom

¹⁶⁸⁴ Oliver, *Lives of Bishops of Exeter*, pp. 286, 290, 292, 294; see above, p. 55.

¹⁶⁸⁵ See above, pp. 73-74.

¹⁶⁸⁶ DHC, PR.Basket D/16/30; TNA, E.179/26/219a, m. 1.

¹⁶⁸⁷ DHC, Chanter 779, loose leaf at rear of vol.

¹⁶⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁸⁹ *Registrum Mathei Parker Diocesis Cantuariensis 1559-1575*, ed W H Frere (Canterbury and York Society, 35, 36, 39, 1928033), ii. 682-3.

¹⁶⁹⁰ DHC, Chanter 18, fo. 69v.

he employed as chancellor. Five men held the post during the first six years of his episcopate.¹⁶⁹¹ Only Thomas Williams managed to survive any length of time: he was still in office when Alley died in 1570.¹⁶⁹²

Alley was not afraid to administer justice himself. Late medieval bishops had, of course, done so via their audience court, that most personal of tribunals where difficult or controversial cases invariably received an airing.¹⁶⁹³ At Exeter, as probably in most other sees, the audience court exercised no appellate jurisdiction. Cases came to it either directly by means of citation or indirectly via the consistory.¹⁶⁹⁴ Here the bishop would intervene and oblige those involved to appear before him rather than the official principal.¹⁶⁹⁵ This is in fact what happened with the Cornwood elders and a number of other disciplinary causes arising from the visitation of 1561. Although entered in the consistory court act book, they were heard not in the chapel of St Edmund in the cathedral where the consistory court normally met, but in the great chamber of the episcopal palace.¹⁶⁹⁶

By its very nature the audience court was a somewhat occasional tribunal and because of this it seems unlikely that it can ever be said to have ceased to function during the early part of the sixteenth century. Certainly Oldham used it to deal with suspected cases of Lollardy.¹⁶⁹⁷ And there is a mention of the court under Veysey.¹⁶⁹⁸ Nonetheless, the tribunal gained a much more permanent place in the scheme of diocesan government after 1560. In that year, Alley's principal registrar, John Germyn, began to construct a series of act books specifically to record audience business.¹⁶⁹⁹ Eventually they came to cover the entire post-Reformation period. This new-found regularity was to lead to the creation of a 'court of the principal registry' after the Civil

¹⁶⁹¹ DHC, Chanter 855, fo. 461v; Chanter 779, fo. 33 and *sub* 1 Jan. 1562/3; Chanter 855a, *sub* 4 July 1564.

¹⁶⁹² DHC, Chanter 857, fo. 66.

¹⁶⁹³ D M Owen, 'An Episcopal Audience Court', in *Legal Records and the Historian*, ed J A Baker (1978), pp. 141-9.

¹⁶⁹⁴ However at Exeter, for a brief spell during the early 1530s, the audience court did seemingly act as a formal court of appeal for the consistory (DHC, Chanter 778, *sub* 28 Sept. 1534, Triggs *c.* Triggs_).

¹⁶⁹⁵ DHC, Chanter 784e, *sub* 9 Oct. 1601, loose note.

¹⁶⁹⁶ DHC, Chanter 779, *sub* 3 July 1561, Off. Prom. Pelven; *ibid.*, *sub* 21 July 1563, Off. *c.* Luxton et Luxton alias Popham.

¹⁶⁹⁷ DHC, Chanter 13, fos. 179v-81.

¹⁶⁹⁸ DHC, Chanter 778, *sub* 28 Sept. 1534, Triggs *c.* Triggs.

¹⁶⁹⁹ DHC, Chanter 19, fo. 23; Chanter 1694, fo. 8.

War.¹⁷⁰⁰ By this stage the role of the bishop in the affairs of his tribunal had been much reduced. His chancellor (or the chancellor's surrogate) presided.¹⁷⁰¹ The court had attained a public status comparable to that of the consistory, so much so in fact that it now met in the cathedral rather than the episcopal palace.¹⁷⁰² Furthermore, its disciplinary workload was much expanded: cases of nonconformity and decay of church fabric were its stock-in-trade whilst the consistory tackled the more mundane problem of sexual incontinence.¹⁷⁰³

The post-Restoration period laid bare the great changes that had occurred in diocesan government at Exeter over the course of the preceding one hundred years. Briefly, the bishop's courts had succeeded in cornering a substantial part of the judicial and administrative business that was available in the south-west much to the detriment of the archdeacons and peculiar authorities. The three Devon-based archdeacons seem to have been hardest hit. Never especially thriving jurisdictions, they lost their disciplinary trade and much of their instance business to Exeter.¹⁷⁰⁴ The peculiar court of the dean and chapter fared little better.¹⁷⁰⁵ Only the tribunal of the archdeacon of Cornwall managed to retain a semblance of prosperity, but even here criminal prosecutions were much reduced.¹⁷⁰⁶

These changes were begun and largely accomplished during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries when litigation levels were rising sharply.¹⁷⁰⁷ The diminishing levels of the post-Restoration period merely accentuated the re-assertion of the episcopal centre in the south-west. As we have already noted, the lesser ordinaries of the see were quick to appreciate what was happening.¹⁷⁰⁸ The 1616 Composition was their response to the crisis. We shall look more closely at this important

¹⁷⁰⁰ M G Smith, 'A Study of the Administration of the Diocese of Exeter during the Episcopate of Sir Jonathan Trelawny Bart, 1689-1707', Oxford BLitt thesis (1964), pp. 119-24.

¹⁷⁰¹ E A O Whiteman, 'The Episcopate of Dr Seth Ward, Bishop of Exeter (1662-1667) and Salisbury (1667-1688/9) with Special Reference to the Ecclesiastical Problems of His Time', Oxford DPhil thesis (1951), pp. 167-9.

¹⁷⁰² DHC, Chanter 757, 765, 770-2.

¹⁷⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁰⁴ Smith, 'Episcopate of Sir Jonathan Trelawny', pp. 118, 180.

¹⁷⁰⁵ ECA, D&C.4516/9.

¹⁷⁰⁶ CRO, ARD/11-12; Smith, 'Episcopate of Sir Jonathan Trelawny', p. 76.

¹⁷⁰⁷ For general comment see R Houlbrooke, 'The Decline of Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction under the Tudors', in *Continuity and Change: Personnel and Administration of the Church in England 1500-1642*, eds. R O'Day and F Heal (Leicester, 1975), pp. 239-57), at pp. 244-9.

¹⁷⁰⁸ See above, pp. 151-55.

document later, but first of all we need to give greater substance to the theme of administrative change. In particular, it should be emphasised that it was an increase in the consistory's civil business which made possible the reorganisation.

Figure 1 reveals just how substantial that increase was. The lift off point probably occurred in or just before 1580, a significant date, surely, for it was then that three proctors, Ralph Kete, John Weston and Nicholas Wyatt, were admitted into the superior office of advocate.¹⁷⁰⁹ The Exeter consistory had once had eight advocates attached to it, but none had served for at least seventy years prior to Kete, Weston and Wyatt's appointment.¹⁷¹⁰ Furthermore, 1580 saw the new consistory court registrar, Robert Michell the elder, begin a fair copy series of court act books to supplement the rough or working copies which were in daily use during term time.¹⁷¹¹

To what extent were these developments responses to public demand for a more streamlined service at Exeter and to what extent were enterprising lawyers and dependents attempting to attract new business? In fact both probably occurred. The break with Rome almost certainly depressed litigation levels in the south-west as it did in other dioceses.¹⁷¹² Once a measure of political and religious stability had been achieved there was bound to be a sharp recovery. The extreme heights to which business rose at Exeter around 1600 can be accounted for by an expanding population. More people invariably meant more arguments and disputes. Significantly defamation suits were being brought in large numbers at the start of the seventeenth century.¹⁷¹³ So, too, were tithe actions which very probably reflected the new ability of tithes to be farmed by laymen as well as clergy.¹⁷¹⁴

Yet it may be suspected that the court personnel played their part in fostering business. It was common practice for proctors and scribes of the

¹⁷⁰⁹ DHC, Chanter 782, fo. 154v.

¹⁷¹⁰ *The Register of Walter de Stapeldon 1307-1326*, ed. F C Hingeston-Randolph (Exeter, 1892), pp. 114-19.

¹⁷¹¹ DHC, Chanter 782, fo. 1; J A Vage, *The Records of the Bishop of Exeter's Consistory Court to 1660* (Devon Record Office Handlists, 1, 1981), p. 5.

¹⁷¹² Houlbooke, *Church Courts and the People*, p. 273; S Lander, 'Church Courts and the Reformation in the Diocese of Chichester, 1500-58', in *Continuity and Change*, eds. O'Day and Heal, pp. 215-37, at pp. 230-1; M Bowker, *The Henrician Reformation: The Diocese of Lincoln under John Longland 1521-1547* (Cambridge, 1981), pp. 86-7.

¹⁷¹³ See Table 5. See also J A Sharpe, *Defamation and Sexual Slander in Early Modern England: The Church Courts at York* (Borthwick Papers, 58, 1980).

¹⁷¹⁴ Houlbooke, *Church Courts and the People*, pp. 121, 147, 149.

consistory to serve in the Devon archdeaconry courts and also in the peculiar tribunals.¹⁷¹⁵ It was a useful additional source of income and it also afforded good experience of church court procedures. Those with an eye to business might well stoop to advising clients to take their grievances to Exeter where the quality of service would be that much better. 'The proctors run away with the causes to the consistory, where was always a chancellor or a surrogate that was a bachelor of laws', wrote Edward Cooke, then registrar of the dean and chapter's peculiar jurisdiction, to an exasperated dean of Exeter at the beginning of the eighteenth century when the parasitical behaviour of the bishop's courts was still fresh in everyone's mind.¹⁷¹⁶

But the advice tendered by proctors to their clients was tainted by self-interest. The fees charged at Exeter were often higher than those levied in the lower courts, whilst the range of items on which a charge could be imposed was greater.¹⁷¹⁷ In a notoriously litigious age, the Exeter lawyers were encouraging suitors to take their grievances where, supposedly, the best service might be had. Certainly statistical evidence suggests that there was a much greater wastage rate among causes entering the consistory under Cotton than under Oldham. Less than ten percent went as far as a definitive sentence compared with twenty percent a hundred years earlier.¹⁷¹⁸ Litigation strategies were far more complex in the post-Reformation period than previously. Plaintiffs were prepared to consider a range of spiritual and secular courts in a bid to wear their opponents down by the sheer multiplicity of suits.¹⁷¹⁹ This, of course, was very much to the lawyers' benefit. Proctorial advice was invariably optimistic in tone, even when clients seemed about to be submerged beneath a welter of legal fees.¹⁷²⁰

It is to be noted that the instance business of the archdeacon of Cornwall's court stood up well to the pressure of the consistory.¹⁷²¹ This is because the personnel of the archidiaconal court were not part of the Exeter circle.¹⁷²² There was no inducement to channel business to the consistory, indeed quite

¹⁷¹⁵ ECA, D&C.7136/1; DHC, CC.152/BOX152, process, Berry *c.* Ellistone; TNA, REQ.2/40/69; DHC, CC.3/18.

¹⁷¹⁶ Smith, 'Episcopate of Sir Jonathan Trelawny', p. 117.

¹⁷¹⁷ Bodl Lib, Additional B.4, pp. 1-43. For further consideration of the issue of fees, see below, pp. 244-61.

¹⁷¹⁸ See Table 6.

¹⁷¹⁹ M J Ingram, 'Communities and Courts: Law and Disorder in Early Seventeenth Century Wiltshire', in *Crime in England 1550-1850*, ed. J S Cockburn (1977), pp. 110-34.

¹⁷²⁰ TNA, SP.46/71, fo. 241.

¹⁷²¹ See Table 7.

¹⁷²² See Appendix 4.

the opposite. An implicit polarisation amongst the bureaucrats and officials of the diocese thus formed. On the one hand there was the somewhat elitist club environment of Exeter; on the other there was the more informal and homely atmosphere of the itinerant archdeacon's court.

Of course, Exeter had always had a certain prestige and social cache. But morale had not been good after the break with Rome. Contracting business levels militated against large, immobile bureaucracies and it seems likely that declining incomes led to a loss of self-esteem. (The 'operating costs' of a mobile tribunal such as that of the archdeacon of Cornwall were less great: informality could be an advantage at a time of low business levels). What we find in the later sixteenth century at Exeter is a return to effective regulation of the legal profession. More people wanted to attach themselves to the bureaucracy and a clearly-defined career structure was imposed. Able proctors could aspire to become advocates instead of being forced to move out of the diocese; scribes and 'back-office' men could hope to secure a place as proctors in the knowledge that the number of practising lawyers would be restricted to ensure that each man would have a respectable income. A new-found confidence abounded at Exeter under the early Stuarts.¹⁷²³

Rising litigation levels and opportunistic behaviour by proctors and scribes were not the whole story, however. The 'club environment' at Exeter was ultimately fostered by the bishops of the post-Reformation Church. Diocesans were only tangentially concerned with the consistory's civil business. They, of course, had a responsibility to ensure that proper and effective justice was dispensed (as their ability to convoke causes to their audience court showed). But there was an increasing tendency to off-load much of the worry on to the shoulders of the highly-trained civil lawyers who were making the office of diocesan chancellor their own.¹⁷²⁴ The inflated business levels settled the matter: more litigation underlined the need for greater professionalism; it would be easy for a bishop to get out of his depth without expert help.

Certainly diocesans had many other things to concern themselves with in the later sixteenth century. They had the basic task of promoting protestantism. More specifically the privy council and Convocation unleashed a torrent of short-term assignments, notably surveys of clergy and laity, the levying of taxes and the framing of reports. Bishops were no longer to be left to their

¹⁷²³ See below, pp. 250-61.

¹⁷²⁴ R A Marchant, *The Church under the Law: Justice, Administration and Discipline in the Diocese of York 1560-1640* (Cambridge, 1970), p. 42.

own devices.¹⁷²⁵ All these matters required a competent bureaucracy. The rising tide of litigation provided the money; the bishops provided the encouragement. The gap between centre and locality in the diocese that had emerged in the middle of the sixteenth century could now be bridged. It was to be done by a policy of direct intervention in which the sheer vigour of the Exeter administration took the regions of the see by storm.

The success of this campaign is revealed by Table 8. Very high numbers of criminal prosecutions were being handled by the Exeter consistory in and around the 1620s. What makes these statistics all the more impressive is that up until the Reformation the court only exceptionally dealt in disciplinary matters: it was by custom a tribunal for the resolution of private disputes.¹⁷²⁶ This was evidently still the case when Alley became bishop in 1560. But the summoning of numerous offenders to Exeter consequent upon the 1561 visitation may well have marked the beginning of the move to transform the consistory into a dual-purpose tribunal. Certainly by no means all of those accused of misdemeanours were 'corrected' by Alley and his audience court. Many were punished by the consistory.¹⁷²⁷

Subsequent court act books revert to the old format: the vast majority of cases entered in them are civil suits.¹⁷²⁸ Possibly the initiative of 1561 was forgotten or perhaps a separate series of *libri ex officio* was begun. In fact neither of these explanations quite fits the bill. The conversion of the consistory into a dual-purpose court (such as might be found in smaller sees at this time) was in all probability a lengthy and hesitant process. The very fact that only two office act books have survived for the post-Reformation period and that they relate only to the 1620s and early 1630s suggests that the heavy correction work of the court was very much a new development even in the reign of James.¹⁷²⁹ This view is endorsed by the associated cause papers. A goodly range of documents for the consistory's civil jurisdiction has survived for the period. But only two files relating to disciplinary work now exist and both date from the 1620s.¹⁷³⁰

But this should not be taken to mean that suddenly, as if from nowhere, the consistory sprang into life as a major criminal court. We have to ask how business was drawn to Exeter given that there was no precedent for this.

¹⁷²⁵ DHC, Chanter 41, *passim*.

¹⁷²⁶ DHC, Chanter 775-8.

¹⁷²⁷ DHC, Chanter 779, fo. 59v

¹⁷²⁸ Vage, *Records of Bishop of Exeter's Consistory*, pp. 5-6.

¹⁷²⁹ DHC, Chanter 763-4.

¹⁷³⁰ Vage, *Records of Bishop of Exeter's Consistory*, pp. 7-9; DHC, CC.134, 170.

Plaintiffs and defendants in civil actions might well look upon a journey to the cathedral city as a necessary evil in the pursuit of their rivalries. Those accused of offences against the laws of the Church might not be so tractable. Moreover, custom would also be a difficult obstacle to overcome. People were used to having misdemeanours corrected locally close to the scene of the crime. Why should they wish to break with a practice that had served them well? In these circumstances a process of gradual change was to be recommended. Bishops of Exeter exercised a concurrent jurisdiction with their archdeacons over civil and criminal matters. This concurrency had previously been defended by the commissioners.¹⁷³¹ Bishops thus had a place in the minds of parishioners as far as law and order were concerned. This was a useful starting point.

Here the episcopal peculiars came into their own. They were free from archidiaconal interference and thus the bishop reigned supreme.¹⁷³² Equally importantly, they were strategically placed, providing islands of authority at regular intervals about the see.¹⁷³³ Whereas before the Reformation the peculiars had been mere appendages to the episcopal estates, they now with the loss of those manors gained considerably in value as points of contact with the localities of the diocese. As we have seen, the bishop's commissioners had been given the oversight of the peculiars.¹⁷³⁴ The ending of the office of commissary meant that responsibility devolved upon the chief judge of the consistory. Civil disputes could of course be carried to Exeter at will. But what of criminal causes? It may have been out of a wish to prevent poaching by local jurisdictions that the consistory during Elizabeth's reign began to send out special commissioners to conduct annual visitations of the peculiars.¹⁷³⁵ These forays were administratively distinct from the diocesan visitations which took place every three years and which were overseen by the staff of the principal registry.

Slowly, but surely, business began to grow. Up until the final year of Woolton's episcopate the practice seems to have been to convene a visitation of the peculiars every springtime.¹⁷³⁶ Greatest attention was paid to the Cornish peculiars probably because of their distance from Exeter: Landrake, South Petherwin or Lawhitton, Egloshayle or Padstow, and St Gluvias were

¹⁷³¹ See above, pp. 6-7.

¹⁷³² See above, p. 12.

¹⁷³³ See Map 1.

¹⁷³⁴ See above, p. 6.

¹⁷³⁵ DHC, Chanter 758.

¹⁷³⁶ *Ibid.* Not all the parishes were covered each year.

the most popular venues at which to hold visitation courts.¹⁷³⁷ In Devon Swimbridge, Bishop's Nymet, Bishop's Mochard or Crediton, Paignton and Chudleigh were the centres favoured.¹⁷³⁸ At these meetings the normal range of visitation business was conducted. Ministers, churchwardens and sidesmen appeared. The first brought their letters or ordination and induction together with any licences they might have for inspection by the commissary. The wardens and sidesmen undertook to perform the duties of their offices conscientiously and bills of presentment were exhibited which the visitors immediately examined. Much of the correctional work which followed was concerned with sexual misdemeanours. Time was also found for proving wills and granting administrations of goods.¹⁷³⁹

In 1593, however, three important changes occurred. First, the practice of appointing local incumbents as visitation commissioners was abandoned. Figures like Degory Viell, the vicar of Landrake, and John Goldsmith, the vicar of St Kew, had regularly turned out to police their areas.¹⁷⁴⁰ They were now, in Woolton's final year, replaced by one man, George Holgreve who undertook to make a tour of all the peculiars in both Devon and Cornwall.¹⁷⁴¹ Upon Woolton's demise, the job fell to the new diocesan chancellor, Evan Morrice.¹⁷⁴² Babington gave Morrice a life-time grant of the chancellorship.¹⁷⁴³ This symbolised the new bishop's desire to hand over the administrative initiative in the south-west to a full-time professional. Morrice almost immediately embarked upon a personal visitation of the peculiars and subsequent chancellors followed suit.¹⁷⁴⁴

Secondly, the Devon peculiars began to receive regular annual inspections, whilst thirdly the second circuit of selected centres conducted by the commissioners six months after the visitation to deal with crimes that had arisen in the interim was abandoned.¹⁷⁴⁵ Instead cases were drawn to Exeter for correction.¹⁷⁴⁶ As the number of offenders was relatively few, the *acta* were entered in the call and *comperta* book.¹⁷⁴⁷ There was no need to create a new class of document. Nonetheless the writing was on the wall. The

¹⁷³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁷³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁷³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴² *Ibid.*; DHC, Chanter 784, sub 6 May 1595.

¹⁷⁴³ *Ibid.*, sub 8 Dec. 1595.

¹⁷⁴⁴ DHC, Chanter 758; PR.Basket D/20/28; Chanter 905a.

¹⁷⁴⁵ DHC, Chanter 758.

¹⁷⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

visitation of the peculiars was in the process of being downgraded (as indeed was the diocesan visitation). And whilst this did not mean that the act of visitation had ceased to matter, it did signify that the tendency to make visitations do the duty of the defunct commissioners by drawing out their activities over a range of months was giving way to centralised and almost constant surveillance by the consistory court based at Exeter.¹⁷⁴⁸

The transformation had been completed by 1602. By that date a fully active disciplinary court was in place at Exeter dealing with crimes arising from all corners of the diocese.¹⁷⁴⁹ The annual visitation of the episcopal peculiars was now being held in the late summer or early autumn, and much of its work was taken up with the pursuit of persons who had been declared excommunicate by the consistory.¹⁷⁵⁰ Possibly the episcopal administration was experiencing teething troubles in operating the new system. Certainly some of the *excommunicati* would seem to have been punished for failing to appear at Exeter rather than for guilt.¹⁷⁵¹ This was only to be expected: it would take time for parishioners to get used to the idea of journeying to Exeter to answer for their alleged misdemeanours. For the moment at least they much preferred to wait until the authorities came to them.

A good deal less satisfactory was the fact that apparitors were very probably behind the diversion of disciplinary causes to Exeter. Numerous marginal annotations in a peculiar call and *comperta* book at this time certainly suggest as much.¹⁷⁵² Apparitors, of course, had a strong incentive to drum up business for their income depended on the number of citations that they delivered. The 1597 canons had shown an awareness of this when they tried to limit the number of summoners employed by the courts and to prevent them acting as informer or promoters of causes.¹⁷⁵³ But local needs denied these strictures their effect in the south-west. The Exeter authorities could plead that it was all in a good cause: the rooting out of disorder was too important a goal to compromise on. Apparitors kept their noses close to the ground. They would know what was going on in remote villages and hamlets and they would ensure that the rule of law prevailed in the interludes between the bishop's visitations. It might even be possible to claim that

¹⁷⁴⁸ See below, pp. 232-37.

¹⁷⁴⁹ DHC, Chanter 760/902. A consistory *libri ex officio* may have been in existence from at least 1595, the year in which Evan Morrice became chancellor (DHC, Chanter 784, *sub* 5 Feb. 1594/5, Off. Prom. Morsyde *c.* Geedle, Braye, Best et Townshend).

¹⁷⁵⁰ DHC, Chanter 904.

¹⁷⁵¹ DHC, Chanter 760/902.

¹⁷⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁵³ *Synodalia: A Collection of Articles of Religion, Canons and Proceedings of Convocations*, ed. E Cardwell (2 vols., Oxford, 1842), i. 301-02.

those apparitors who worked for the consistory were legitimate deputies of the rural deans and therefore specially charged with powers of search and presentment.¹⁷⁵⁴

But there was a less altruistic reason for their prominence. Almost certainly the transformation of the consistory into a full-time tribunal for the handling of *ex officio mero* causes stemmed from William Cotton's arrival in the south-west. As we have already noted, Cotton was a man in a hurry who was desperately eager to impress his superiors in London and thus gain translation to a more prestigious see.¹⁷⁵⁵ In Morrice he had an able deputy who had already shown a strong interest in centralising authority within the diocese. And certainly Cotton's rule started energetically. No sooner had Whitgift's metropolitical visitation of the south-west ended than the bishop began his primary visitation.¹⁷⁵⁶ During the first fifteen years of Cotton's episcopate, that is during the period when the bishop still believed in the possibility of promotion, no less than seven visitations were held.¹⁷⁵⁷ And this is to omit from the calculation the metropolitical visitations of 1605 and 1612 which were administered partly or entirely by episcopal officers.¹⁷⁵⁸ During the thirty-eight years preceding Cotton's arrival, the bishops of Exeter visited a mere twelve times, a difference in frequency of some fifty percent.¹⁷⁵⁹

Clearly Cotton was going over the top. He was not obliged to visit more than once in every three years. Yet his average was one in every two. This was bound to ruffle feathers. Moreover, Cotton's excesses added to an already deteriorating relationship between bishop and archdeacons in the south-west. Alley and Bradbridge had not really been able to do much to ensure that their lieutenants were behaving themselves when it came to the exercise of ecclesiastical justice. Were they, for example, too ready to commute the penances which their courts had imposed?¹⁷⁶⁰ The collapse of the commissary system had given the archdeacons a new-found freedom. Only if episcopal placemen could be inveigled into these offices could diocesans

¹⁷⁵⁴ See below, pp. 256-61.

¹⁷⁵⁵ See above, pp. 134-41.

¹⁷⁵⁶ DHC, Chanter 21, fo. 64.

¹⁷⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, fos. 64, 72v, 83, 87, 100v; South Tawton/PW1, fos. 66, 79.

¹⁷⁵⁸ LPL, Reg. Bancroft, fo. 189; Reg. Abbot, i. fo. 224v.

¹⁷⁵⁹ DHC, Chanter 18, fo. 88; Chanter 19, fo. 38; *The Accounts of the Wardens of the Parish of Morebath, Devon, 1520-1573*, ed. J E Binney (Exeter, 1904), p. 236; DHC, Dartington/PW2, p. 71; South Tawton/PW1, fo. 23v; A L Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall: A Portrait of a Society* (1969), p. 347; B L, Lansdowne 45/42, 43; DHC, Dartington/PW2, pp. 129.146.164, 189.

¹⁷⁶⁰ See below, pp. 233-34.

breathe more easily. Alley, certainly, seems to have tried to emulate Coverdale. He seized the opportunity of the death of the Marian archdeacon of Totnes to colleague Robert Louher.¹⁷⁶¹ Alley also prevailed upon John Tusser to present his eldest son, Roger, to the archdeaconry of Cornwall when it fell vacant in 1563.¹⁷⁶² This left the *politique* Henry Squire as archdeacon of Barnstaple and the long-serving but benign George Carew as archdeacon of Exeter.¹⁷⁶³

The team was not so bad, but Louher and Squire were pluralists with their main commitments elsewhere, whilst Roger Alley was subsequently deprived by Archbishop Parker for being under age at the time of his appointment, and for not being in holy orders.¹⁷⁶⁴

Nor can it be said that the archdeacons' officials were likely to be advocates of change in the early years of Elizabeth's reign. Admittedly only George Weaver, who served the archdeacon of Exeter around 1560, was truly suspect in his religious disposition.¹⁷⁶⁵ But the others lacked commitment to the new regime. Most, according to a contemporary survey, were unmarried beneficed clergymen who had had a taste of university life but who did not preach.¹⁷⁶⁶ Perhaps more importantly, they had lived through the dramatic changes of the 1530s, 40s and 50s and had learned to keep their heads down. They were doubtless efficient in the discharge of their basic duties, but they disliked the prospect of having to enforce a specific policy and were accordingly slow to respond to outside pressure.

Thus in 1572, Henry Crane, the official of the archdeacon of Cornwall, was excommunicated by William Marston, the diocesan chancellor, for failing to notify the consistory court of the names of those Cornish clerics who had recently been elected rural deans for the archdeaconry.¹⁷⁶⁷ And the same general remarks can be applied to the men who served as registrars of the archidiaconal courts. Often they were laymen who hoped to make a respectable career in the lower echelons of the civil and canon law profession. They were by no means undutiful, but they worked to suit

¹⁷⁶¹ DHC, Chanter 18, fo. 75v.

¹⁷⁶² *Ibid.*, fo. 84.

¹⁷⁶³ DHC, Chanter 16, fo. 16v; Chanter 18, fo. 5; see above, pp. 66-68.

¹⁷⁶⁴ *A/ Ox*, p. 939; TNA, E.135/11/14, fos. 45v, 46v; Registrum Parker, ed. Frere, i. 323. Squire did preside over his court during 1574-6 (DHC, 1127/EA/AD1, fos. 49, 50, 53, 55v, 56v).

¹⁷⁶⁵ DHC, Chanter 779, fo. 200; and see above, p. 58.

¹⁷⁶⁶ DHC, Chanter 858, fo. 26v; TNA, SP.15/11/87; CCCC, Parker 97, fos. 176, 181v, 183.

¹⁷⁶⁷ DHC, Chanter 780, *sub* 24 Sept. 1572.

themselves and, protected by life grants of their offices, were difficult to remove.¹⁷⁶⁸

Death, then would have to play its part in the promotion of the Reformation in the south-west. The crown, of course, was well aware of this. Alley and Bradbridge were not pressurised by the government to turn their diocese upside down. The Elizabethan regime during the 1560s and early 1570s comprised an ambiguous blend of conservatism and progressivism. Not until the shake-out occasioned by the Northern Rebellion of 1569 and the Ridolfi Plot of 1571 did the queen's team of advisers assume a more solidly protestant hue¹⁷⁶⁹. As we saw earlier, the initial aim of the crown was to avoid making conservative martyrs.¹⁷⁷⁰ The 1559 visitors did not resort to large-scale deprivations. Only obvious troublemakers were prised from office. The rest were to be put at their ease: the 1559 settlement was a successful exercise in ideological disarmament.

Bradbridge's death ushered in a new era both locally and nationally. His was one of a series of episcopal fatalities in the late 1570s and early 1580s. The new men were invariably more thrusting and businesslike. Together with Woolton they had a capacity for 'good government'.¹⁷⁷¹ Certainly the new bishop of Exeter did not hesitate to cross swords with the lesser jurisdictions of his diocese. At the end of October 1579, Thomas Williams, Alley's chancellor and friend but now official of the archdeacon of Exeter, was summoned to appear in the episcopal palace to explain why he had held his autumn visitation in defiance of the bishop's wishes. Williams humbly acknowledged his infringement of ancient custom and promised to end his visitation so that Woolton's own tour of inspection could proceed.¹⁷⁷²

Woolton was, of course, anxious to get things moving in the south-west. He had quickly launched upon his primary visitation. The articles of inquiry revealed his intentions.¹⁷⁷³ They were aimed at purging the diocese of popish practices and fostering protestant values. Proper use of the Book of Common Prayer was enjoined. Altars were to be 'utterly taken down'. Church interiors were to be whitened. Ministers were to refrain from wearing

¹⁷⁶⁸ Houlbrooke, *Church Courts and the People*, pp. 25-6.

¹⁷⁶⁹ W MacCaffrey, *The Shaping of the Elizabethan Regime* (1969), pp. 296-317.

¹⁷⁷⁰ See above, pp. 62-63.

¹⁷⁷¹ J Vowell alias Hooker, *A Catalog of the Bishops of Exeter* (1584), no. 48; Collinson, *Puritan Movement*, pp. 191-207.

¹⁷⁷² DHC, Chanter 20, fos. 45v-6.

¹⁷⁷³ *Articles to be inquired of, within the Diocese of Exon, in the visitation of the reverende father in God, John Bishop of Exeter in the xxi yeare of the reigne of our most gracious sovereign Lady Elizabeth* (1979).

mass-vestments. Instead they were to make diligent study of the scriptures. Numerous articles also investigated lay morals and the willingness of churchwardens to present vice and recusancy. Parish festivities were frowned upon amidst more regular questions concerning the state of repair of churches and chapelries, and the disorderly behaviour of ministers. Evidently Woolton was aiming to fulfil the expectations of his patron, Bedford. Yet it was radical protestantism which soon came to engage his attention.¹⁷⁷⁴

Even so, the bishop was far from being an innocent. His attack on Williams was calculated. Woolton was well aware of the ease with which the archdeacons and their officials could encroach upon the bishop's authority. Most likely he had been briefed by William Germyn, his principal registrar whose hobby was to comb the medieval records of the see for jurisdictional precedents.¹⁷⁷⁵ As noted earlier, the Germyns belonged to an Exeter patrician family and were probably strong protestants.¹⁷⁷⁶ Three of their number served as principal registrar between 1540 and 1600.¹⁷⁷⁷ All were inclined to innovation in matters administrative. William's father was responsible for starting the series of audience act books previously referred to, whilst his brother Thomas ended the sequence of composite episcopal registers which had been compiled for each bishop since the second half of the thirteenth century.¹⁷⁷⁸ In their place were put an institution register, an ordination register and a series of licence and letter books.¹⁷⁷⁹

The work of the principal registry, in common with that of the consistory court, was expanding in the later sixteenth century. More clergy were seeking licences to preach, teach and serve as curates.¹⁷⁸⁰ More grants of probate and letters of administration needed to be made to keep pace with rising population and levels of wealth.¹⁷⁸¹ These things required closer supervision. As the principal registry was responsible for mounting visitations and as the level of spiritual crime was also on the increase, it made sense to attempt to revitalise the visitatorial process. At one stage in the middle ages the bishop's visitation had been a major event occupying the

¹⁷⁷⁴ See above, pp. 102-11.

¹⁷⁷⁵ Bodl Lib, Selden Supra 42.

¹⁷⁷⁶ See above, p. 86.

¹⁷⁷⁷ ECA, D&C.3551, fo. 252v; DHC, Chanter 41, p. 6; *APC*, 1575-77, p. 159.

¹⁷⁷⁸ D M Smith, *Guide to the Bishops' Registers of England and Wales: A Survey from the Middle Ages to the Abolition of Episcopacy in 1646* (Royal Historical Society, 1981), pp. 76-8.

¹⁷⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁸⁰ DHC, Chanter 41, *passim*.

¹⁷⁸¹ DHC, Chanter 1694, fo. 7.

whole of every third year.¹⁷⁸² But its scale had diminished with the establishment of the commissary system. Consequently the principal registry had remained part of the episcopal household and the audience court, too, had ceased to develop. Woolton's desire to initiate a thorough-going inspection of his diocese in 1579 raised the possibility of restoring the fourteenth-century position. This would in turn enhance the prestige of the principal registrar and his staff: they would henceforth comprise a fully-fledged department of episcopal government.

It was now that relations between bishop and archdeacons began to turn sour. It was all a question of money. Revenues which might normally have gone to the archdeacons were now about to be diverted to the diocesan and his agents. This would enable the episcopal administration to be even more assertive, for rising levels of income oiled the wheels of bureaucracy. The great weapon with which bishops terrorised their subordinates was the inhibition. The issuing of a mandate suspending the archdeacons from the exercise of their jurisdiction was always a prelude to the commencement of an episcopal visitation.¹⁷⁸³ Two matters were of prime concern to the archdeacons: how long the inhibition might last and when it might be imposed. Archdeacons, of course, gained money all the year round from their judicial and administrative activities. But the spring was an especially lucrative time for them because it was then that they held their annual visitations.¹⁷⁸⁴ It would be especially unwelcome if bishops should decide to issue an inhibition at Easter. Fortunately diocesans had largely managed to avoid doing so during the past century and a half and had instead made their visitations later in the year, usually in the autumn or early winter. But this was of no great benefit if bishops kept their inhibitions in force for more than six months.

This was where Woolton came in. He did not attempt to visit in the spring, but he did in 1582 at least try to deny his archdeacons their customary revenues by forbidding them 'to do anything whilst the visitation was depending, unfinished and especially within one whole year from the time of their being inhibited'.¹⁷⁸⁵ This order must have come as a hammer blow. It was most likely inspired by Woolton's desire 'to control and cut off [the] money penances' imposed by the archidiaconal courts for sexual

¹⁷⁸² DHC, Chanter 1170, p. 6.

¹⁷⁸³ D M Owen, *The Records of the Established Church in England Excluding Parochial Records* (British Records Association, 1970), p. 31.

¹⁷⁸⁴ DHC, Dartington/PW2, pp. 232, 307, 415.

¹⁷⁸⁵ DHC, Chanter 1170, p. 9.

incontinence.¹⁷⁸⁶ Writing to John Cole, the archdeacon of Totnes, at the beginning of 1582, the bishop emphasised the extent to which fornication abounded in his diocese and thereupon ordered Cole and his official to cease granting commutations. Furthermore, Cole was to send up to Exeter 'before the Feast of the Annunciation.....a full and perfect account of relaxations and commutations of penance before the time of our consecration showing what has been received and to what uses [the] money [has been] put'.¹⁷⁸⁷ Probably similar letters were despatched to the other archdeacons.

We may also conjecture that Woolton was far from pleased by what he found in the transcripts of court acta sent to the principal registry. His initiative certainly ushered in a period of close surveillance of the archdeaconry courts. Bishop Cotton had copies made of the *libri ex officio* of the archdeaconry of Cornwall, whilst Joseph Hall reissued Woolton's letter.¹⁷⁸⁸ This suggests that surveillance was not working. And indeed bishops had to negotiate the crucial obstacle of trust. Woolton was able in the opening years of his episcopate to appoint friends and relatives to the three Devonian archdeaconries.¹⁷⁸⁹ Cole was 'sometime' Woolton's scholar. He was of 'as great forwardness as any [at Oxbridge] of his time'.¹⁷⁹⁰ He had visited 'Geneva and other universities in France'.¹⁷⁹¹ Thomas Barrett, who gained Exeter, and Robert Lawe, who was collated to Barnstaple, were, as we have seen, Woolton's kinfolk.¹⁷⁹² They were also, like Cole, expert theologians and preachers.¹⁷⁹³

But blood was not necessarily thicker than water when it came to money: Barrett, we recall, was later to be a leading exponent of the 1616 Composition.¹⁷⁹⁴ Archdeacons had a responsibility to their officials and registrars. If, as might be suspected, commutations had been introduced on a widespread scale when court business was slack in the middle decades of the sixteenth century and the revenue put straight into the pockets of court staff rather than given to 'pious uses', this was perhaps a necessary evil to keep the administrations afloat. Admittedly conditions had improved by the 1580s. Business was almost certainly at higher levels than thirty years

¹⁷⁸⁶ DHC, Chanter 726/56.

¹⁷⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁸⁸ DHC, Chanter 813a&b; Chanter 726/56.

¹⁷⁸⁹ BL, Lansdowne 45/43.

¹⁷⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁹¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁹² See above, p. 142

¹⁷⁹³ BL, Lansdowne 45/43.

¹⁷⁹⁴ See above, pp. 152-53.

earlier.¹⁷⁹⁵ Nonetheless, it was difficult to break a habit once it had been formed. In effect, the scribes had an expanding source of income, a hedge against inflation. Woolton was now requiring that this be removed: there were to be no early retirements amongst the staff of the archdeaconry courts.

The conflicting loyalties of the archdeacons, even when the incumbents were close acquaintances of the bishop, made essential the revamping of the visitatorial process. If ancient practice could be revived then the autonomy of the archdeacons might be properly subdued. But there were snags here too. The year-long inhibition of the archidiaconal jurisdictions was ultimately more trouble than it was worth. Business levels in the late sixteenth century were probably higher than those for the later medieval period.¹⁷⁹⁶ There were more people than ever in the region and this ultimately meant higher levels of crime to contend with. And even if the visitation mandate were to be stretched to cover a full twelve-month period, there still remained a two-year gap before the next visitation was due.

More fundamentally, the growth of business threatened to undermine the efficiency of the visitatorial process. There seems to have been a threshold of activity beyond which the structure of the visitation became unwieldy and inefficient.¹⁷⁹⁷ Certainly this was the experience at York.¹⁷⁹⁸ And then again in the south-west there was the mounting opposition of the archdeaconries to the intrusive behaviour of the diocesan. An attack on the criminal and administrative work of the archidiaconal tribunals was bound to lead to rancour even in Devon, where, as we have seen, many if not most of the personnel of the lesser courts had connections with the consistory.¹⁷⁹⁹ Siphoning off civil suits to Exeter was of no great importance for the proctors and scribes would still benefit. But stopping the processing of criminal causes and the proving of wills was another matter, for these were things done locally and (since the demise of the commissioners) almost exclusively by the archdeaconry courts.

Such problems must have forced Woolton and his immediate successors to think in terms of a full-time system of surveillance for their diocese. The

¹⁷⁹⁵ CRO, ARD/1-2, 7; DHC, Chanter 813a&b.

¹⁷⁹⁶ See Figure 1 and also B L Woodcock, *Medieval Ecclesiastical Courts in the Diocese of Canterbury* (Oxford, 1952), p. 84.

¹⁷⁹⁷ For this see W J Sheils, *Archbishop Grindal's Metropolitical Visitation of 1576* (Borthwick Texts and Calendars, 1977).

¹⁷⁹⁸ Marchant, *Church under the Law*, pp. 204-35.

¹⁷⁹⁹ See above, p. 222.

course of evolution charted earlier, which began with the episcopal peculiars and ended with the establishment of a regular court of correction at Exeter, was the result. Initially this may have been intended as a conciliatory gesture towards the archdeaconries. By shifting the emphasis away from the triennial visitation to the consistory, bishops could claim to be playing the 'disciplinary game' fairly. The archdeaconry courts would be able to operate for most months in each three-year cycle and therefore could compete on more or less equal terms with the episcopal tribunal. But things turned out differently in practice. Cotton's zeal ensured that passions remained high. It is true that the bishop did not inhibit his archdeacons for excessively long periods. The 1608 visitation, for example, lasted no longer than three months.¹⁸⁰⁰ But the aggressive manner in which the development of the consistory court was promoted coupled with the frequency of visitation more than offset this 'concession'. Furthermore, in 1599 and 1606, Cotton decided to commence his visitation in the spring.¹⁸⁰¹

Clearly Cotton was a driven man. The articles for his primary visitation emphasise this.¹⁸⁰² They are terse and few in number compared to the lengthy list of questions assembled by Woolton for his first visitation twenty years earlier.¹⁸⁰³ Cotton was seemingly going through the motions, except that is for certain administrative issues which were of particular relevance to him. Thus churchwardens and sidesmen were asked to reveal the names of those person in their parishes who had died since the start of the year and whose wills needed to be proved by the bishop's courts.¹⁸⁰⁴ They were also to disclose whether their incumbent had refused 'to denounce or execute any process' emanating from the consistory.¹⁸⁰⁵ Cotton further asked about the number of apparitors in each deanery working for the episcopal and archidiaconal courts. Had the 'summoners' compounded with any suspected person 'and made no returns thereof or exacted any fees other than usual'?¹⁸⁰⁶

Cotton was evidently trying to discover the standing of episcopal government in his diocese. He was doing what a good conformist bishop was supposed to do and as such was a shining example of Whitgift's Church. But so too in his

¹⁸⁰⁰ DHC, Chanter 21, fo. 87.

¹⁸⁰¹ *Ibid.*, fos. 64, 83.

¹⁸⁰² *Articles to bee enquired of by the Churchwardens and Swornemen in the Ordinary Visitation of the Lord Bishop of Excester, within the Diocese of Excester, in Anno Dominis 1599* (1599).

¹⁸⁰³ See above, p. 231.

¹⁸⁰⁴ *Articles to bee enquired of*, sig. A3b.

¹⁸⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, sig. AbbII.

¹⁸⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

own way was Woolton. His attack on the granting of commutations by the archdeaconry courts was at one level no more than a response to the urgings of Convocation: a canon of 1575 had specifically identified this abuse.¹⁸⁰⁷ The revamping of episcopal government in the south-west began as a Grindalian enterprise and ended up as a Whitgiftian concern. For Woolton the idealism of his earlier years could best be preserved in the conformist ethos of the late Elizabethan Church. Only by following in the footsteps of the archbishop could moderation be safeguarded. Cotton, however, was under no such illusion. His concern for the seemliness of religious life in his diocese sprang from naked self-interest. Not only was everything done in a rush: corners were cut. The former led to a constitutional clash of major proportions; the latter helped ensure victory, but only at the cost of undermining the Church that he was supposedly seeking to defend.

II

So we come to the Composition of 1616.¹⁸⁰⁸ Ostensibly its purpose is clear. It represented an attempt by the lesser jurisdictions of the see to restrain Cotton and his agents and thus preserve their livelihoods. But this is not the full story. For whilst the Composition was undoubtedly organised by the archdeacons and peculiar authorities, it ultimately proved to be of much greater benefit to their antagonists, the bishops of Exeter.

Why should this have been so? The Composition was formally agreed on 25 March, its signatories being Cotton, his chancellor Barnaby Goche, the dean of Exeter Matthew Sutcliffe, the four archdeacons, the Exeter chapter and the vicars-choral.¹⁸⁰⁹ The preamble optimistically forecast that 'a peace and certainty' would 'forever hereafter' obtain 'touching the execution of ecclesiastical jurisdiction' in the south-west. But events did not turn out thus. Disharmony persisted as bishops of Exeter continued to trench upon what the archdeacons and peculiar authorities considered to be their rights.

What had gone wrong? Clause six of the Composition was the focus for much of the continuing unrest. It dealt with the conduct of episcopal visitations. Three basic points were made: diocesan visitations were to be triennial; they were not to occur during the Easter fortnight; and the period during which the archidiaconal jurisdictions was to be inhibited was not to exceed two months. These were, of course, central criticisms of recent

¹⁸⁰⁷ *Synodalia*, ed. Cardwell, i. 137-8.

¹⁸⁰⁸ See above, pp. 154-55.

¹⁸⁰⁹ ECA, D&C.2473. See Appendix 1 for a transcription.

episcopal practice. What was the upshot? During the ensuing century and a half numerous infractions of clause six occurred. Between 1622 and 1638 seven diocesan visitations (as well as two metropolitical inspections) were held.¹⁸¹⁰ The visitations of 1622 and 1630 were begun in the spring, whilst the two-month inhibition rule was infringed both in 1622 and 1662.¹⁸¹¹

Such indeed was the unrest generated by the wilfulness of successive bishops of Exeter that a second agreement had to be penned during the middle years of the eighteenth century to sort out the troubles associated with clause six.¹⁸¹² It came out strongly in favour of the bishops. For although it was reaffirmed that the inhibition imposed by diocesans prior to commencing their visitations should not last longer than two months, the archdeacons were obliged to concede that bishops of Exeter could exercise their right of visitation at any time of the year and thus in the spring take the presentments of the outgoing churchwardens and sidesmen, swear in the new parish officials and receive the relevant fees.¹⁸¹³ The archdeacons' claim for a priority of visitation over their bishop was specifically rejected.¹⁸¹⁴

What is particularly interesting about this second agreement are the contrasting natures of the two arguments put forward by the episcopal administration to justify its behaviour over the preceding one hundred and fifty years. The first stated quite bluntly that the provisions of the sixth clause had no binding force upon the signatories because the premise upon which they had been based (the archdeacons' alleged right of priority of visitation) neither existed nor was mentioned by the Composition. However, the second argument conceded that the restrictions placed upon the conduct of diocesan visitations in 1616 needed to be observed. But these constraints were of no practical effect for they could not prevent bishops from receiving the oaths of newly-elected wardens later in the year. Indeed, if the episcopal visitation were to be held in the autumn even those presentments accruing from the archdeacons' Michaelmas visitations would fall to the diocesan.

Why these contradictory arguments? And why did mid-eighteenth century bishops prefer to emphasise the second rather than the first? The answer lies in the 1616 Composition. Clause five stated that all ecclesiastical jurisdiction not specifically allocated to the archdeacons and peculiar

¹⁸¹⁰ DHC, Chanter 217-19, 8271; PR.Basket A/641-50; PR.Basket D/17/87; LPL, Reg. Abbot ii. fo. 282; Reg. Laud, fo. 102.

¹⁸¹¹ DHC, Chanter 1179, pp. 10-11.

¹⁸¹² DHC, Chanter 1170.

¹⁸¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁸¹⁴ *Ibid.*

authorities by the accord was to be regarded as belonging to the bishop. Diocesans in the middle of the eighteenth century had to treat carefully. They wanted to uphold their rights, but if they pressed the former argument too enthusiastically they risked overturning the 1616 Composition altogether. If they were to insist that clause six had no binding force upon its signatories, then might not also the validity of clause five be brought into question? Furthermore, the other four clauses of the Composition would be rendered null and void.

These initial clauses dealt with the jurisdictional relationship between the bishop and the dean and chapter, the dean, the vicars choral and the four archdeacons. The clauses touched on two issues: the handling of non-contentious testamentary business and the processing of criminal and civil causes. Regarding the former, it was agreed that the lesser authorities should process the wills and goods of all persons dying within their jurisdictions save for those of 'knights, beneficed men, and such as are de roba episcopi' which were to be the preserve of the bishop. Regarding the latter, the peculiar authorities were to have sole control over causes arising within their territories, whilst the archdeacons were to have 'concurrent power with the bishop to hear and determine' civil and criminal actions in their jurisdictions.

Once again these were highly advantageous clauses as far as the bishop was concerned. Uncertainty pervaded their wording. For example, could diocesans exercise their prerogative rights with regard to probate matters? In the later middle ages bishops had laid claim to authority over all persons dying within the see 'possessed of personality in divers archdeaconries, or other jurisdictions within the said diocese'. With rising levels of population and wealth in the sixteenth century, more and more people would be liable to fall into this category. Conceivably the archdeacons and peculiar authorities would want to restrict bishops here. Perhaps this is what they intended by not elaborating on the phrase '*de roba episcopi*'. But in practice it mattered not because clause five could always be mobilised by bishops to support the continued exercise of their prerogative rights. Similar problems obtained regarding the contentious work of the archidiaconal courts. A shared jurisdiction over criminal and civil causes was bound to lead to accusations of encroachment by one side or the other. This hardly seemed likely to produce a lasting peace in the south-west.

Can it therefore be concluded that the 1616 Composition was ineptly drafted, that the archdeacons and peculiar authorities had failed to translate their anger and fear into a rock-solid agreement? This is perhaps possible, but

there is a more plausible and certainly more interesting explanation to contemplate. Thus far the impression has been given that the Composition comprised a statement of intent made by one party against another. And assuredly the impetus for the agreement came from below, from the lesser jurisdictions of the see. Cotton and Goche had to be constrained to accept the idea of an accord.¹⁸¹⁵ But this is not to suggest that they disliked what the Composition contained. Nor is it to imply that the archdeacons and peculiar authorities believed they could forever compel the bishop and his agents to behave themselves. Cotton and Goche conformed because it was necessary to get the patent of office of chancellor sealed by the chapter. Certainly they were fully aware of the nature of compositions.

And with good cause, for compositions were normally used by bishops to restrain their archdeacons. As was mentioned earlier, the agreements usually arose at a certain stage in the development of ecclesiastical government when archdeacons were threatening to break free from episcopal oversight.¹⁸¹⁶ By imposing a composition on his lieutenants, a bishop could hope to stem the tide of particularism in his see. The agreement set forth the diocese's jurisdictional constitution. But a composition was in no sense a legal document.¹⁸¹⁷ It did not possess the force of law. Its success depended upon the willingness of its signatories to compromise which in turn rested upon the strength of position of the party promoting its establishment.

By canon law, the bishop was the possessor of the *ius ordinarium*, the right to sit in judgement on matters pertaining to spiritual jurisdiction arising in his see.¹⁸¹⁸ In contrast, the archdeacons had acquired their status as ordinaries by way of custom and usage.¹⁸¹⁹ They could not appeal to prescriptive right as a defence against their diocesan if the latter tried to undermine their authority by appointing commissioners to exercise his rights on their doorstep. It was this which made archdeacons susceptible to the idea of composition in the later middle ages.¹⁸²⁰ For composition offered them something which they did not possess as de facto occupants of the spiritual jurisdiction of a see's localities, namely official recognition as *ordinarii locorum*.¹⁸²¹ This made the agreement of the later medieval period a practical proposition for

¹⁸¹⁵ See above, pp. 154-55.

¹⁸¹⁶ See above, pp. 4-7.

¹⁸¹⁷ C Morris, 'The Commissary of the Bishop in the Diocese of Lincoln', *JEH*, 10 (1959), pp. 50-65, at pp. 60-2.

¹⁸¹⁸ Owen, 'Episcopal Audience Court', in *Legal Records*, ed. Baker (1978), pp. 140-9, at p. 141.

¹⁸¹⁹ Morris, 'Commissary of the Bishop', p. 52.

¹⁸²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁸²¹ *Ibid.*

both parties. Bishops gained assistance in their bid to enhance their authority. Archdeacons, whilst forced to draw back from a claim to a monopoly over the exercise of spiritual authority within their territories, nonetheless received half a loaf. This existed not only in their own eyes, but also in those of their diocesans.

Yet, arguably, the value of the composition lay not in its capacity for resolving jurisdictional disputes, but in its ability to limit the scope of those conflicts. Certainly agreements did not remove the potential for antagonism between bishop and archdeacon. Instead they institutionalised that strife. The protagonists could still push forward and attempt to question or even breach the terms of the composition.¹⁸²² Agreements were not extensive treatises on the management of diocesan government. They were imprecise, often incomplete statements of principle, designed to achieve a commitment to a jurisdictional *modus vivendi* which took as its basis certain minimum standards of administrative behaviour. Above all, compositions presented an idealised, static picture of ecclesiastical organisation: what ought to be the case if all parties were prepared to act in good faith. In short, agreements begged questions.

Such observations are worth emphasising because it might easily be assumed that the composition was tantamount to a final settlement capable of bringing down the curtain on the developing pattern of diocesan government during the later middle ages.¹⁸²³ Of course, to some extent it was. But it was only so because of the special circumstances of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Compositions, we have argued, presupposed a willingness to compromise. And compromises invariably result from a perceived weakness of position. In the later middle ages the archdeacons were certainly vulnerable; but so, too, were the bishops. Admittedly the latter possessed the *ius ordinarium*. But a correct legal stance might mean nothing if the bishop proved incapable of enforcing obedience to his dictates. Compositions were a necessary part of the process of enforcement. They symbolised the practical struggle to achieve that obedience. But they only belonged to the process because it suited the bishop. They were indispensable aids in the later middle ages. However, given a different set of circumstances the bishop might well adopt an entirely new approach to the task of enforcing his will throughout his diocese.

¹⁸²² *Ibid.*, p. 1; Morris, 'Commissary of the Bishop', p. 61.

¹⁸²³ Compare D Owen, 'The Records of the Bishop's Official at Ely: Specialization in the English Episcopal Chancery of the Later Middle Ages', in *The Study of Medieval Records: Essays in Honour of Kathleen Major* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 189-205, at p. 189.

This takes us back to the situation at Exeter in the early years of the seventeenth century. Here, indeed, the running was being made by the archdeacons and peculiar authorities. Moreover, the 1616 Composition was the first to be agreed for the diocese: there had been no medieval accords. This, however, made little difference to the situation. The use of a composition by the lesser ordinaries of the see ultimately indicated the weakness rather than strength of their position. Such was their plight in the face of episcopal aggression that they were forced to resort to a device which in earlier centuries had been regarded as a tool of the bishops. Their aim at the start of the Stuart age was not to prevent their diocesan from encroaching upon their jurisdictions; rather it was to set limits to that encroachment. The device of composition could be used to symbolise the see's 'ancient constitution'. Some scope for manoeuvre did after all exist.

Compositions did not end jurisdictional rivalries. Instead they allowed them to flourish within certain defined limits. In the later middle ages this process of demarcation had been the thin end of the wedge for the lesser ordinaries. But at Exeter in the early years of the seventeenth century it was the institutionalisation of jurisdictional rivalries which made the device of composition an attractive proposition for the see's archdeacons and peculiar authorities. Accordingly, as the preamble of the 1616 accord reveals, the registry offices of the diocesan and his fellow ordinaries were diligently searched for 'instruments, evidences and records' relating to the conduct of ecclesiastical government in the south-west. By presenting the fruits of this search in the most straightforward and thus in the most imprecise of ways, not only might bishops of Exeter be persuaded of the merits of the agreement, but the lesser authorities would also have the best possible terms upon which to base their 'guerrilla' strategy of resistance.

But why were the lesser ordinaries of the see adopting such a minimalist posture of defiance against the intrusions of their diocesan? Surely in view of the absence of earlier compositions they were defending a position of strength? Moreover, how was it that the bishop was able to intrude upon the jurisdictions of his fellow ordinaries without the aid of an agreement? These questions make the assumption that the jurisdictional situation pertaining at Exeter in the early seventeenth century mirrored that which prevailed in other sees in the later middle ages. But this was not so. Exeter's lack of a medieval treaty did not render it administratively underdeveloped in the early seventeenth century, even though there were aspects of organisational development which set it apart from other sees.

For in order that Exeter's individuality be proven, it is necessary to show that the nature of the device of composition changed between the later middle ages and the post-Reformation period and this is not possible unless one is prepared to confuse or conflate the instrument itself with the situation to which it was being applied. Certainly the exponents of composition at Exeter in the early seventeenth century were no longer the bishops. Nor was the agreement being employed to further a jurisdictional position as it would have been in the later middle ages. But this did not mean that the nature of the accord itself had changed. Indeed, far from the Exeter agreement forsaking its late medieval ancestry the document in fact sought to encapsulate that inheritance. Not only did the treaty of 1616 exemplify the inseparability of the device of composition from its late medieval environment; it also underlined the strength of that union in its precepts. The Exeter accord was a truly medieval document because it attempted to recall a past age of jurisdictional relationships. In the eyes of its progenitors, the lesser ordinaries of the see, each clause drew upon custom for its inspiration. In short, the composition stood four-square as an ecclesiastical bill of rights, a touchstone for both present and future generations of ecclesiastical officials in the south-west.

Viewing the Exeter agreement as a defensive document, the purpose of which was to recapture or reimpose the jurisdictional past, a past moreover that was commensurate with the 'highly centralised' nature of late medieval diocesan government, puts an entirely different complexion upon episcopal encroachment in the post-Reformation period. Hitherto it might have reasonably been supposed that this encroachment was at best the product of 'primary colonization', or at worst the result of parasitic behaviour by the diocesan: bishops of Exeter were taking advantage of the absence of a medieval composition to enhance their position of authority within the see whether that absence was believed to be due to an underdeveloped administrative system or to a failure to enshrine in writing the diocese's ancient constitution. In the light of the preceding arguments, however, it seems more credible to describe the episode of episcopal encroachment as 'secondary settlement'. Manifestly, neither a 'highly centralised' administrative system, nor the presence of a medieval composition constituted insuperable barriers to further organisation change. For arguably it was the redundancy of the later medieval context in the post-Reformation period and not the wilfulness of the bishops of Exeter which resulted in the latter trenching upon the authority of the see's lesser ordinaries in the early seventeenth century.

In short, the post-Reformation Church was on an altogether higher plane than its late medieval predecessor. Diocesan government in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries may well have been centralised. But it was a loose form of centralisation, in which the bishop went to the localities of his see rather than the localities came to him. The Church in the south-west under Elizabeth and the early Stuarts introduced a much more rigid form of centralisation. It was indeed the era of episcopal absolutism. The beauty of the later medieval ecclesiastical constitution was its ambiguity. It could mean different things to different people. It afforded stability because the bishop was weak. This was not the case in the post-Reformation period. Economic and political changes had revitalised the office of diocesan. This was reflected in institutional change on the ground. Suddenly, the late medieval constitution became a liability as bishops began to interpret it differently from their archdeacons. The latter saw it as a bulwark against change. The former saw it as the starting point for wholesale reorganisation in which they became provincial magnates, the servants of an increasingly authoritarian crown.

III

However, it is a moot point to what extent Cotton and his successors as bishops of Exeter were in charge of events in their see. Certainly it was ironic that as they gathered more power about themselves, they were obliged to delegate on an increasing scale to their subordinates.

Here the full-time chancellor was a key figure. Yet even he was being made redundant by a growing army of scribes. Specialisation developed to threaten the omniscience of the bishop and his chief legal officer. The task of overseeing the more junior members of the registries became ever harder, especially as business levels continued to rise. Registrars and their assistants began to carve out bureaucratic empires for themselves, thereby making the most of the opportunities for gain inherent in the work of the church courts.

We know this because of the evidence left behind by the royal commission on 'exacted fees and innovated offices'.¹⁸²⁴ First established during James' reign in response to parliamentary agitation, the commission was reissued in 1627.¹⁸²⁵ Its remit was wide. The commissioners were empowered to

¹⁸²⁴ TNA, E.215.

¹⁸²⁵ G E Aylmer, 'Charles I's Commission on Fees, 1627-40', *HR*, 31 (1958), pp. 58-67.

receive grievances and to summon officers from both the secular and spiritual courts to appear before them.¹⁸²⁶ The aim was to discover the extent by which fees had risen since the eleventh year of Elizabeth's reign, the point of departure for the commission's inquiries.¹⁸²⁷ In order to assist the commissioners in the conduct of their work the terms of reference allowed for the appointment of sub-commissioners to undertake on-the-spot investigations within individual counties.¹⁸²⁸ The local commissioners were authorised to call court personnel to give evidence as to the fees they had received and to supply proof in the form of official tables of charges of the legitimacy of their exactions.¹⁸²⁹ An account of the sub-commissioners' proceedings, which included a digest of the more serious misdemeanours that had been uncovered, was to be sent up to London with a view, presumably, to the taking of disciplinary measures.¹⁸³⁰

Altogether some seven counties received sub-commissions during the period 1627-40, but of these only one county commission, that for Devon, has left behind a sufficient body of material to enable an assessment of its activities to be made.¹⁸³¹ The one striking feature to emerge from a study of its papers is the extent to which they are concerned with the financial affairs of the diocese of Exeter. As we shall shortly see this preoccupation was not entirely fortuitous. Nonetheless, it remains true that the fees charged by the Exeter church courts had risen over the course of recent years. The question was, were these increases fair?

Two commissions of inquiry were issued for Devon between 1627 and 1640. The first was made in September 1628; the second ten years later in June 1638.¹⁸³² Neither commission was especially long-lived. The former lasted barely nine months, whilst the latter was in being for less than seven weeks.¹⁸³³ Here, attention will be paid to the well-documented affairs of the 1628 commission. The concerns of the 1638 commissioners were rather circumscribed: they went over some of the ground already covered by their predecessors and they initiated what proved to be a long-running investigation into the affairs of Joseph Martyn, a prominent figure in the

¹⁸²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

¹⁸²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸²⁸ J S Wilson, 'Sir Henry Spelman and the Royal Commission on Fees', *Studies presented to Sir Hilary Jenkinson*, ed. J C Davies (1957), pp. 456-70, at p. 464.

¹⁸²⁹ TNA, E.215/1336, 1383.

¹⁸³⁰ TNA, E.215.1329-33; Wilson, 'Sir Henry Spelman', in *Studies*, ed. Davies, p. 460.

¹⁸³¹ Aylmer, 'Commission on Fees', p. 60.

¹⁸³² TNA, E.215/1383; C.181/5, fos. 109v-10.

¹⁸³³ TNA, E.215/1329, 1333.

Exeter diocesan administration, but who was here being pursued for his work as judge of the Devon vice-admiralty court.¹⁸³⁴

Some sixty-six individuals were named as commissioners in 1628.¹⁸³⁵ Membership was confined to the higher ranks of Devon county society and was representative of both landed and mercantile interests. Members were guided in their investigations by a small staff of scribes headed by a clerk appointed by the London commissioners. This was John Dibley of St Andrew's in Holborn.¹⁸³⁶ He arrived at Exeter in September bringing with him the text of the sub-commission which was duly published before a select gathering of commissioners in the Guildhall on the twenty-fifth of the month.¹⁸³⁷ In brief the text announced that those named in the commission or any three of them were empowered to search and inquire after exactions and innovations in all court offices both temporal and ecclesiastical and instructed all mayors, sheriffs, bailiffs and other crown officers to lend assistance.¹⁸³⁸ The text was to be further published in various churches and market places about the county.¹⁸³⁹

After this formal opening, order was made for Dibley to despatch warrants to the constables of the hundreds and boroughs to summon those legal offices who resided in their jurisdictions to appear in person at Exeter bringing with them a certificate of the fees which they received.¹⁸⁴⁰ If those concerned lived too far away, they were to send their certificates to the clerk of the commission who would produce them in court for examination.¹⁸⁴¹ These warrants were issued throughout the pre-Christmas period and beyond into the New Year.¹⁸⁴² Meanwhile, the commissioners began to receive evidence of alleged extortion from complainants.¹⁸⁴³ This stage of the proceedings ran from early October into the spring of the following year, when the findings of the commissioners were put before a grand jury whose task was to indict or exonerate those accused of financial malpractice.¹⁸⁴⁴ After May 1629 the commission seems either to have concluded its work or to have fallen

¹⁸³⁴ TNA, SP.16/487/57; SP.16/538/6, 10-32, 109-37; E.215/1365, 1367-9, 1396-1408; see above, p. 207.

¹⁸³⁵ TNA, E.215/1383.

¹⁸³⁶ TNA, E.215/1389.

¹⁸³⁷ TNA, E.215/1383.

¹⁸³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁸³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁴⁰ TNA, E.215/1329, p. 1.

¹⁸⁴¹ TNA, E.215/1345.

¹⁸⁴² TNA, E.215/1335-62.

¹⁸⁴³ TNA, E.215/1329, p. 1.

¹⁸⁴⁴ *Ibid.*; E.215/1387.

dormant: at least we do not hear again of its activities until its renewal in 1638.¹⁸⁴⁵

It is clear from the warrants despatched by Dibley and his assistant, John Strange, that a full and measured survey of the petty courts and other regulatory bodies which exercised authority within Devon was undertaken by the sub-commissioners.¹⁸⁴⁶ Numerous attorneys, stewards, bailiffs and clerks of town, manorial, hundredal and stannary courts were called upon to exhibit their tables of fees: to this extent there seems to have been no escape.¹⁸⁴⁷ Greater trouble was taken in dealing with the incorporated companies of Exeter: the merchant adventurers, tailors, cordwainers, brewers, joiners, carpenters, painters, bakers and helliers were all called upon to display their charters of privilege and their minute books.¹⁸⁴⁸ Even John Hooker's commonplace book – 'the ancient great manuscript of Mr Hooker's' – was dragged out of the city archives to settle one matter of controversy.¹⁸⁴⁹

Nonetheless, it is difficult to escape the impression that the civil lawyers of the county, and in particular the staff of the diocesan administration, were singled out for special attention. Despite the large number of prominent persons named as commissioners in 1628, the administrative and investigative burden soon fell upon a caucus of enthusiasts numbering no more than ten and often fewer than six. This was quite permissible and indeed was invariably the practice where large governmental commissions were concerned. Local notables would be included on such bodies more out of deference to their standing in the community than from an expectation that they would play a full and active part in proceedings.¹⁸⁵⁰

In fact, those who dominated the affairs of the Devon sub-commissioners on exacted fees were drawn from the mercantile and patrician classes of the city of Exeter. This was no mere coincidence. They comprised a pressure group whose most active members were Thomas Bridgeman, John Acland (mayor of Exeter in 1628), Adam Bennett, John Levermore and John Hakewill.¹⁸⁵¹ Acland, Bennett and Levermore were also named as commissioners in 1638

¹⁸⁴⁵ TNA, C.181/5, fos. 109v-10.

¹⁸⁴⁶ TNA, E.215/1335-62.

¹⁸⁴⁷ TNA, E.215/1491-1525.

¹⁸⁴⁸ TNA, E.215/1466-71.

¹⁸⁴⁹ TNA, E.215/1360.

¹⁸⁵⁰ R Lockyer, *Tudor and Stuart Britain 1471-1714* (2nd edn., 1985), p. 308.

¹⁸⁵¹ TNA, E.215/1329, p. 1.

and the last two together with another prominent Exonian, Alan Penny, headed the inquiry into the affairs of Joseph Martyn.¹⁸⁵²

However, it is Thomas Bridgeman whom we must concentrate upon. Bridgeman was also one of the London commissioners, an important fact given that he had a long-standing grudge to work off.¹⁸⁵³ He, in fact, enjoyed close, though scarcely harmonious ties with the Exeter diocesan administration, being the second son of Jasper Bridgeman who had practised as a proctor in the consistory court for some forty years, from the mid 1570s until his death in 1617.¹⁸⁵⁴ Like several of his colleagues, Jasper was a pluralist office-holder: he was a commissioner for piracy in Devon and served as registrar of the Devon vice-admiralty court.¹⁸⁵⁵ Earlier, at the start of his long career in 1578, he had gained the registrarship of the archdeaconry of Exeter from his friend, Robert Fisher, the then archdeacon.¹⁸⁵⁶ Eight years later, Jasper secured a reversionary grant of the office for his eldest son, Simon, from Fysher's successor, Thomas Barrett, Woolton's son-in-law.¹⁸⁵⁷

However, Simon never became registrar. Within a matter of weeks of Jasper's death in May 1617, Barrett had made a joint life grant of the office to his own son, Thomas, and William Kifte, a proctor of the consistory court.¹⁸⁵⁸ Kifte was probably the moving spirit. He wanted to be registrar and so offered an inducement to Barrett. This would explain why a joint grant was made. Barrett junior was not a notary public and therefore could not serve as registrar. Nonetheless, Kifte was to pay him a pension of £52.00 each year.¹⁸⁵⁹ Understandably the Bridgemans were far from pleased. They got Archbishop Abbot to write to the Exeter dean and chapter and this prevented the confirmation of Barrett's grant.¹⁸⁶⁰ The Bridgemans also refused to return the muniments of the archdeaconry registry which had fallen into their hands upon their father's death.¹⁸⁶¹

¹⁸⁵² TNA, C.181/5, fos. 109v-10; see above, p. 245.

¹⁸⁵³ TNA, E.215/1365.

¹⁸⁵⁴ DHC, CC.142, Martyn *c.* Rees; Chanter 790, *sub* 30 Apr. 1617, Erick c. Trregeo; ECA, D&C.3601, fos. 23v-4.

¹⁸⁵⁵ TNA, C.181/1, fos. 61v-2, 82v-3; C.181/2, fos. 52, 175, 200v-1, 242.

¹⁸⁵⁶ TNA, Chanter 20, fo. 45v; TNA, REQ.2/178/86.

¹⁸⁵⁷ TNA, Chanter 21, fos. 33v-5v.

¹⁸⁵⁸ ECA, D&C.3601, fos. 23v-4.

¹⁸⁵⁹ TNA, E.215/1329, p. 27.

¹⁸⁶⁰ ECA, D&C.3553, fo. 69.

¹⁸⁶¹ DHC, CC.181/6(b), 1-2.

This forced Barrett and Kifte to bring an action in the court of Chancery.¹⁸⁶² They could not properly carry out their duties until the missing records had been returned. The court sympathised with them and ordered that the Bridgemans surrender the various act books and wills in their possession.¹⁸⁶³ When Thomas Bridgeman refused, Bishop Cotton and certain justices of Exeter were empowered to enter Bridgeman's house and seize the documents.¹⁸⁶⁴ This they did, but in the spring of 1619, some twenty-one months after the start of the case, Bridgeman managed to persuade the court that a miscarriage of justice had taken place and in consequence another order was issued requiring the re-delivery of the muniments to Bridgeman.¹⁸⁶⁵ A writ of sequestration was also granted which meant that the profits of the office of registrar were to be paid over to him.¹⁸⁶⁶

This led to a further round of litigation in Chancery.¹⁸⁶⁷ Kifte rushed to the court to argue that no miscarriage of justice had occurred and that the original order should stand. It was now that the key issue of possession of the registrarship was raised. The court found for Barrett and Kifte as the Bridgemans were unable to show cause why the more recent grant should not prevail.¹⁸⁶⁸ Very probably the case turned on whether Simon Bridgeman had earlier resigned the registrarship. Barrett and Kifte argued that he had. Possibly the Bridgemans were simply being obstructive, for there were deeper issues underlying the struggle for the registrarship than just pure greed. The theme of religious conservatism in the cathedral close was once again rearing its head. In their bill of complaint to Chancery, Barrett and Kifte insinuated that the Bridgemans were catholic recusants.¹⁸⁶⁹

Certainly some sort of case can be made out for suggesting that the rivalry over the registrarship was part of an implicit struggle within the Exeter diocesan administration between so-called 'old' and 'new' elements. The Bridgemans were associated with the world of Bradbridge: they were not firmly part of the mature Church of England. They were at best *politiques* and at worst secret catholics who 'did not repair to divine service according to the laws of the realm'.¹⁸⁷⁰ By contrast, Barrett and Kifte were very much

¹⁸⁶² *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁶⁹ *Ibid.*; see above, pp. 141-55.

¹⁸⁷⁰ DHC, CC.181/6(b), 1-2. It is worthwhile noting that John Bridgeman, the progressive Caroline bishop of Chester, was Jasper Bridgeman's nephew.

part of the new order, Barrett obviously so because of his ties with Woolton, Kifte more because he espoused the hard-hitting rapaciousness characteristic of the generation of court personnel who emerged towards the end of the sixteenth century.¹⁸⁷¹

It is perhaps further evidence of this 'ideological clash' that shortly after the ending of the Chancery suit Kifte was in trouble with Bishop Cotton for attempting to exercise his office during the period of an episcopal visitation.¹⁸⁷² 'New' men such as Kifte were necessary for the promotion of ecclesiastical justice in the south-west but they were always likely to go off on their own tack. Their loyalty was ultimately to themselves especially if they gained an office whose powers trenched upon those of the bishop. The Bridgemans were quick to exploit this rift between Kifte and Cotton. They became supporters of 'episcopal absolutism' in the sense that they sought to use letters inhibitory from the consistory to prevent yet again the dean and chapter from confirming the patent of office that Barrett had granted to his son and Kifte.¹⁸⁷³ This, however, was very much a last ditch stand, for earlier Kifte had presented clear evidence of Simon Bridgeman's resignation to the canons.¹⁸⁷⁴ In any event the chapter was unlikely to respond favourably to an intervention by the bishop's court especially after the affair of the 1616 Composition. Thus the canons resolved to ignore the inhibition, declaring that the diocesan chancellor was not empowered to meddle in their affairs.¹⁸⁷⁵ William Hellyer once more came to the fore and lent his weight to Barrett and Kifte's cause.¹⁸⁷⁶

So the Bridgemans had to accept defeat. But, as has been suggested, they were to have the last laugh. Responsibility for the appointment of local commissions on exacted fees lay with the London commissioners.¹⁸⁷⁷ In the light of what has gone before, it seems reasonable to suppose that Thomas Bridgeman was the driving force behind the establishment of the Devon sub-commission. Certainly he would know all about the opportunities for graft available to the staff of the Exeter church courts. Indeed, it had probably been his intention to be a beneficiary. Moreover, Bridgeman would know whom to include on the list of sub-commissioners. Being a member of the Exeter city elites, his cause would find a ready-made constituency, especially

¹⁸⁷¹ See below, pp. 252-61.

¹⁸⁷² DHC, CC.181/6(a), 1.

¹⁸⁷³ DHC, CC.181/6(b), 1.

¹⁸⁷⁴ ECA, D&C.3553, fo. 90.

¹⁸⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, fo 90v.

¹⁸⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, fo. 93v.

¹⁸⁷⁷ Aylmer, 'Commission on Fees', p. 60.

given the age-old rivalry of the cathedral and city authorities.¹⁸⁷⁸ The arrival of John Dibley in the autumn of 1628 marked the beginning of the Bridgeman's revenge. Suddenly the spotlight of public attention was turned upon the affairs of the Exeter diocesan administration and for a brief moment at least they became something of a cause celebre.

Bridgeman had certainly chosen his target well, for it was during the 1620s that the church courts of the south-west were at their most rapacious. The problem can be linked to Barnaby Goche's appointment as diocesan chancellor in 1616.¹⁸⁷⁹ Goche sanctioned a number of fee increases and this seems to have had a snow-balling effect whereby a spirit of self-help and enterprise was allowed to develop throughout the hierarchy of the Exeter church courts.¹⁸⁸⁰ It was as if a spring had suddenly been released. And certainly there was much justifiable pressure to raise fees. Elizabeth's reign had seen the peak of the Tudor inflation.¹⁸⁸¹ But the fees levied by the local spiritual tribunals had remained more or less static. In fact the sums exacted approximated well to the two 'national' scales of charges imposed during the sixteenth century, the 1529 statute regulating the fees levied for grants of probate and letters of administration and Whitgift's table of charges of 1597, which dealt with a further range of exactions likely to be faced by suitors of the church courts.¹⁸⁸²

However, this is not an entirely satisfactory guide to what was happening under Elizabeth. The great problem with the 1529 and 1597 scales of charges was that they were insufficiently detailed.¹⁸⁸³ For example, it was unclear what the probate fee payable to the registrar under the terms of the 1529 act covered. Did it only apply to the actual process of registration? If so, the registrar might well feel entitled to charge extra for a parchment exemplification of the will, the wax for sealing it, or the certificate of probate.¹⁸⁸⁴ Dealing with the most valuable estates, the act accorded the registrar discretion to charge a flat rate for registration or a variable sum

¹⁸⁷⁸ M C Curtis, *Some Disputes between the City and the Cathedral Authorities of Exeter* (Manchester, 1932), *passim*.

¹⁸⁷⁹ ECA, D&C.3553, fo. 58v.

¹⁸⁸⁰ TNA, E.215/1369, pp. 57-8, 66.

¹⁸⁸¹ R B Outhwaite, *Inflation in Tudor and Early Stuart England* (1969), p. 11.

¹⁸⁸² TNA, E.215/1169A; E.135/9/14; DHC, CC.151/BOX 150, process, Neg. Appeal Bickford *c.* Harte, fos. 71v-94; R Burn, *Ecclesiastical law* (2 vols., 1763), i. 562-4; Kitching, 'The Prerogative Court of Canterbury from Warham to Whitgift', in *Continuity and Change*, ed. O'Day and Heal, pp. 191-214, at p. 213.

¹⁸⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 208-11.

¹⁸⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 209.

depending on the length of the document.¹⁸⁸⁵ The same charges were authorized for copying wills as for registering them.¹⁸⁸⁶ Registrars, therefore, had ample opportunity to raise the same money as before the act while adhering to the letter of the law. The same shortcoming existed with Whitgift's table of charges. The list was by no means exhaustive, especially with regard to those items of expenditure likely to be incurred by litigants in civil actions before the church courts.

And indeed with the great expansion in the work-loads of ecclesiastical bureaucracies during the latter half of the sixteenth century there was excellent scope for the levels of income of court personnel to rise significantly. The determination of litigants to pursue matters to the bitter end contributed to the growing complexity and verbosity of actions.¹⁸⁸⁷ In addition, more people had more to leave in their wills: this too made for lengthier documents and provided ample opportunity for legal argument. To this extent it could be said that contemporaries had a point when they began to inquire into rises in the level of fees charged. A wide range of charges could, in the view of the average layman, be expected to offset any need to increase the amounts exacted from clients and suitors.

But alas the situation was not quite so simple. As we noted earlier, rising levels of business encouraged, if they did not necessitate, bureaucratic reorganisation.¹⁸⁸⁸ In particular, more people were needed to man the central diocesan administration. Admittedly church courts always supported a floating population of scribes and *litterati* who performed a variety of minor but important tasks associated with the everyday work of the spiritual tribunals.¹⁸⁸⁹ Most would probably be apprenticed to the regular court personnel. Certainly proctors had indentured clerks to assist them in their duties.¹⁸⁹⁰ In due course these underlings would themselves become practising lawyers and take on youths to educate them in the ways of the spiritual tribunals.¹⁸⁹¹ Superficially this was the situation at Exeter in the early years of the seventeenth century. But there had been an important development: rising business levels had led to a greater degree of stratification within the hierarchy of the episcopal bureaucracy. One

¹⁸⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁸⁷ See Table 6.

¹⁸⁸⁸ See above, pp. 222-24.

¹⁸⁸⁹ eg CRO, ARD/3, fo. 142; DHC, Chanter 791, sub 16 June 1617.

¹⁸⁹⁰ TNA, PROB.11/60, fo. 262; ECA, D&C.4626/1/5.

¹⁸⁹¹ DHC, Chanter 779, sub 22 Sept. 1561; TNA, PROB.11/60, fo. 262; DHC, CC.142, Mendus *c.* Whitwaye.

consequence of this was the emergence of a middle-tier of court personnel who did not occupy designated posts as such but who nonetheless were more substantial in terms of status than mere scribes or *litterati*.

The evidence taken by the commissioners on exacted fees is especially revealing here. At the time when the sub-commissioners began their inquiries, the offices of principal and consistory court registrar were held by Robert Michell junior and Bernard Periam respectively.¹⁸⁹² Immediately below them was a group of four individuals: Edward Michell (who was probably Robert's son), Henry Rowcliffe, Nicholas Streete and George Trobridge.¹⁸⁹³ Michell and Trobridge worked mainly in the principal registry whilst Rowcliffe and Streete spent the majority of their time in the consistory registry.¹⁸⁹⁴ Rowcliffe's job was to maintain the instance act books of the court. Streete, meanwhile, looked after the *libri ex officio*.¹⁸⁹⁵

Tensions and rivalries within the episcopal administration greatly helped the growing importance of 'the four'. Rising business levels almost inevitably distanced registrars from their registries. This in turn encouraged sinecurists to seek office. Periam was one of these. He already held half a share of the registrarship of the archdeaconry of Totnes when he gained the consistory post in 1624.¹⁸⁹⁶ This was the year in which Robert Michell senior died.¹⁸⁹⁷ Since William Germyn's death in 1595, Michell senior had held both the principal and consistory registrarships.¹⁸⁹⁸ It was his intention that his son, Robert junior, should succeed to them.¹⁸⁹⁹ But when the time came Robert junior found his path blocked by Chancellor Goche who wanted his client John Baldwin to become consistory court registrar.¹⁹⁰⁰ After six months of wrangling a compromise of sorts was arranged. Periam would take the title of registrar but Streete would do the work of the office.¹⁹⁰¹ Meanwhile, Baldwin intruded himself into the episcopal bureaucracy by proclaiming himself sealkeeper to the chancellor and by maintaining 'a book of informations' for the consistory.¹⁹⁰²

¹⁸⁹² DHC, Chanter 798, *sub* 20 Feb. 1623/4; ECA, D&C.3601, fo. 43.

¹⁸⁹³ TNA, E.215/1329, pp. 8, 38, 47, 75; ECA, D&C.4626/5/3.

¹⁸⁹⁴ DHC, CC.181/65/1.

¹⁸⁹⁵ ECA, D&C.4626/2/2; TNA, E.215/1329, p. 19.

¹⁸⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

¹⁸⁹⁷ DHC, Chanter 798, *sub* 16 Feb 1623/4.

¹⁸⁹⁸ DHC, Chanter 21, fo. 57v; Chanter 782, fo. 1; Chanter 40, fo. 11v.

¹⁸⁹⁹ DHC, CC.5/541.

¹⁹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*; Chanter 1189a.

¹⁹⁰¹ ECA, D&C.3553, fos. 121v-22v; D&C.3601, fos. 40v-1; TNA, E.215/1329, p. 65.

¹⁹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 19; E.215/1375.

Ultimately, Michell junior was the loser. Baldwin established himself as Streete's master and so in practice gained control of the registrarship.¹⁹⁰³ Was this a wholly bad thing? Obviously Michell thought so because he stood to lose financially. But to other in less exalted positions the advent of an absentee registrar was to be welcomed, for the prospect of the deputy retaining a proportion of the profits of the office beckoned. This was certainly true for the registrarships of the archdeaconries of the south-west. Periam's partner at Totnes was William Sherman, a London notary public.¹⁹⁰⁴ Sherman had been quick to appreciate the investment potential of registrarships. When William Bruton died in 1608 he made a bid for the Totnes office on the grounds that Bruton's claim to be registrar was imperfect at law.¹⁹⁰⁵ Archbishop Abbot supported Sherman and commanded the Exeter dean and chapter not to seal a new patent of office unless it was in favour of his nominee.¹⁹⁰⁶ Once Sherman had got a toe-hold in the south-west he extended his influence to the archdeaconries of Exeter and Cornwall.¹⁹⁰⁷

Sherman naturally sought competent deputies to do the work of the registrarships. Robert White, a consistory proctor, oversaw the Exeter and Totnes posts; Obadiah Reynolds did duty in Cornwall.¹⁹⁰⁸ In return a formal agreement was framed which allowed the deputies to retain a share of the revenues of office.¹⁹⁰⁹ But was this all? There would always be a temptation to make the most of their opportunities. Lack of oversight could well encourage underlings to behave irresponsibly. Certainly William Kifte did not scruple to demand high or novel fees from litigants and suitors in the court of the archdeacon of Exeter.¹⁹¹⁰ And Baldwin was also accused of being a notorious exactor by witnesses before the sub-commissioners in 1628-9.¹⁹¹¹ His post of sealkeeper was nothing more than a means of demanding money from the clientele of the consistory.

Set in this context, Goche's decision to increase several of the charges imposed by the diocesan administration appears not so much opportunistic as pragmatic. Certainly there was some justification for his action. The table

¹⁹⁰³ TNA, E.215/1329, pp. 2-3.

¹⁹⁰⁴ ECA, D&C.3601, fo. 34.

¹⁹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, fo. 1.

¹⁹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*; D&C.3553, fo. 7.

¹⁹⁰⁷ *CSPD*, 1655-56, p. 8.

¹⁹⁰⁸ DHC, CC.3c/BOX 8, oath of admission; DHC, CC.152/BOX 152, process, Off. Prom. Horne *c.* Wood, fo. 58v; TNA, E.215/1329, p. 89; CRO, ARD/6, fo. 30v; DHC, CC.152/151, process, Honicombe *c.* Hearle, fo. 2v.

¹⁹⁰⁹ TNA, E.215/1329, p. 89.

¹⁹¹⁰ TNA, E.215/1388.

¹⁹¹¹ TNA, E.215/1375.

of fees which existed at the start of the seventeenth century made little allowance for the remuneration of the lesser officers of church court registries. At best they assumed that the registrar would provide for an assistant out of his own receipts.¹⁹¹² This was all right when business levels were modest and when the registries were less populated. But the position in the early seventeenth century required a more equitable solution. Unfortunately Goche's remedy proved to be ill-founded. In essence his aim seems to have been to tap the rising wealth of the population of the southwest. Again this was not entirely unreasonable. Those who could pay more should do so. The problem was that, given the growing freedom of lesser officials, the upper and middle classes might be over-exploited. The line between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour could all too easily be transgressed and latent anticlericalism amongst the elites given its head in consequence.

And this was indeed what happened. During the later middle ages the church courts had gained a place of the utmost importance in the social fabric.¹⁹¹³ They were popular because their concerns were 'populist': they tackled those issues which most exercised the minds of the lower orders. But things changed in the sixteenth century. Clearly the break with Rome undermined the courts' credibility. But more profound was the impact of population growth and price inflation. In the short term (as we have seen) these forces helped the courts to recover their vigour.¹⁹¹⁴ But in the longer term they altered the tribunals' social base. Late medieval society comprised (in essence) a handful of wealthy individuals and a large mass of unprosperous peasants. By the beginning of the seventeenth century wealth had become more dispersed. In addition to nobles and gentlemen there were burgeoning yeomen and bourgeoisie. At the same time poverty had increased sharply.¹⁹¹⁵ This presented the church courts with a dilemma. Their natural constituency had disintegrated. With their personnel feeling the pinch of inflation, it became a matter of necessity as well as common sense to target their energies upon those groups in society aspiring to join the ranks of the elites.

Certainly the prominent role played by members of the Exeter commercial classes in the attack on the local diocesan courts cannot be explained purely in terms of private malice. There was also a clash of cultures and values.

¹⁹¹² TNA, E.215/1169A; E.135/9/14; DHC, CC.151/BOX 150, process, Neg. Appeal Bickford *c. Harte*.

¹⁹¹³ Woodcock, *Medieval Ecclesiastical Courts*, *passim*.

¹⁹¹⁴ See above, p. 222.

¹⁹¹⁵ Lockyer, *Tudor and Stuart Britain*, pp. 120-7.

Many of the witnesses brought before the sub-commissioners to complain about extortion and corruption were inhabitants of the city.¹⁹¹⁶ And, what is more, their complaints had substance to them. Take, for example, the fees levied for licences to marry. There were, in fact, two types of licence. One allowed couples to wed without the reading of the banns: at the beginning of the seventeenth century this cost anything from 13s 4d (67p) to 24s (£1.20).¹⁹¹⁷ The other enabled marriages to be celebrated during the forbidden seasons of Advent and Lent: this normally fetched 3s 4d (17p).¹⁹¹⁸ However, following Goche's arrival in the south-west all marriage licences were priced at 26s (£1.30).¹⁹¹⁹ Of this the chancellor received 10s. The rest went to the principal registrar, his assistants and the bishop's apparitor-general.¹⁹²⁰ Clearly this was an attempt to cash in on fashion. Marriage licences were invariably sought by the well-to-do.¹⁹²¹ Now the socially ambitious were being made to pay for their snobbery.

Further examples of 'targeting' can be seen in the civil and criminal work of the consistory. The cost of citations *ad instantiam* had also risen following Goche's appointment. Prior to 1616 it had been customary for litigants to pay 6d (2.5p) for citations containing one to four names and 12d (5p) for a *quorum nomina*.¹⁹²² (These sums were divided equally between the chancellor and the court registrar).¹⁹²³ After 1616 the charge was 6d for every name and no *quorum nomina* were granted.¹⁹²⁴ As before the price increase most favoured the registrar's assistants. They were now affordable. Equally Goche and the others must have been conscious of the extent of the consistory's civil business. Certainly they were aware that an increasing number of actions were vexatious in character.¹⁹²⁵ Streete and Edward Michell later deposed to the sub-commissioners that the new fee structure for citations was waived 'if the parties proceed and the sentence [is] put in execution by taxation of the judge'.¹⁹²⁶ They could afford to do this for the charges levied in the course of an action which endured to its judicial

¹⁹¹⁶ TNA, E.215/1329, *passim*.

¹⁹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

¹⁹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 50-1.

¹⁹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

¹⁹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

¹⁹²¹ *The Marriage Licences of the Diocese of Exeter from the Bishops' Registers*, ed. J Vivian (3 parts, Exeter, 1887-9), *passim*.

¹⁹²² TNA, E.215/1329, pp. 38, 50-1, 56.

¹⁹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

¹⁹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 57; see also Table 6 and above, p. 223.

¹⁹²⁶ TNA, E.215/1541a.

conclusion would be substantially more than the money received from the serving of a summons.

But it was the consistory's newly established criminal jurisdiction which revealed the profit motive at its most severe. Earlier in this chapter mention was made of the role of apparitors in drumming up business for the court¹⁹²⁷. This can now be reinforced. Two files relating to *ex officio mero* prosecutions before the consistory have survived for the mid 1620s.¹⁹²⁸ Amongst other things they contain the letters which apparitors sent to the registry staff at Exeter.¹⁹²⁹ These writings make abundantly clear the central role which the court's messengers played in the enforcement of ecclesiastical discipline in the south-west. Indeed, the consistory specifically acknowledged two procedures for dealing with suspected wrongdoers: one for malefactors presented by their minister or wardens: another for persons denounced by an apparitor ('or some other without presentment').¹⁹³⁰ The distinction seems to have lain in the rigour of the court's questioning. When accused by an apparitor it was often harder (and more expensive) for the suspect to gain his or her freedom.¹⁹³¹

The correspondence backs this up. Seemingly apparitors specialised in bringing instances of sexual incontinence before the court. Of course, they were ideally placed to hear village gossip. Each of the diocese's thirty-two deaneries was allotted one consistory apparitor. In effect these men were doing the job of the rural deans.¹⁹³² As was mentioned earlier, sloth amongst the clergy of the south-west had led to the office of rural dean becoming little more than a sinecure.¹⁹³³ Its functions were performed by the consistory apparitors who were officially recognised as the rural deans' deputies.¹⁹³⁴ The development of a regular office jurisdiction at Exeter did much to enhance the importance of the apparitors. The problem was that success went to their heads.

By instinct apparitors were men of the world. Their basic task of delivering citations was not a pleasant one: violence could easily be visited upon them

¹⁹²⁷ See above, p. 228.

¹⁹²⁸ DHC, CC.134; CC.170. For a description of these files, see my 'The Records of the Bishop of Exeter's Consistory Court c1500-c1600', *RTDA*, 114 (1982), pp. 94-5.

¹⁹²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 94-5.

¹⁹³⁰ TNA, E.215/1329, p. 35.

¹⁹³¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹³² DHC, Chanter 779, fos. 48-51.

¹⁹³³ See above, pp. 8-9.

¹⁹³⁴ DHC, Chanter 1692.

as bearers of bad tidings.¹⁹³⁵ Not surprisingly, therefore, apparitors were resilient and resourceful. Their job entailed risks; they would thus make it worth their while. The rise of the consistory as a disciplinary court was convenient to say the least. For this development to succeed active apparitors would be required. They would have to overcome the summoners of the archidiaconal courts if the office business of the consistory were to flourish. The rural deans' deputies were thus a fundamental part of the process of administrative change in the south-west. This, of course, enabled them to name their price and that price was the heavy fees they exacted for their labours.

Following Goche's reforms, a consistory court apparitor got 16d (7p) for delivering a citation, decree, excommunication, suspension, or other mandate in the county of Devon and 2s (10p) if the cause originated in Cornwall.¹⁹³⁶ In addition, apparitors received 2s for every commutation of penance granted by the consistory.¹⁹³⁷ Bearing in mind the size of the court's work-load in the 1620s, these were far from negligible sums and it is worth recalling that Whitgift's table of fees had set 4d (2p) as the appropriate sum for delivering a citation¹⁹³⁸. Certainly the charges bore down heavily on defendants especially given that apparitors' fees were only one component in a bill of costs. Thus William Gover of Buckerell (Devon) was charged 12s (60p) when he appeared before the consistory in 1624.¹⁹³⁹ The two biggest items of expenditure were the articles of interrogation which cost 3s 4d (17p) and the act of dismissal which was priced at 5s 6d (27.5p). The judge, registrar and assistants would divide up these fees. The bad thing from the defendant's point of view was that these were 'compulsory' charges levied upon guilty and innocent alike.¹⁹⁴⁰ Naturally complaints began to circulate about the ethics of the court staff. Were they not prosecuting people simply to relieve them of their wealth?

This might well be regarded as no more than partisan grumbling were it not for the survival of the apparitors' correspondence. From these letters it is clear that there was a conspiracy between the apparitors and members of the consistory staff, notably John Baldwin and his servant Nicholas Streete, to pick upon 'better off' suspects precisely because of their ability to pay for

¹⁹³⁵ DHC, CC.3b/69.

¹⁹³⁶ Bodl. Lib., Additional B.4, p. 22.

¹⁹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁹³⁸ Burn, *Ecclesiastical Law*, i. 564.

¹⁹³⁹ DHC, CC.134.

¹⁹⁴⁰ M J Ingram, *Church Courts, Sex and Marriage in England, 1570-1640* (Cambridge, 1987), p. 55.

their freedom. John Bettye, who operated in central Cornwall, seems to have been especially brazen about the whole business.¹⁹⁴¹ It is worth quoting at length from his correspondence. The following comes from a letter he wrote to Streete in the summer of 1623.¹⁹⁴² He reports that he has lately cited a woman from St Stephen-in-Brannel who 'is begat with child [but] will name no father'.

I pray let her be excommunicated this day, There is one Mr Anthony Corrie Vicar of St Stephen wh[o] is greatly suspected with her. If you write him a letter to that purpose he will bleed. I give it you for your good. Keep it to yourself until I speak with you.....I have cited Mr Oliver Morton of Stithians to appear at the next consistory court for he is noted with Tamsin Tucker of Feock. She is his tenant. He is desirous to answer it an Perran[zabuloe]. I did tell him when I cited him the matter was with Mr Baker (probably one of the surrogate judges of the consistory) who would have ended with him at his coming at Perran[zabuloe]. I will get the name of his servant who I think he cannot free himself for her.....William Betty (a kinsman and fellow apparitor) hath cited Nicholas Coll of St Breock to be here at Padstow this day for that he did beget Mr Symons' servant with child.....[H]e must pay soundly before he [?is freed] as Mr Symons saith he is an usurer and rich. I owe him some monies which Mr Symons saith he shall free me of the same and shall pay well beside. I pray you forget me not in it when he come to compound. I have many other things to talk with you for your good when I meet with you.

By the time that we meet Bettye again this mercenary disposition had become well-known. Thus he complains to Baldwin that

At the last court I was turned away without process which disgrace it may be you think I make great profit to myself but I protest before God I have not taken any man's money since you were at Padstow but only a thirty shillings of Braye of St Endellion which I entreated you for at my last being with you at Chudleigh and the same money will I pay you before the next court.....I found out a business against one Robert Hernan of Launceston, a sergeant, for he is noted with Constance Hocker of [St] Breock by Wadebridge. She is dwelling in the peculiar by me. I did cite her to be here this court since which time I see you have discharged them both. For her part I know her to be worth a hundred and fifty pounds and would have given me money to have freed her. I cited Henry Penhaligen of St Issey to appear this court which process was executed upon the church door in the presence of this bearer who will make faith thereof if you please for I have sent him [to] you [for] a purpose. I have sent you for Richard Tamlyn of [St] Mabyn and his widow Robins whom he were to marry nine shillings (45p) for their states until the next court for I could not get the parson of [St] Mabyn to publish the excommunication but kept it still in his hands that I could not have the excommunication to be published in [St] Breock against Robert Randall but if you please to send me

¹⁹⁴¹ DHC, CC.134; CC.170.

¹⁹⁴² DHC, CC.134.

a new excommunication against Randall it shall be done. I have cited Parson Ducke of [St] Mabyn to be here this court.....I have found you a fatter bullock than he I brought to Padstow to you. His name is John Martin of St Breock, a man worth two thousand pounds. He is faulty and he shall not deny it. It shall be proved against him the very times and places. The woman is of my name, Betty. It shall be for your good and not a little, but I must not be seen in it, being they are kin unto me both.....¹⁹⁴³

Bettye evidently believe that he was doing a good job. And in his own terms he undoubtedly was and so, too, were his fellow apparitors. Their letters, if less detailed, are equally eloquent as to the degree to which money and fee-taking dominated apparitorial thinking. Thus Francis Huchenson, who policed the deanery of Kenn near to Exeter, sought Streete's advice over Thomas Fletcher of Whitestone. Fletcher had allegedly made a female parishioner pregnant but 'steadfastly den[ied] it'.¹⁹⁴⁴ His father offered to give 10s (50p) to have his son free of the court 'but more he will not give so you may use your mind for I think the justices have them both in hand. So if that may serve send me word and I will tell his father and send you his answer so'.¹⁹⁴⁵

Bartering of this kind inevitably brought forth complaints. John Powe of Marwood in north Devon was being less than forthright when he

did cite Susan Hammant of Winkleigh and threaten her to receive some money of her and he would discharge her again. Whereupon the said Susan having received great wrong at his hands for that he did cite her she being without any cause to be punished.....she did request [Powe] that he would dismiss her if possible he could for the great wrong that he did show unto her, but he did so much threaten her to have money that she was greatly afraid of him concerning the grudges and requiring of money of her she did pay unto him the sum of three shillings and four pence (17p) and he did promise to discharge her again.¹⁹⁴⁶

Episodes such as this lend weight to the accusation levelled against George Parry, Bishop Hall's chancellor, that he 'had abused the power of excommunication for the sake of the fees'.¹⁹⁴⁷ According to the same source, over a thousand excommunications were sent forth from the consistory in 1627.¹⁹⁴⁸ Money would have to change hands before those named on the court's schedules could 'gain their states'. The problem was that at least some of these excommunications – precisely how many it is impossible to tell

¹⁹⁴³ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁴⁴ DHC, CC.170.

¹⁹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁴⁶ DHC, CC.134.

¹⁹⁴⁷ TNA, SP.16/178/27.

¹⁹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

– resulted from the refusal (or inability) of the defendants to pay their fees of citation, examination and dismissal. Thus persons found innocent of the crimes imputed to them could nonetheless be judged as malefactors by the court. Certainly portions of each of the two *ex officio mero* files are devoted to letters sent into the consistory by ministers on behalf of parishioners wronged by the law.¹⁹⁴⁹

Thus the vicar of Uplozman was concerned about a poor almswoman who had stood excommunicate almost a year 'for want of means to fetch her state'.¹⁹⁵⁰ 'Upon her confession I could not find her any way culpable of the crime she was accused of'.¹⁹⁵¹ Maybe she had been the victim of apparitorial malice as Jane Pasmore of Tiverton seems to have been. 'Her father's desire and mine', (writes the minister), 'is that she may have her state again and that we may now wherefore she was excommunicated for.....she was never cited, nor summoned'.¹⁹⁵² Evidently it was all too easy for villagers to find themselves 'outlawed'. The rector of Widworthy managed to persuade one of his congregation to submit to the court's censure and thereupon asked that

She may have her estate because Hurford (the apparitor) for a year or two since cited her and when she appeared she was never called and she thought that Hurford would play some such trick with her, therefore she refused to appear when her name was now hanged in the church door.¹⁹⁵³

A recent study of the church courts of Elizabethan and early Stuart Wiltshire has similarly pointed to a degree of administrative slackness in the decade leading up to the outbreak of the Civil War.¹⁹⁵⁴ This, however, seems to have been caused by a compositional change in the disciplinary work of the tribunals. Cases of sexual incontinence, which had hitherto formed the backbone of the courts' criminal business, began to decline in number during the 1620s.¹⁹⁵⁵ Officers were thus obliged to pursue crimes of a less popular nature, such as Sabbath-breaking and working on religious holidays, in order to recoup the fees that they had lost and thus ultimately denied them the support of parishioners.¹⁹⁵⁶ To a certain extent, therefore, the courts were becoming obsolete.¹⁹⁵⁷

¹⁹⁴⁹ DHC, CC.134; CC.170.

¹⁹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁵³ DHC, CC.134.

¹⁹⁵⁴ Ingram, *Church Courts*, pp. 67-9, 362-3.

¹⁹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 371.

¹⁹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 371-2.

¹⁹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

Clearly the widespread antipathy towards ecclesiastical justice in the years 1640-2 needs to be explained¹⁹⁵⁸. But was this unpopularity merely the produce of short-term factors, a fatal mixture of Laudianism and lassitude? The evidence presented here suggests that administrative slackness in the south-west had deeper roots. Biological and attitudinal changes may well have been factors in the piratical behaviour of court officials and apparitors. But, arguably, they do not provide a sufficient context for the discoveries made by the royal commissioners on exacted fees. Rather these factors worsened an already grave situation that had been induced by the important and substantial developments associated with the revitalisation of episcopal government in the post-Reformation period.

¹⁹⁵⁸ A Fletcher, *The Outbreak of the English Civil War* (1981), pp. 91-124.

Conclusion

At first sight the early sixteenth and seventeenth centuries have much in common as far as ecclesiastical history is concerned. On the eve of the break with Rome the English Church was also busy reforming itself. Yet it was doing so in a half-hearted, uninspired fashion. The initiatives that a bishop like Hugh Oldham pursued are rightly to be commended.¹⁹⁵⁹ But they failed to change the character of later medieval religion. The sort of spiritual leadership that humanist critics called for did not emerge. Instead diocesans contented themselves with piecemeal reforms which sought to make the most of an imperfect system.¹⁹⁶⁰ Faced by heresy and fearful of lay animosity, they had no desire to challenge centuries-old practices.¹⁹⁶¹ They refused to break the mould of ecclesiastical government. Consequently the Church remained a corporation in which money spoke loudest. Doctrine continued to be subservient to the needs of a vast and unremitting bureaucracy. Ultimately a 'good works' theology was no match for the forces of the Cromwellian state. The speed with which the break with Rome was accomplished bore eloquent testimony to the profound emptiness that characterised late medieval religious life.¹⁹⁶²

Of course, in the 1530s idealists and politicians were very much at one. The schism served to unite rather than divide. Nonetheless, it was not long before differences began to emerge. The Church had been humbled by the state. Its wealth was made captive to the needs of the crown. And those needs chimed ill with the godly aspirations of the idealists. True reformers found themselves in a cleft stick. They relied on the political classes for support. But those classes were currently being bought off by the government through the dispersal of ecclesiastical wealth.¹⁹⁶³ Not surprisingly, therefore, the protestant reformation misfired. Starved of resources, both human and material, the cause of godliness became marginalised.

¹⁹⁵⁹ See above, pp. 13-6.

¹⁹⁶⁰ This is obviously a personal impression gained from my own researches and from reading S J Lander, 'The Diocese of Chichester 1508-1558: Episcopal Reform under Robert Shirburne and its Aftermath', Cambridge PhD thesis (1974); F M Heal, 'The Bishops of Ely and their Diocese during the Reformation Period c1515-1600', Cambridge PhD thesis (1972); M Bowker, *The Henrician Reformation: the Diocese of Lincoln under John Longland 1521-1547* (Cambridge, 1981).

¹⁹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁶² The sense of urgency is best conveyed by G R Elton, *Reform and Reformation: England 1509-1558* (1977).

¹⁹⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 230-49.

The 1559 religious settlement testified to this. Elizabeth was of necessity bound to frame a settlement which enveloped Calvinist doctrine in a shroud of late medieval ecclesiology.¹⁹⁶⁴ Supremely the package offered something to everyone. This, paradoxically, was both its strength and weakness. Zealots who comprised the queen's most avid supporters could continue to believe in the possibility of further reform precisely because of the widespread nature of religious conservatism in the 1560s. They could convince themselves that the queen was truly on their side but that she hesitated to fulfil their wishes because of the manifest dangers of popery.¹⁹⁶⁵

Of course, this piece of self-delusion became less and less credible as the reign progressed. By the later stages of Elizabeth's rule the catholic community had shrunk to almost negligible proportions.¹⁹⁶⁶ It was manifest that domestic conservatives posed no political threat to the realm.¹⁹⁶⁷ All they wanted was to be left in peace to pursue their devotions. Meanwhile, the successful prosecution of the war with Spain gave zealots further incentive to hope for change. Yet Elizabeth refused to give ground believing firmly in the virtues of her self-appointed role as arbiter between the religious groupings of the realm. The problem was that by the final years of the queen's life, conformism had emerged to take up its place as a fully-fledged ideology of allegiance. Suddenly, Elizabeth was no longer an arbiter but the figurehead of a party.

From this stage onwards the Church increasingly appeared as an arm of the state. Certainly the early Stuarts' regard for their bishops contrasted sharply with the contempt shown by Henry VIII, Edward VI and Elizabeth.¹⁹⁶⁸ The age of stark materialism, at least as far as the Church was concerned, was seemingly over. And with it went the close harmony that had been achieved between the crown and the political nation. Of course, these things took time to happen and even longer to be appreciated. But there can be no doubting the second wind that puritanism received upon the collapse of its movement for further reform. In defeat zeal gained a strong sympathy vote from gentry who were increasingly alarmed by the neo-clericalism of the

¹⁹⁶⁴ N L Jones, *Faith by Statute: Parliament and the Settlement of Religion 1559* (1983), *passim*.

¹⁹⁶⁵ C Cross, *The Royal Supremacy in the Elizabeth Church* (1969), p. 58.

¹⁹⁶⁶ R Lockyer, *Tudor and Stuart Britain 1471-1714* (2nd edn., 1985), p. 172.

¹⁹⁶⁷ A G R Smith, *The Emergence of a Nation State: the Commonwealth of England 1529-1660* (1984), pp. 151-2.

¹⁹⁶⁸ A Foster, 'The Functions of a Bishop: the Career of Richard Neile, 1562-1640', in *Continuity and Change: Personnel and Administration of the Church in England 1500-1642*, eds. R O'Day and F Heal (Leicester, 1985), pp. 33-54, at pp. 34-6.

Anglican Church.¹⁹⁶⁹ This fear of arbitrary rule by a crown working hand-in-glove with its bishops eventually coalesced with the puritan belief that high churchmanship contained the deadly seeds of popery. For were not all papists oppressors, and all absolutists catholics?¹⁹⁷⁰

Here assuredly was a potent brew and it proved fatal for Charles I and Archbishop Laud. Nor was this just a matter of perception, for on the evidence of the south-west, the Church was indeed gaining in political and economic strength during the post-Reformation period. We need to get beyond accusations of corruption and decadence. Certainly there was much that was wrong with the early Stuart Church, more perhaps than many commentators today would allow.¹⁹⁷¹ But these faults were the product of success and innovation rather than the culmination of a century and more of terminal decline. Wealth was returning to the Church, not just into the hands of bureaucrats, but also into the pockets of bishops and their clergy.

For the former, certainly, the profits of spiritual jurisdiction were by no means negligible. Just as the basis of the crown's daily income was shifting from land to prerogative dues in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, so also was that of the episcopate. Probably bishops of Exeter doubled their receipts from their spiritualities over the period so that the notional annual value of the see in the records of the Exchequer - £500 - because increasingly unrealistic.¹⁹⁷² Furthermore, the long leases on episcopal estates made at the time of the Reformation, began to fall in in the early Stuart period.¹⁹⁷³ Entry fines could thus be more frequently levied, especially as the new leases were for substantially shorter spans of years.¹⁹⁷⁴

The rank and file of the clergy also saw its economic position improve significantly between 1560 and 1640. Limitations of space prevent a detailed examination of this important topic, but it is very apparent from the Exeter records that the problem of oversupply of ordinands which had plagued the

¹⁹⁶⁹ P Lake, 'Conformist Clericalism? Richard Bancroft's Analysis of the Socio-Economic Roots of Presbyterianism', *SCH*, 24 (1987), pp. 219-29.

¹⁹⁷⁰ J P Sommerville, *Politics and Ideology in England 1603-1640* (1986), p. 45.

¹⁹⁷¹ Compare P Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants: the Church in English Society 1559-1625* (Oxford, 1982). See also the important recent study by Kenneth Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor: the Episcopate of James I* (Oxford, 1990) which argues for the pastoral commitment of a majority of Jacobean bishops 'in the diocese, at court and in parliament' (*ibid.*, p. 295).

¹⁹⁷² This estimate is based on a scrutiny of the fees received by bishops of Exeter from the exercise of their ecclesiastical jurisdiction.

¹⁹⁷³ See above, p. 27 and Table 4.

¹⁹⁷⁴ C Hill, *Economic Problems of the Church from Archbishop Whitgift to the Long Parliament* (1956), pp. 311-17.

pre-Reformation Church no longer obtained under the early Stuarts.¹⁹⁷⁵ A neat and necessary symbiosis now existed between ordination and employment. The 'two class' ministry of the early sixteenth century in which a privileged few gained freehold benefices whilst the vast majority of priests was obliged to eke out a painful existence as curates and chantrists had been abolished.¹⁹⁷⁶ The turning point came half was through Elizabeth's reign. The 1570s saw not only the beginning of the presbyterian onslaught and the conformist retort, but also the start of a largely graduate ministry.¹⁹⁷⁷ Suddenly the fledgling Church of England was gaining a workforce equipped with a pride and ambition built upon the firm foundations of academic achievement. For good and bad reasons, these men were to demonstrate a dogged and enduring loyalty to their employer over the coming years. The ministry was their chosen profession and they were determined to make a go of it. Too much intellectual and material investment had been made for it to be otherwise.¹⁹⁷⁸

Consequently a self-imposed career structure was established. Entrance into the ministry was regulated: there was always a supply of new blood to prevent staleness. But the supply never became overwhelming. Thus all ordinands were assured of full-time jobs at some stage in the future. This made them less regretful at having to serve as curates, schoolteachers and preachers in the meantime. There would be a purpose to their temporary discomfort. Moreover, they would gain valuable experience of the day-to-day demands of ministerial office. Clerical marriage was an important factor in the growth of a career-based ministry. Livings might be handed down from father to son over several generations.¹⁹⁷⁹ Above all, clerical incomes were rising. Schoolmastering and preaching were useful by-employments but most importantly receipts from tithes were increasing. Not all such payments had been commuted and thus the clergy was able to benefit from (rather than succumb to) the inflationary pressures of the period.¹⁹⁸⁰

The subject of clerical wealth requires greater consideration but taken as a whole it would seem reasonable to regard the early Stuart clergy as a force

¹⁹⁷⁵ See Figure 2.

¹⁹⁷⁶ M L Zell, 'The Personnel of the Clergy in Kent in the Reformation Period', EHR, 89 (1974), pp. 513-33.

¹⁹⁷⁷ R O'Day, *The English Clergy: the Emergence and Consolidation of a Profession 1558-1642* (Leicester, 1979), pp. 126-43.

¹⁹⁷⁸ I Green, 'Career Prospects and Clerical Conformity in the Early Stuart Church', *P&P*, 90 (1981), pp. 71-115.

¹⁹⁷⁹ O'Day, *English Clergy*, pp. 162-3.

¹⁹⁸⁰ D M Barratt, 'Condition of the Parish Clergy from the Reformation to 1660 in the Dioceses of Oxford, Worcester and Gloucester', Oxford DPhil thesis (1950), *passim*.

for continuity rather than change.¹⁹⁸¹ Certainly the once much-touted idea of 'alienated intellectuals' – clever men plotting revolution because they had been denied jobs in the Church through over-recruitment – needs reappraisal.¹⁹⁸² Rather the rank and file of the clergy underpinned the growing elitism of the episcopate. Laud's desire to restore the social worth of the ministry was merely a particularly resonant echo of a well-established line of thought stretching back over the decades.¹⁹⁸³ The difference, of course, was that now, in the early seventeenth century, the second estate had the backing of the crown. This the puritans well appreciated and they tried hard to undermine the alliance by arguing that divine right episcopacy posed a serious threat to the royal supremacy.¹⁹⁸⁴ But the crown was not to be so easily convinced. There was to be no repetition of the 1530s. A crucial change had occurred. A century earlier Thomas Cromwell had sought to broaden the monarchy's case of support by involving the political classes in a dramatic and daring jurisdictional revolution. By the 1630s the crown was seeking to disown this inheritance. Absolutism by consent was to be replaced by absolutism by divine right.

¹⁹⁸¹ Green, 'Career Prospects', pp. 114-5.

¹⁹⁸² M H Curtis, 'The Alienated Intellectuals of Early Stuart England', *P&P*, 23 (1962), pp. 25-43.

¹⁹⁸³ K Sharpe, 'Archbishop Laud', *History Today*, 33 (1983), pp. 26-30.

¹⁹⁸⁴ J P Sommerville, 'The Royal Supremacy and Episcopacy "Jure Divino", 1603-1640', *JEH*, 34 (1983), pp. 548-58.

Appendix 1: The Composition of 1616

ECA D&C.2473

TO ALL CHRISTIAN PEOPLE to whom this present writinge shall come WILLIAM by Gods providence Lord Bisshopp of Exeter, Barnabe Goche Doctor of Lawe Chancellor to the said Lord Bishopp; The Deane and Chapter of the Cathedrall Church of Saint Peter in Exeter aforesaid, Matthew Sutcliffe Deane of the said Cathedrall Churche, Thomas Barrett Archdeacon of Exeter, William Huchenson Archdeacon of Cornwall, William Parker Archdeacon of Totton, William Helyar Archdeacon of Barum, And the Custos and Colledge of Vicars Chorall of the said Cathedrall Churche send greeting in our Lord God everlastinge. WHEREAS there have been heretofore and nowe dyvers questions moved betweene the said parties, touching the execution of ecclesiasticall Jurisdiction within the Diocesse of Exeter aforesaid; for clearing of which said questions, and for the settling and establishing of a peace and certaintye therein for ever heereafter betweene the said parties and their Successors NOWE KNOWE YEE, That it is concluded, agrreed, manifested and declared by and betweene the said Partyes, for them and their said Successors (upon searche, viewe and due examination of dyvers Instruments, evidences and Records remaying in the severall Registries or Custodies of the said Parties) that the execution of the said ecclesiasticall Jurisdiction of the said Partyes to these presents shalbe bounded, lymitted, and for ever hereafter used and exercised by the said Partyes within their severall Jurisdictions respectively, in manner and forme following FIRST, That the said Deane and Chapter, their Successors and Officers shall for ever hereafter, solely and without any concurrence prove (in common forme) all Testaments (except the testaments of Knights, beneficed men, and such as are *de Roba Episcop*) and grante letters of Administracion of the goods of all parties deceased (except of Knights, beneficed men, and such as are de Roba Episcop) within all their severall Peculiars within the said Diocesse, videlicet, Coliton, Shute, Monkton, Branscomb, Sidburie, Salcomb, Culmestoke, Topisham, Hevetree, Clisthoniton, Stokecanon, Littleham, Ide, Dawlish, Eastingmouth, Saint Mary Church, Kingskarswill, Coffinwell, Staverton, Ashberton, Bickington, Buckland, Norton and Colbrooke within the Countie of Devon; And Saint Wynnowe, Saint Nectan, Bradock, Boconnock, Pieran in Zabulo, and Saint Agnes, within the Countie of Cornwall; And also solely and without any concurrence, heare and determine, within their said several Peculiars, all causes aswell *ad instantiam Partis* as *ex Officio*. SECONDLY, That the said Matthewe Sutclyffe Deane of the said Cathedrall Church and his Successors, and his and their Officer and Officeres, shall for ever heereafter

solely and without any concurrence prove (in common forme) all Testaments (except before excepted) and grante letters of Administracion of the goods of all parties deceased (except before excepted) within the Parrish of Braunton in the said Countie of Devon, and the Close of the said Cathedrall Church of Saint Peter in Exeter; And also solely and without any concurrence heare and determine (within the said Parrish of Braunton and Close aforesaid) all causes, aswell *ad instantiam Partis* as *ex Officio*. THIRDLY, That the said Custos and Colledge of Vicars Chorall, and their Successors, and their Officer and Officers, shall for ever hereafter solely and without any concurrence, prove (in common forme) all Testaments (except before excepted) and grante letters of Administracion of goods of all parties deceased (except before excepted) within the Parrish of Woodburye in the said Countie of Devon; And also solely and without any concurrence heare and determine (within the said parrish of Woodburye) all causes, aswell *ad instantiam Partis* as *ex Officio*. FOWERTHLY, That the said Thomas Barrett and his Successors, within the said Archdeaconrie of Exon, and his and their Officer and Officers (*salvo semper Jure Decan*) And the said William Huchenson and his Successors, their Officer and Officers; And the said William Parker and his Successors within the said Archdeaconrie of Totton, and his and their Officer and Officers; And the said William Helyar and his Successors, within the said Arcdeaconrie of Barum, and his and their Officer and Officers, shall for ever heereafter solely and without any concurrence, within their said severall Archdeaconries respectively, prove (in common forme) all Testaments (except the Testaments of Knights, beneficed men, and such as are *de Roba Episcopi*) and grante letters of Administracion of the goods of all Parites deceased (except of Knights, beneficed men and such as are *de Roba Episcopi*) And have and shall have concurrent power with the Bisshop of heare and determine all causes, aswell *ad instantiam Partis* as *ex Officio*, within their said several Archdeaconries respectively. FIFTHLY, That the said Lord Bisshopp and his Successors, and his and their Chancellor for the tyme being, or any of them, shall and may for ever heereafter solely and without any concurrence, at his or their will and pleasure (within all the Peculiars of the said Bisshopp videlicet: Crediton, Sandford, Kennerley, Morchard Episcopi, Nymet Episcopi, Tawton Episcopi, Sombridge, Landkey, Chudleigh, Teignton Episcopi, Westingmouth, Payngton, Marldon, Stokegabriell, within the said Countie of Devon, And Lezant, Lawhitton, Southpetherwyn, Revenne, Larrack, Saint Ernye, Saint Germans, Egloshaile, Breock, Saint Ervyn, Padstowe in rure, Maryn, Saint Issye, Saint Uvall, Petrock parva, Saint Gerans, Anthonye in Roseland, Gluvias, Budock, Milor, Mabe alias Lavape within the countie of Cornwall aforesaid) use and exercise all manner of Jurisdiction whatsoever. And within the residue of the said Diocesse, the Bisshop or his Chancellor solely and without any concurrence, shall have

power to dispence in all Causes, to grante all manner of Licences, Sequestracions and Relaxations; And generally to doe whatsoever is not formerly declared to belong to the said Archdeacons, Dean and Chapter, Deane, and Custos and Colledge, or to some of them as aforesaid. The said Bisshopp likewise or his Chancellor shall heare and determine all causes, aswell *ad instantiam Partis as_ex Officio* brought unto him or them by way of appeale, complaint, negligence, recusation or provocation, from the said Archdeacons, Deane and Chapter, Deane, and Custos and Colledge or any of them. LASTLY, That the said Bisshopp and his Successors, his or their Chancellor or Officers for the tyme being, shall and may for ever heereafter, once in every three yeares compleate, visite all the said Diocese (except the Peculiars of the said Deane and Chapter, Deane, and Custos and Colledge of Vicars, and their Successors) And during the time of such visitacion (which shall not be held at any time in Easter weke, or in the weeke next before Easter) the said Bisshopp, his Successors, his or their Chancellor or other Officers for the time being, shall and may inhibite the said severall Archdeacons and their Successors, from doing and attempting any thinge in prejudice of such visitacion, during the tyme of such visitacion which shalbe for the time of two monethes and no longer; The said two monethes to be accompted from the time of the execution of such Inhibition upon the said severall Archdeacons respectively; And during the said two monethes, the Jurisdictons of the said Archdeacons shall wholly ceasse, and the same be exercised by the Bisshopp or his Chancellor in all things, Saving in such causes whereof they the said Archdeacons were possessed before the execution of the said Inhibition; And that after the end of the said two monethes, the said Archdeacons and their Successors shall and may resume and exercise their severall Jurisdictons respectively, without any relaxation or other leave whatsoever. IN WITNESSE whereof the said Parties have heereunto putt their severall Seales. Yeoven the five and twentieth day of Marche in the yeares of the Raigne of our soveraigne Lord James by the grace of God of England France and Ireland Kinge Defender of the faithe etc. the fowerteenth, and of Scotland the nyne and fortieth, And in the yeare of our Lord God one thowsand sixe hundred and sixteene, And of the Consecration of the said Lord Bisshopp the eighteenth.

Appendix 2: A Summary List of Senior Clergy in the Diocese of Exeter c1519-c1660

Key

adm	admitted
comp	compounded for
dep	deprived
d	died
occ	occurred
pres	presented
r	resigned
seq	sequestered
trans	translated
vac	vacated

Bishops of Exeter

John Veysey	1519-51r; 1553-54d
Miles Coverdale	1551-53vac
James Turberville	1555-59dep
William Alley	1560-70d
William Bradbridge	1571-78d
John Woolton	1579-94d
Gervase Babington	1595-97trans
William Cotton	1598-1621d
Valentine Carey	1622-26d
Joseph Hall	1627-41trans
Ralph Brownrigg	1642-59d

Deans of Exeter

Reginald Pole	1524-37dep
Simon Heynes	1537-52d
James Haddon	1553-54vac
Thomas Reynolds	1555-59dep
Gregory Dodds	1559-70d
George Carew	1571-83d
Stephen Townsend	1583-88d
Matthew Sutcliffe	1588-1629d

William Peterson	1629-61d
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Cathedral Precentors

John Chamber	1524-49d
George Carew	1549-54dep
John Rixman	1554-57d
Richard Petre	1557-71r
William Marston	1571-99d
Bishop William Cotton	1599-1606r
William Cotton	1606-56d

Cathedral Chancellors

William Leveson	1537-83d
John Leach	1583-1613d
Edward Cotton	1613-22r
Bishop Valentine Carey	1622-24r
Laurence Burnell	1624-47d

Cathedral Treasurers

Thomas Southern	1531-56d
Nicholas Wotton	1557-58r
John Blaxton	1558-60dep
Richard Tremayne	1560-84d
Robert Lawe	1584-1629d
Robert Hall	1629-67d

Archdeacons of Exeter

Adam Travers	1519-56d
George Carew	1556-69r
Robert Fisher	1569-82d
Thomas Barrett	1582-1633d
Aaron Wilson	1634-43d
Edward Young	1643-62r

Archdeacons of Cornwall

Thomas Wynter	1537-43r
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John Pollard	1543-44r
Hugh Weston	?1545-?52
Rowland Taylor	1552-54dep
John Rixman	1554-55r
George Harvey	1555-63r
Roger Alley	1563-64dep
Thomas Somaster	1574-1603d
William Hutchinson snr	1603-16d
Jasper Swifte	1616-16r
William Parker	1616-29r; 1629-31d
Martin Nansogg	1629-29dep
Robert Peterson	1631-33d
Robert Hall	1633-41r
George Hall	1641-62r

Archdeacons of Totnes

George Carew	1534-49r
William Fawell	1549-58d
John Pollard	1558-60d
Thomas Kent	1560-61d
Robert Louther	1562-68vac
Oliver Whiddon	1568-80d
John Cole	1580-84d
Lewis Sweete	1584-1613r
William Parker	1613-16r
Jasper Swifte	1616-20d
William Cotton	1620-22r
Edward Cotton	1622-47d

Archdeacons of Barnstaple

Thomas Brerewood	1528-44d
John Pollard	1544-54dep
Henry Squire	1554-83r
Robert Lawe	1583-85vac
William Tooker	1585-1605r
William Hellyar	1605-45d

Subdeacons of the Cathedral

Nicholas Weston	1539-47d
John Blaxton	1547-58r
Thomas Nutcombe	1558-66dep
Christopher Bodley	1566-87r
Francis Godwin	1587-1603r
John Sprott	1603-32d
Hugh Cholmeley	1632-41d
Samuel Hall	1641-74d

Deans of St Buryan

Thomas Baghe	occ1533-?57d
John Geare	occ1558-73
William Fairechilde	adm1578 ¹⁹⁸⁵
William Forthe	comp1583; occ1592-98d
William Fairechilde	comp1596
Richard Murray	comp1607-37d
Walter Raleigh	pres1637-42vac
Robert Creighton	comp1642-45seq
John Weeks	occ1645-61

Prebendaries of Uffculme

John Warner	1554-65d
Thomas White	1565-71r
Adrian Hawthorne	1571-77d
William Hayte	1589-?1604d
Christopher Peryn	1605-12d
Nicholas Fuller	1612-23d
Thomas Clarke snr	1623-34r
Thomas Clarke jnr	1634-56d

¹⁹⁸⁵ There was a long-running dispute between Fairechilde and Forthe over possession of the deanery and Fairechilde seems to have had 2 bites of the cherry, once before being displaced by Forthe and once after the latter's death. Fairechilde also had to fight off Robert Berde in 1598 who was presented by the crown but who then had his presentation rescinded the following year.

Appendix 3: Canons Residentiary of Exeter Cathedral 1561-c1645

Note

The numbers attached to the places of residence below have no contemporary warrant. They have been added to help identify the succession to the nine places of residence that Bishop Alley created in his statute of 1561 (see above, p. 35).

Key

d	died
dep	deprived
r	resigned
*	held one of the major or minor dignities of the cathedral ¹⁹⁸⁶
occ	year of first occurrence as residentiary ¹⁹⁸⁷

1.

Gregory Dodds	occ1560-70d*
Stephen Townsend	occ1571-88d*
Matthew Sutcliffe	occ1589-1629d*
Robert Hall	occ1627-67d*

2.

William Leveson	occ1537-82d*
John Leach	occ1584-1613d*
Edward Cotton	occ1613-47d*

3.

Richard Tremayne	occ1560-84d*
Robert Lawe	occ1587-1629d*
William Hutchinson jnr	occ1629-45d

4.

George Carew	occ1535-83d*
Thomas Barrett	occ1584-1633d*
Hugh Cholmeley	occ1633-41d*
Aaron Wilson	occ1641-43d*
George Hall	occ1643-62r*

¹⁹⁸⁶ The major dignities were the dean, the precentor, the chancellor, the treasurer and the subdean; the minor dignities were the four archdeacons.

¹⁹⁸⁷ According to the excrescence and chapter act books.

5.

Richard Gammon	occ1559-69dep
John Woolton	occ1570-79r
Degory Nichols	occ1579-90d
William Tooker	occ1591-99r*
William Hellyer	occ1599-1645d*

6.

William Marwood	occ1560-81d
John Cole	occ1581-84d*
Nicholas Marston	occ1585-1624d
Laurence Burnell	occ1624-47d*

7.

Robert Fisher	occ1560-83d*
Laurence Bodley snr	occ1584-1615d
John Bridgeman	occ1615-21r
William Peterson	occ1621-61d*

8.

John Smith	occ1561-64d*
William Marston	occ1572-99d*
Bishop Cotton	occ1600-06r*
William Cotton	occ1606-56d*

9.

Edward Ryley	occ1562-78d
John Kenall	occ1578-92d
Francis Godwin	occ1592-1601r*
Martin Kaye	occ1601-07r*
John Sprott	occ1607-32d*
Edward Kellett	occ1632-41d
John Berry	occ1641-67d

Appendix 4: Summary List of Court and Administrative Personnel in the Diocese of Exeter c.1500-c.1660

Note

To some extent I have been arbitrary in deciding who should appear in this list. I have not included the deputy judges of the various courts, nor the litterati who congregated around the registraries at Exeter, nor indeed the apparitors who worked in the deaneries of the diocese. A line had to be drawn somewhere and I hope in the future to provide a much fuller survey, both in terms of names and detail.

Key

adm	admitted
BA	bachelor of arts
BCL	bachelor of civil of canon law
BD	bachelor of divinity
cl	clerk
comm	commission(ed)
d	died
DCL	doctor of civil or canon law
DD	doctor of divinity
LLB	bachelor of laws
LLD	doctor of law
MA	master of arts
np	notary public
occ	occurs
r	resigned
x	between dates given
*	appears more than once in list

1. Diocesan Chancellors

Thomas Herle MA cl	comm1551
Robert Weston DCL	occ1552
John Blaxton LLB cl	occ1556-59

George Verney cl	occ1559
John Smith DCL cl	occ1560; revoked 1561
Robert Louther DCL cl	comm1561; revoked 1562
Robert Fisher DCL and William Marwood MA cl	joint comm1563-64
Richard Grene DCL	occ1564-66
*Thomas Williams MA cl	occ1566-70
William Marson LLB cl	comm1571-81r for health reasons; reappointed 1586; last occ1592 but probably continued until Woolton's death in 1594
Stephen Townsend DD cl	comm1581-82r
Matthew Sutcliffe LLD cl	comm1582; dismissed 1586
Evan Morrice DCL	comm1595(life grant)-1605d
William Hutchinson DD cl	occ1605-08
Henry Manning DCL	comm1608(life grant)-14d
William Cotton MA cl	comm1614(life grant)-15r; appointment not ratified by Exeter dean & chapter
Barnaby Goche LLD	comm1615(life grant)-26d
George Parry LLD	comm1626(life grant)-53/60d

2. Principal Registrars of the Bishops of Exeter

*John Crofte LLB np	1529(life grant)-last occ1547
*William Bourne LLB np	occ1547
*John Germyn np	occ1550-53; restored 1556x57-68d
*Thomas Bordfielde no	occ1553-56x57
*Thomas Germyn np	occ1568; dismissed 1572; restored 1574-76d
*William Hylles np	occ1572-74
*William Germyn MA	occ1576-95d
*Robert Michell snr np	occ1595-24d
*Robert Michell jnr DCL np	occ1624-41d
*Joseph Hall np	1641(life grant)-69d

3. Registrars of the Exeter Consistory Court

*Adam Wylkoks np	1529 (grant)-41d
William Fyton np	1541(life grant)-last occ1549
*William Bourne LLB np	?from 1550
*Thomas Bordfielde np	?from 1556-last occ1563
*John Bordfielde np	occ1572-74

*Robert Michell snr np	occ1580-1624d
*Robert Michell jnr DCL np	occ1624-24r
*Bernard Periam np	1624(life grant)-31d
*Joseph Hall np	1631(life grant)-41r
*Henry Rowcliffe np	1641(life grant)-62d

4. Advocates of the Exeter Consistory Court

*Ralph Kete BCL cl	adm1580-82 when probably succeeded by *Daniel Nelayne
John Weston BCL np	adm1580-last occ1587 when probably succeeded by Edward Pearde
*Nicholas Wyatt BCL np	adm1580-last occ1608
*Daniel Nelayne cl	occ1582-83 when succeeded by *Arthur Strode
*Arthur Strode BCL	adm1583-last occ1595
*Edward Pearde BCL	occ1588-1625d when probably succeeded by *Edward Jones
William Lewys BCL	adm1605-last occ1613
Marmaduke Lynne LLD	adm1612 but did not practise
*Edward Jones LLB	occ1630-last occ1631 but perhaps to 1638d
*Joseph Martyn DCL	Adm1628-last occ1637; perhaps ceased to practise thereafter because of commitments in London and elsewhere
*William Griffith BCL	Adm1631-last occ1638 but probably to 1640d

5. Proctors of the Exeter Consistory Court

*John Germyn np	occ1513-63; probably to 1568d
Thomas Harrys	occ1513-34
Robert Hoker	occ1513-18
John Stephens	occ1513-47
P--- White	occ1513-18
*Adam Wylkoks np	occ1513-18; perhaps to 1529 when became consistory registrar
*Michael Browne np	occ1530-63; probably to 1565d
John Clarke	occ1530-34
----- Collyns	occ1530-34
*John Crofte LLB np	occ1530-32
----- Hopper	occ1530-34
Ralph Metheros	occ1530-34
Charles Stockport	occ1530-32

----- Turner	occ1530-32
Richard Wannell	occ1533-34
*Thomas Bordfielde np	occ1560
William Churche np	occ1560-63; probably to 1568d
Richard Gibbons	occ1561-68
*Henry James np	occ1561-74; probably to 1578d when probably succeeded by *Thomas Trosse
Thomas Stephins	occ1561-74; probably still practising 1577 but had ceased by 1580
John ?Bear	occ1561
*Hugh Osborne np	occ1562-79; probably succeeded by *Jasper Bridgeman
Hugh Gorvyn np	occ1561-63
William Constantyne DCL cl	occ1562; probably ceased when became beneficed in Wales in 1563
*John Weston BCL np	occ1572-80; perhaps practising 1567; ceased when adm advocate 1580
*Ralph Kete BCL cl	occ1572-80; ceased when adm advocate 1580
*Nicholas Wyatt BCL np	occ1572-80; ceased when adm advocate 1580
*Edward Marshe np	occ1572-1607r for health reasons and succeeded by *Lewis Watkins
Roger Lancaster LLB	occ1578
*Thomas Trosse np	occ1578-1615d
*Jasper Bridgeman np	occ1579-1617d; probably succeeded by *Robert White
*Richard Langherne MA	adm1580-1631d
John Wolridge np	adm1580 but did not practise
*William Bruton np	adm1582-last occ1599; probably succeeded by *Thomas Mabson
John Denham np	occ1583
Henry Petherick np	occ1589-1602
Antony Turpin	occ1592-1602; probably ceased when appointed registrar of the ecclesiastical commission court
Thomas Mabson np	occ1599
Angel Maddocks np	occ1600-12d
*Robert Staplehill np	occ1604-08d
*Edward Jones LLB	occ1604-25 when appointed surrogate judge of consistory

*Richard Potter np	adm1607-11r and succeeded by *Robert Gunn; apparently resigned again in 1616 in favour of *Thomas Payne
Lewis Watkins np	adm1607-last occ1613; succeeded Edward Marshe
*William Kifte np	adm1607 but not allowed to practise until a place had fallen vacant; even so exercised office in 1608-36d
*James Calthropp LLB np	adm1608-39d
Robert Gunn np	adm1611-last occ1619; succeeded Richard Potter
*Robert White np	adm1615 but not allowed to practise until a place had fallen vacant; allowed to practise 1617-40d; probably succeeded Jasper Bridgeman
*Thomas Payne np	adm1616 at second attempt after first application opposed by proctors; practised to 1646d; apparently succeeded Richard Potter
*Henry Rowcliffe np	adm1625-last occ1638 but probably to 1641 when became consistory registrar
*Christopher Babb np	adm1627-42d
*Walter Sainthill np	adm1627-last occ1644
*Hugh Stofford np	adm1627 but did not practise
Nicholas Street np	occ1628
*Edward Heywood np	occ1637-47
*James Payne np	occ1637-46
Robert Kifte np	occ1640-41
*Henry Linscott np	occ1640-49; resumed after Restoration and probably continued to 1670d
*Edmund Toll np	occ1640-44
John Babb np	occ1641-44
Andrew Holman np	Occ1644-49; resumed after Restoration and probably continued to 1663d
Francis Cooke np	adm1648 'by reason of shortage and absence of proctors' but had practised since 1646-last occ1649; resumed after Restoration and became principal registrar 1669
Elizeus Bray	occ1649

6. Principal Apparitors of the Bishop of Exeter

Thomas Marler and William Veysey	1524(joint grant)
John Bostocke	1535(grant)-last occ1540
*Thomas Bordefielde	occ1533
William Marten	1561(life grant)-1609d
Henry Glover	occ between 1608-28
----- Gervis	occ between 1608-28
William Moore	occ after 1608-28d
Richard Elwood	1626(life grant) and 1628(life grant)

7. Episcopal Secretary

*Richard Potter np	occ1607; probably acting before this date and probably to death of Bishop Cotton; Potter d1622
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8. Officials of the Archdeacons of Barnstaple

John Heron MA cl	occ1568-74
Robert Brailie MA cl	occ1575
*Nicholas Wyatt BCL np	occ1576-82
*George Holgreve cl	occ1593
Richard Baylie MA cl	occ1593-99
Richard Wheeler cl	occ1596
*Edward Pearde BCL	occ1612-18
*James Calthropp LLB np	occ1623-33

9. Registrars of the Archdeacons of Barnstaple

William Osborne np	1541(grant)
*Hugh Osborne np	occ1576-99; probably to 1609d
*John Stofford np	1605(life grant)-1640d
*Hugh Stofford np and Hugh Potter np	1640 (joint life grant)

10. Proctors of the Archdeacon of Barnstaple's Court

*Henry Rowcliffe np	occ1612-14
Nicholas Wyatt	occ1612-14
*Walter Sainthill np	occ1632-33
*Edward Heywood np	occ1632-33
*Hugh Stofford np	occ1633

11. Officials of the Archdeacons of Cornwall

John Harris	occ1541
Matthew Selack MA cl	occ1563
Henry Crane MA cl	occ1572-75
William Forthe MA cl	occ1578-79
*Ralph Kete BCL cl	occ1581-1602
Sampson Strode LLB cl	occ1586-89
*Arthur Strode BCL	occ1595
Henry Denis BCL	occ1596-1600
Henry Verchill cl	occ1597-1600
William Parker BD cl	occ1600-16
John Saunders MA cl	occ1625-26
Henry Lockett MA cl	occ1627-31

12. Registrars of the Archdeacons of Cornwall

George Stapledon	1541(grant)-68d
*William Hylles np	occ1572
Gregory Friggens np	occ1578-1621d
James Parker	1621(life grant)-42d
*Obadiah Reynolds np	1642(life grant)-62d

13. Proctors of the Archdeacon of Cornwall's Court

William Drake cl np	occ1572-86
Ralph Harbert cl	occ1572
*Daniel Nelayne cl	occ1572
John Swete np	occ1572
John Wills snr np	occ1586-1611
Ralph Kete jnr np	occ1605-11 but probably to 1636d
Robert Walters	occ1605
John Bewes	occ1605-06
John Mathewe	occ1606-13
William Friggens np	occ1606-31
Hugh Wills snr np	occ1608-31
John Kete	occ1608-21
John Wills jnr np	occ1609
Henry John	occ1609-11
?George Bowth	occ1610-11

Robert Friggens np	occ1611-21
John Hickes np	occ1613
George Beare cl	occ1617
Lewis Sweete np	occ1621-25
*Obadiah Reynolds np	occ1621
John Ward MA	occ1621-36
Richard Blight np	occ1624-36
Nathaniel Beard	occ1629-35
Robert Kete	occ1630
Thomas Robyns	occ1630-31
Hugh Wills jnr	occ1635-37
William Noye	occ1636-37

14. Officials of the Archdeacons of Exeter

*George Weaver BCL cl	occ1562
*Thomas Williams MA cl	occ1564-69
*George Holgreve cl	occ1599-1604
Jasper Swifte DD cl	occ1612-15
Thoas Irishe cl	occ1622
*Joseph Martyn DCL	occ1628-31 but probably continued to 1633 at least
*William Griffith BCL	comm1637-40d

15. Registrars of the Archdeacons of Exeter

*Michael Browne np	1544(life grant) but not confirmed by dean & chapter until 1547; probably to 1565d
*Henry James np	occ1565-78d
*Jasper Bridgeman np	occ1579-1617d
*William Kifte np	1617(life grant)-36d
Richard Baker np and *Richard Syms np	1636(joint life grant)
*Richard Syms np and Nicholas Everleigh np	1638(joint life grant)

16. Proctors of the Archdeacon of Exeter's Court

*Thomas Trosse np	occ1575-99
*Richard Langherne MA	occ1592-99

*Edward Marshe np	occ1592-95
*Henry Petherick np	occ1592
*Edward Jones LLB	occ1615
*James Calthropp LLB np	occ1620
*Thomas Payne np	occ1620-39
*Christopher Babb np	occ1638
*Edward Heywood np	occ1638-39
*James Payne np	occ1638
*Walter Sainthill np	occ1638-39

17. Officials of the Archdeacons of Totnes

Richard Fountain MA cl	occ1573-76
Richard Phillips BA cl	occ1595
Laurence Pickeringe BD cl	occ1599
*Edward Pearde BCL	occ1601-12
Richard Evelegh MA cl	occ1621
Thomas Porter MA cl	occ1630
*Joseph Martyn DCL	occ1637-39
William Webber	occ1641-46

18. Registrars of the Archdeacons of Totnes

*Robert Chaffe np	1554(life grant)-80d
*William Bruton np	occ1584-1608d
*William Sherman np and *William Smythe np	1608(joint life grant)
*Bernard Periam np	occ1629

19. Proctors of the Archdeacon of Totnes' Court

*Richard Langherne MA	occ1613
*Christopher Babb np	occ1637-39
*Edward Heywood np	occ1637-39
*Robert White np	occ1637
*James Payne np	occ1638
*Henry Linscott np	occ1641

20. Officials of the Dean of Exeter's Peculiar Jurisdiction

*William Hellyer MA	occ1610
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21. Registrars of the Dean of Exeter's Peculiar Jurisdiction

*Thomas Chaffe	occ1596-1604d
*Edward Jones LLB	occ1608-19x26

22. Officials of the Dean and Chapter of Exeter's Peculiar Jurisdiction

John Kenwood LLB	?-1531r
*George Weaver BCL cl	comm1531-last occ1544 but probably to 1548 when displaced by Roche; re-comm1555
John Roche alias Bartlett cl	occ1548-55
Richard Gammon DD	occ before June 1568; ousted by *Gregory Dodds
*Gregory Dodds DD	occ before Jun 1568-70d
Richard Tremayne DD	occ1577-79
*Matthew Sutcliffe LLD	occ1591-1604
*William Hellyer MA	comm1604; relinquished in favour of *James Calthrop and returned in 1639-45d
*James Calthrop LLB np	comm1627-39d

23. Registrars of the Dean and Chapter of Exeter's Peculiar Jurisdiction

*Robert Chaffe np	1544(life grant)-80d
*Thomas Chaffe	occ1580-1604d
*Richard Staplehill	1604(life grant)-33d
*Edmund Toll np	1633(life grant)-last occ1642; probably d by 1666 when *Francis Cooke serving

24. Proctors of the Dean and Chapter of Exeter's Peculiar Jurisdiction

*James Calthrop LLB np	occ1621-35
*William Kifte np	occ1621-36d
*Richard Langherne MA	occ1621-27
*Thomas Payne np	occ1622-35
*Robert White np	occ1623-24
*Edward Jones LLB	occ1623
*Walter Sainthill np	occ1625-35
*Henry Rowcliffe np	occ1628-35
*Christopher Babb np	occ1628-32

25. Chapter Clerks

Richard Henson np	1542(grant)-61d
John Ryder np	1561(grant)-90d
*William Bruton np	1590(?grant)-1608d
*Robert Staplehill np	1608(grant)-1609d
*William Smythe np	1609(grant)
*Robert White np	1611(grant); removed from office 1612
*Edward Sainthill np	1612(grant)-33d
*Thomas Payne np	1633(grant)-46d

26. Officials of the Vicars-Choral of Exeter's Peculiar Jurisdiction

John Leach BD cl	occ1613
John Mayne cl	comm1641

27. Registrars of the Vicars-Choral of Exeter's Peculiar Jurisdiction

*Michael Browne np	occ1562-65d
*Henry James np	occ1565-78d
*Thomas Chaffe	occ1583-1604d
*Robert White np	occ1610-40d
*Thomas Payne np	1640(life grant)-46d

28. Officials of the Dean of St Buryan's Peculiar Jurisdiction

James Gentill	occ1535
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Appendix 5: Rural Deans in the Diocese of Exeter 1561-1640

Note

The names below have been largely taken from the election returns that the archdeacons sent to Exeter which were copied into the consistory court act books in September at the start of each legal year. This source has been supplemented by the original returns where they survive and are legible (DHC, Chanter 1692). Nonetheless significant gaps remain. Scrutiny of the lists below suggests that the identity of the incumbent may have been as important a factor in the choice of rural dean as the identity of the living that he held (see above, p. 8). Certainly some individuals (and some benefices) recur rather more frequently than others. In a diocese of over five hundred and fifty parishes the range of livings appears rather limited.

Archdeaconry of Barnstaple

Barnstaple Deanery

1561	Thomas Symons	Rector of Tawstock
1580	Evan Griffin	Vicar of Westleigh
1581	Thomas Symons	Rector of Instow
1582	John Mountjoy	Vicar of Fremington
1583	Simon Canham	Rector of Tawstock
1594	Simon Canham	Rector of Tawstock
1595	John Trender	Vicar of Barnstaple
1596	Thomas Andrewe	Rector of Filleigh
1597	Arthur Yardley	Vicar of Chittlehampton
1598	John Jones	Rector of High Bickington
1599	Laurence Calverleghe	Rector of Atherington
1604	Richard Baitson	Rector of Chulmleigh
1610	John Vicarie	Curate of Atherington
1615	Henry Bryant	Rector of Newton Tracey
1616	John Downe	Rector of Instow
1618	James Hygate	Vicar of Fremington
1627	Henry Bryant	Rector of Newton Tracey
1629	Martin Blake	Vicar of Barnstaple
1630	Oliver Haylor	Rector of Tawstock
1631	William Blanchard	Vicar of Fremington

1632	John Hawkins	Rector of Filleigh
1633	John Hammer	Rector of Instow
1637	Laurence Burnell	Rector of High Bickington
1640	Thomas Cheeke	Vicar of Yarnscombe

Chulmleigh Deanery

1561	Thomas Griffethe	Rector of Nymet Tracey
1573	Roger Tollet	Rector of Zeal Monachorum
1580	Robert Webber	Rector of Chulmleigh
1581	Alexander Burrell	Vicar of Burrington
1582	Robert Housegood	Rector of Wembworthy
1583	John Coell	Rector of Chulmleigh
1594	Philip Nicolle	Rector of Wembworthy
1595	Thomas Clapham	Rector of Chawleigh
1596	Hugh Dowrishe	Rector of Lapford
1597	Walter Harte	Rector of Zeal Monachorum
1598	George Bande	Rector of Nymet Tracey
1599	Anthony Kellye	Rector of North Tawton
1610	Walter Harte	Rector of Zeal Monachorum
1615	John Batson	Rector of Chulmleigh
1616	William Harvey	Vicar of Burrington
1618	John Rise	Rector of Lapford
1623	Henry Payne	Rector of Nymet Rowland
1627	William Cogan	Rector of Chawleigh
1629	George Allen	Rector of Lapford
1630	William Rogers	Rector of Bondleigh
1631	John Mathewes	Rector of Nymet Tracey
1632	Peter Bancks	Rector of Zeal Monachorum
1633	John Cooke	Vicar of Coleridge
1637	John Cogan	Rector of Chawleigh
1640	Ambrose Freere	Rector of Clannaborough

Hartland Deanery

1561	John Legatt	Vicar of Buckland Brewer
1573	John Legatt	Vicar of Buckland Brewer
1580	William Butler	Rector of Alverdiscott
1581	William Graddon	Rector of Wear Giffard
1582	Thomas Burnell	Vicar of Monkleigh
1583	Giles Butler	Rector of Littleham
1594	James Bate	Rector of Littleham

1595	Thomas Lendon	Vicar of Buckland Brewer
1596	John Risdon	Rector of Parkham
1597	William Tucker	Rector of Clovelly
1598	Robert Gwine	Rector of Alwington
1599	Thomas Goodchild	Vicar of Abbotsham
1610	William Risdon	Vicar of Abbotsham
1611	John Bant	Vicr of Northam
1615	William Tucker	Vicar of Monkleigh
1616	James Bate	Rector of Littleham
1618	John Risdon	Rector of Parkham
1627	James Bate	Rector of Littleham
1629	Edmund Fountayne	Rector of Parkham
1630	Richard Torre	Rector of Clovelly
1631	John Pyne	Rector of Alwington
1632	Nicholas Honey	Vicar of Abbotsham
1633	Walter Yeo	Rector of Clovelly
1637	John Atwill	Rector of Wear Giffard
1640	Nicholas Honey	Vicar of Abbotsham

South Molton Deanery

1561	Richard Bagnoll	Rector of Oakford
1573	Robert Pyne	Rector of Rose Ash
1580	William Hale	Rector of Woolfardisworthy
1580	Humphrey Henry	Rector of Puddington
1580	William Underwood	Rector of Washford Pyne
1581	Henry Squire	Vicar of Witheridge
1582	Edward Croke	Rector of Thelbridge
1582	Richard Taylor	Rector of West Worlington
1582	John Burnard	Rector of East Worlington
1583	Anthony Bounde	Rector of Romansleigh
1594	William Jeninges	Rector of Stoodleigh
1595	Alexander Morrice	Rector of Cruwys Mochard
1596	George Holgrave	Rector of Woolfardisworthy
1596	Lionel Reynold	Rector of Puddington
1596	John Rumbellowe	Rector of Washford Pyne
1597	John Geydon	Vicar of Witheridge
1598	John Graunte	Rector of Thelbridge
1599	Anthony Bounde	Rector of Romansleigh
1599	William Logan	Rector of Cheldon
1599	John Reede	Rector of Meshaw

1610	Roger Venner	Rector of Stoodleigh
1615	John Reede	Rector of Meshaw
1616	Edward Squire	Rector of King's Nympton
1618	John Fisher	Rector of George Nympton
1619	Robert Berrye	Vicar of Knowstone and Molland
1623	Elias Blake	Rector of East Anstey
1623	Gilbert Bennett	Vicar of West Anstey
1627	George Holgrave jnr	Rector of Woofardisworthy
1629	John Graunte	Rector of Thelbridge
1629	John Cogan	Rector of East Worlington
1629	Ferdinand Carpenter	Rector of West Worlington
1630	Nathaniel Hellis	Rector of Romansleigh
1630	William Cogan	Rector of Cheldon
1630	John Reed	Rector of Meshaw
1631	Martin Blake	Rector of King's Nympton
1632	Edward Selly	Rector of Warkleigh
1637	Daniel Berry	Vicar of Knowstone and Molland
1640	John Abraham	Rector of Stoodleigh

Shirwell Deanery

1561	John Heron	Rector of Parracombe
1573	Walter Denis	Rector of Heanton Punchardon
1580	Richard Tremayne	Rector of Combe Martin
1581	Richard Whithear	Rector of East Down
1582	Robert Dorman	Rector of Arlington
1583	Edward Parret	Rector of Countisbury
1594	John Bellewe	Rector of Bratton Fleming
1595	William Conybeare	Rector of Loxhore
1596	Richard Burton	Rector of Shirwell
1597	Simon Canham	Rector of Marwood
1598	Laurence Calverleigh	Rector of Heanton Punchardon
1599	William Culme	Rector of Georgeham
1610	Conan Briant	Rector of Challacombe Raleigh
1615	Richard More	Rector of Stoke Rivers
1616	Richard Carpenter	Rector of Loxhore
1618	Jasper Kebbye	Rector of Brendon
1619	John Briant	Rector of Parracombe
1621	Bartholomew Moore	Rector of Highbray
1627	John Adams	Vicar of West Down
1629	John Morrice	Vicar of Ilfracombe

1630	Jasper Kebbye	Rector of Brendon
1631	George Westcott	Rector of Berrynarbor
1632	Richard Richards	Rector of Combe Martin
1633	John Pyne	Rector of East Down
1637	John Hunt	Rector of Loxhore
1640	Roger Hamblyn	Vicar of West Down

Torrington Deanery

1561	George Luxton	Vicar of Shebbear
1573	Henry Squire	Rector of Iddesleigh
1580	Robert Prideaux	Rector of Newton St Petrock
1581	Samuel Beck	Rector of Langtree
1582	Simon Hart	Rector of Little Torrington
1583	Simon Hart	Rector of Little Torrington
1584	Richard Wheeler	Rector of Buckland Filleigh
1595	Alnectus Arscott	Vicar of Shebbear
1596	Robert Prideaux	Rector of Newton St Petrock
1597	William Baylie	Rector of Langtree
1598	Simon Harte	Rector of Little Torrington
1599	Robert Walter	Curate of Great Torrington
1610	Robert Prideaux	Rector of Newton St Petrock
1615	Oliver Collibeare	Rector of Roborough
1616	Edward Buckland	Rector of Beaford
1618	James Wyse	Rector of Dolton
1627	Thomas Baylie	Rector of Langtree
1629	John Phipps	Rector of Little Torrington
1630	Oliver Collibeare	Rector of Roborough
1631	Robert Buckland	Rector of Beaford
1632	Anthony Short	Rector of Ashreigney
1633	James Voysey	Rector of Dolton
1637	John Gregory	Rector of Meeth
1640	Henry Wilson	Rector of Buckland Filleigh

Archdeaconry of Cornwall

East Deanery

1573	George Cotton	Vicar of Linkinhorne
1580	John Cocke	Rector of St Dominick
1581	Henri Fairchild	Rector of Calstock
1582	John Lillington	Vicar of St Stephen-by-Saltash

1583	Nicholas Prowse	Rector of St John
1594	William Heydon	Vicar of Lewannick
1595	Wiliam Mynterne	Rector of Botus Fleming
1596	Edward Mablye	Rector of Calstock
1597	Walter Arundell	Rector of Sheviock
1598	Ralph Elliot	Rector of Pillaton
1599	William Hele	Rector of Landulph
1606	William Hidon	Vicar of Lewannick
1608	Henry Phillipps	Rector of North Hill
1609	Walter Arundell	Rector of Sheviock
1611	Nicholas Lodge	Rector of St John
1613	Robert Seaman	Rector of Rame
1615	Daniel Featly	Rector of North Hill
1618	John Fowle	Rector of St Ive
1621	Ralph Elliot	Rector of Pillaton
1623	Nicholas Moreton	Rector of St Ive
1627	Bezaleel Burt	Rector of Landulph
1628	William Vincent	Rector of Botus Fleming
1629	Richard Lynam	Vicar of Quethiock
1630	Arthur Baych	Vicar of Antony
1631	John Deeble	Vicar of Maker
1632	Gregory Arundell	Rector of Sheviock
1637	James Rous	Vicar of Lewannick
1640	George Hall	Vicar of Menheniot

Kerrier Deanery

1573	Richard Germyn	Vicar of Constantine
1580	Nicholas Wood	Rector of Ruan Major
1581	John Harrie	Rector of Grade
1582	Thomas Cole	Rector of Landewednack
1583	William Bright	Vicar of Constantine
1594	John Ralphe	Vicar of Wendron
1595	Thomas Baker	Vicar of St Keverne
1596	William Bright	Vicar of Constantine
1597	James Pennaluricke	Vicar of Stithians
1598	John Ralphe	Vicar of Wendron
1599	Ralph Bosistowe	Vicar of Constantine
1606	John Ralphe	Vicar of Wendron
1608	James Pennaluricke	Vicar of Stithians
1609	William Orchard	Vicar of Breage

1611	James Pennaluricke	Vicar of Stithians
1612	John Harrie	Rector of Grade
1613	Matthew Webber	Rector of Ruan Major
1615	Edward Orchard	Vicar of Stithians
1618	Christopher Trevillian	Rector of St Mawgan-in-Meneage
1624	Richard Harries	Vicar of Gwennap
1627	John Periam	Vicar of Manaccan
1628	Milo Exelbye	Vicar of St Keverne
1629	Matthew Webber	Rector of Ruan Major
1630	Abel Loveringe	Rector of Grade
1631	Nicholas Rutter	Vicar of Constantine
1637	Christopher Trevillian	Rector of St Mawgan-in-Meneage
1640	Walter Yeo	Rector of Grade

Penwith Deanery

1573	Nicholas Kernish	Vicar of Uny Lelant
1580	Benedict Letham	Rector of Phillack
1581	Henry Tirack	Rector of Ludgvan
1582	Henry Guston	Vicar of Gulval
1583	Roger Rosmineus	Vicar of Zennor
1594	Thomas Johnslinge	Vicar of St Erth
1595	Phillip Hill	Vicar of Zennor
1596	John Bagwell	Vicar of Uny Lelant
1597	John Hardinge	Rector of Illogan
1598	Philip Torre	Rector of Uny Redruth
1599	Thomas Triggs	Vicar of Gwinnear
1606	Robert Chollocombe	Vicar of Uny Lelant
1608	Henry Tirack	Vicar of Crowan
1609	Richard Veale	Vicar of Gulval
1611	Thomas Johnslinge	Vicar of St Erth
1612	Nicodemus Pestell	Vicar of Uny Lelant
1613	Richard Veale	Vicar of Gulval
1615	Henry Tirack	Vicar of Crowan
1618	John Rowe	Rector of Camborne
1627	Thomas Harries	Vicar of Paul
1628	Joseph Sherwood	Vicar of St Hilary
1630	John Dodd	Vicar of Sancreed
1631	Thomas Currey	Vicar of Uny Lelant
1632	Peter Cooper	Vicar of gulval
1637	Richard Tucker	Rector of Ludgvan

1640	Amos Macy	Vicar of St Just-in-Penwith
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Powder Deanery

1573	Henry Crane	Rector of Withiel ¹⁹⁸⁸
1580	Abraham Clerke	Vicar of Probus
1581	John Wynam	Rector of St Michael Penkevil
1582	William Chalanor	Rector of Ladock
1583	Ralph Kete	Rector of St Erme
1594	William Gatcliffe	Vicar of St Clement
1595	Richard Aliston	Vicar of Kenwyn
1596	Richard Williams	Rector of Philleigh
1597	Robert Harte	Rector of Roche
1598	Ralph Maye	Vicar of St Austell
1599	William Gatcliffe	Vicar of St Clement
1606	Francis Hearle	Rector of St Erme
1608	William Trenick	Vicar of Mevagissey
1609	Christopher Colmer	Vicar of St Allen
1611	William Danson	Rector of Truro
1612	James Dyer	Vicar of Feock
1613	William Gatcliffe	Vicar of St Clement
1615	Philip Torre	Vicar of Probus
1618	Tristram Osgood	Rector of St Ewe
1621	Henry Lockett	Rector of Ruan Lanhorne
1627	Nathaniel Delbridge	Vicar of Cuby
1628	John Nicholson	Rector of St Just-in-Roseland
1629	John Glanville	Rector of St Ewe
1630	Robert Browne	Vicar of Feock
1631	Henry Helyar	Vicar of Veryan
1637	Robert Dunckyn	Vicar of St Stephen-in-Brannel
1640	Edward Shiffield	Vicar of Feock

Pydar Deanery

1561	Henry Crane	Rector of Withiel
1573	Henry Crane	Rector of Withiel
1580	John Gaye	Rector of St Mawgan-in-Pydar
1581	Robert Archerd	Vicar of Padstow
1582	John Kennall	Rector of St Columb Major
1583	Henry Crane	Rector of Withiel
1594	John Blewett	Vicar of Newlyn

¹⁹⁸⁸ Perhaps a mistake as Withiel was in Pydar deanery (see below).

1595	William Jollye	Vicar of St Enoder
1596	John Graunt	Rector of Lanivet
1597	Jhn Blewett	Vicar of Newlyn
1598	Morgan Powell	Vicar of Cubert
1599	William Jollye	Vicar of St Enoder
1606	William Jollye	Vicar of St Enoder
1608	Morgan Powell	Vicar of Cubert
1609	John Blewett	Vicar of Newlyn
1611	Morgan Powell	Vicar of Cubert
1612	Gilbert Coade	Vicar of St Veep
1613	John Blewett	Vicar of Newlyn
1615	Thomas Colmer	Vicar of Newlyn
1618	Nathaniel Prideaux	Vicar of Cubert
1621	William Coade	Vicar of Newlyn
1627	John Glanville	Rector of Withiel
1628	Theodore Heape	Vicar of St Enoder
1630	John Legge	Rector of St Columb Major
1631	Hannibal Gammon	Rector of St Mawgan-in-Pydar
1637	Nathaniel Prydeaux	Vicar of Cubert
1640	William Wishart	Rector of Withiel

Trigg Major Deanery

1561	John Sutton	Vicar of St Gennys
1573	John Coker	Rector of Jacobstow
1580	John Cawlse	Vicar of Poughill
1581	John Penkevil	Vicar of St Teath
1582	Roger Harward	Vicar of Poundstock
1583	John Cornish	Rector of Whitstone
1595	Henry Verchill	Rector of Jacobstow
1596	Peter Denis	Vicar of Poundstock
1597	John Kerslake	Rector of Week St Mary
1598	James Woode	Vicar of Launcells
1599	John Jackson	Vicar of North Petherwin
1606	Jasper Robinson	Rector of Marhamchurch
1608	John Grene	Vicar of Davidstow
1609	Thomas Downe	Vicar of Stratton
1611	John Carter	Vicar of St Gennys
1613	John Jackson	Vicar of North Petherwin
1615	Jasper Robinson	Rector of Marhamchurch
1618	Henry Verchill	Rector of Jacobstow

1623	Thomas Downe	Vicar of Stratton
1627	John Carter	Vicar of St Gennys
1628	Nathaniel Beard	Vicar of Altarnun
1629	William Churton	Vicar of Poundstock
1630	William Saye	Vicar of St Clether
1631	Henry Verchill	Rector of Jacobstow
1637	William Warmington	Vicar of Launcells
1640	Richard Turner	Rector of Marhamchurch

Trigg Minor Deanery

1573	John Sutton	Rector of Lesnewth
1580	John Goldsmith	Vicar of St Kew
1581	Nicholas Denbold	Vicar of Treneulos
1582	Gerentius Davie	Vicar of Tintagel
1583	Lewis Adams	Vicar of St Beward
1594	John Browne	Vicar of Poughill
1595	Lewis Adams	Vicar of St Beward
1596	Nicholas Stowell	Rector of Blisland
1597	William Parker	Rector of St Tudy
1598	Degory Bettinson	Rector of Lesnewth
1599	Lewis Adams	Rector of St Beward
1606	Lewis Adams	Rector of St Beward
1608	Thomas Hutton	Vicar of St Kew
1609	Gerentius Davie	Vicar of Tintagel
1611	John Baylie	Vicar of Bodmin
1613	Stephen Cavell	Rector of St Endellion
1615	Thomas Bettinson	Rector of Minster
1618	Zachary Torway	Rector of Lesnewth
1623	John Cottell	Rector of Trevalga
1627	Nicholas Yates	Rector of Minster
1628	Thomas Syms	Vicar of St Teath
1630	Matthew Sweetser	Vicar of Tintagel
1631	Thomas Harrison	Rector of Michaelstow
1637	William Todd	Rector of Lanteglos-by-Camelford
1640	John Deaves	Rector of Michaelstow

West Deanery

1573	John Trevillian	Vicar of St Cleer
1580	William Lamb	Rector of St Martin-by-Looe
1581	John Wills	Vicar of Pelynt

1582	Vincent Marston	Rector of Lanreath
1583	Peter Wills	Vicar of Morval
1594	John Wills	Vicar of Pelynt
1596	Walter Tyncombe	Rector of Lansallos
1598	William Hardestie	Vicar of Lanteglos-by-Fowey
1599	William Hardestie	Vicar of Lanteglos-by-Fowey
1606	William Gilbert	Rector of St Pinnock
1608	Arthur Furse	Vicar of Talland
1609	Henry Grante	Vicar of St Veep
1611	Nicholas Hatche	Vicar of Lanteglos-by-Fowey
1613	John Wills	Vicar of Morval
1615	Walter Tyncombe	Rector of Lansallos
1618	John Wills	Vicar of Morval
1623	Arthur Furse	Vicar of Talland
1627	William Stephens	Vicar of Duloe
1629	William Thomas	Vicar of Pelynt
1630	Matthew Sharrock	Vicar of St Cleer
1631	George Phare	Rector of St Keyne
1637	Nicholas Hatch	Vicar of Lanteglos-by-Fowey
1640	Samuel Hill	Rector of Warleggan

Archdeaconry of Exeter

Aylesbeare Deanery

1561	John Backster	Vicar of Ottery St Mary
1573	John Pasmore	Rector of Clyst St Mary
1580	Ralph Manneringe	Vicar of Ottery St Mary
1581	John Wilkens	Vicar of Sidmouth
1582	Robert Stokes	Vicar of Aylesbeare
1583	Roger Alley	Vicar of Otterton
1594	John Evans	Vicar of Sidmouth
1595	Robert Stokes	Vicar of Aylesbeare
1596	John Travers	Rector of Farringdon
1597	Richard Hunt	Rector of Clyst St Mary
1598	Robert Bucklande	Rector of Clyst St George
1599	Robert Pilkington	Vicar of Harpford
1607	Isaiah Farringdon	Rector of Lymestone
1608	Richard Bowdon	Rector of Huxham
1610	Peter Brice	Vicar of Rockbeare

1614	Robert Pilkington	Vicar of Harpford
1615	Ralph Manwaryng	Vicar of Sidmouth
1616	William Venne	Vicar of Otterton
1618	Nicholas Byrche	Rector of Bickleigh
1623	Robert Steynings	Rector of Broad Clyst
1624	Bartholomew Parre	Rector of Clyst St Mary
1625	Gideon Edmonds	Rector of Clyst St George
1627	Isaiah Farringdon	Rector of Lymptstone
1629	Ambrose Boone	Rector of Poltimore
1630	James Watson	Vicar of Aylesbeare
1631	John Seager	Vicar of Broad Clyst
1632	Ambrose Bence	Vicar of Rockbeare
1637	John Bradford	Vicar of Harpford
1640	Stephen Chapman	Vicar of East Budleigh

Cadbury Deanery

1561	Thomas Lovebone	Rector of Stockleigh English
1573	Thomas Lovebone	Rector of Stockleigh English
1580	Thomas Ellsdon	Rector of Down St Mary
1581	Gentile Buller	Rector of Upton Pyne
1582	John Bradford	Vicar of Newton St Cyres
1583	Laurence Bodley	Rector of Shobrooke
1594	Richard Stille	Rector of Stockleigh English
1595	John Bradford	Vicar of Newton St Cyres
1596	James Densham	Rector of Down St Mary
1597	Philip Turner	Vicar of Thorverton
1598	Robert Heycrafte	Vicar of Bramford Speke
1599	William Lowther	Vicar of Cadbury
1610	Laurence Bodleigh	Rector of Shobrooke
1614	Thomas Barrett	Rector of Cheriton Fitzpaine
1615	Tristram Heycrafte	Vicar of Bramford Speke
1618	Francis Shaxton	Rector of Down St Mary
1623	John Bowbeare	Rector of Stockleigh Pomeroy
1624	John Bradford	Vicar of Cadbury
1627	William Franck	Rector of Poughill
1629	John Cowlinge	Rector of Cadeleigh
1630	William Cowlinge	Rector of Stockleigh English
1631	Thomas Barrett	Rector of Cheriton Fitzpaine
1632	Thomas Alden	Vicar of Bramford Speke
1637	William Norrice	Vicar of Bramford Speke

1640	Nathaniel Durant	Rector of Cheirton Fitzpaine
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Christianity Deanery

1561	Walter Voysey	Rector of St Leonard
1580	Richard Baker	Rector of St Stephen
1581	John Ellis	Rector of St Martin
1582	----- Collmer	Rector of St Pancras
1583	Walter Densham	Rector of St Mary Major
1594	Edmund Templeman	Curate of St Kerrian
1595	William Jenninges	Curate of St Pancras
1596	John Tillie	Curate of St Kerrian
1597	Robert Withers	Curate of All Hallows Goldsmiths' Street
1598	Samuel Knight	Curate of St Martin
1599	Samuel Knight	Curate of St Martin
1605	Richard Chub	Rector of Holy Trinity
1610	Gregory Moore	Curate of St Mary Steps
1611	James Browne	Curate of St Olave
1615	Henry Trotte	Curate of All Hallows on the Walls
1616	Robert Withall	Curate of St Kerrian
1618	Robert Withall	Curate of St Kerrian
1623	Francis Bradsell	Vicar of Heavitree
1624	Henry Trotte	?
1629	William Sheres	Curate of All Hallows Goldsmiths' Street
1630	Robert Parson	Rector of St Martin
1631	?	Curate of All Hallows on the Walls
1632	Timothy Shute	Rector of Holy Trinity
1637	Robert Oland	Rector of St Paul
1640	Nicholas Hooper	Rector of St Edmund-on-the-Bridge

Dunkeswell Deanery

1561	William Cottell	Curate of Sheldon
1573	Thomas Maior	Rector of Combe Raleigh
1580	Justin Lancaster	Rector of Churchstanton
1581	John Newcombe	Vicar of Upottery
1582	Thomas Clapham	Rector of Hemyock
1583	Walter Knott	Vicar of Luppitt
1594	Walter Knott	Vicar of Luppitt

1595	Peter Bande	Rector of Churchstanton
1596	Peter Mavericke	Vicar of Awliscombe
1597	John Newcombe	Vicar of Upottery
1598	Walter Knott	Vicar of Luppitt
1599	Nathaniel Wilson	Rector of Combe Raleigh
1607	William Lee	Rector of Clayhidon
1610	Nathaniel Wilson	Rector of Combe Raleigh
1614	Anthony Band	Rector of Hemyock
1615	William Lee	Rector of Clayhidon
1618	Nathaniel Wilson	Rector of Combe Raleigh
1623	Roger Kelly	Rector of Hemyock
1624	Humphrey Johnson	Vicar of Luppitt
1627	Thomas Maior	Vicar of Yarcombe
1629	Peter Bond	Rector of Churchstanton
1630	Robert Slowman	Vicar of Upottery
1631	Roger Kelly	Rector of Hemyock
1632	Humphrey Johnson	Vicar of Luppitt
1637	Robert Slowman	Vicar of Upottery
1640	Thomas Welman	Vicar of Luppitt

Dunsford Deanery

1561	Richard Tremayne	Rector of Doddiscombeleigh
1573	John Service	Vicar of South Tawton
1580	Christopher Bodleigh	Rector of Whitestone
1581	Edward Mably	Rector of Throwleigh
1582	Stephen Cowling	Rector of Bridford
1583	Rowland Burrell	Rector of Cheriton Bishop
1591	John Pulton	Rector of Hittisleigh
1594	John Blackeforde	Rector of Ashton
1595	William Gee	Vicar of Dunsford
1596	Christopher Bodleigh	Rector of Whitestone
1597	Rowland Burrell	Rector of Cheriton Bishop
1598	Michael Dollen	Rector of Doddiscombeleigh
1599	Richard Gewin	Rector of Throwleigh
1604	John Weeks	Rector of Drewsteignton
1610	Jerome Bodleigh	Rector of Whitestone
1614	John Gee	Vicar of Dunsford
1615	Edward Gee	Rector of Tedburn St Mary
1618	Richard Curson	Vicar of South Tawton
1623	Ralph Manwaringe	Rector of Teburn St Mary

1624	Walter Cowlinge	Rector of Bridford
1625	Thomas Baker	Rector of Whitestone
1627	Michael Dolling	Rector of Doddiscombeleigh
1629	John Poulton	Rector of Hittisleigh
1630	John Shilston	Vicar of Holcombe Burnell
1631	Humphrey Gey	Rector of Gidleigh
1632	William Garnett	Vicar of Dunsford
1637	Richard Car	Rector of Throwleigh
1640	Richard Mervyn	Rector of Throwleigh

Honiton Deanery

1561	Thomas Watson	Vicar of Axmouth
1573	Thomas Phillips	Vicar of Seaton
1580	Simon Norrington	Rector of Uplyme
1581	John Tooker	Rector of Southleigh
1582	John Molland	Rector of Combe Pyne
1583	Bartholomew Palmer	Rector of Widworthy
1594	Richard Harvie	Vicar of Axmouth
1595	Thomas Phillips	Vicar of Seaton
1596	Richard Farneham	Vicar of Thorncombe
1597	John Molland	Rector of Combe Pyne
1598	Robert Hayte	Rector of Gittisham
1599	John Robins	Rector of Honiton
1607	Richard Harvie	Vicar of Axmouth
1610	John Carpenter	Rector of Northleigh
1614	Thomas Beamont	Rector of Gittisham
1615	Robert Pinsent	Rector of Cotleigh
1618	William Knolls	Vicar of Axminster
1623	Simon Potter	Rector of Southleigh
1624	John Jourden	Rector of Musbury
1625	Thomas Foster	Rector of Farway
1627	John Tanner	Rector of Offwell
1629	Robert Perry	Rector of Widworthy
1630	Robert Gomershall	Vicar of Thorncombe
1631	Robert Hore	Rector of Cotleigh
1632	Matthew Drake	Rector of Musbury
1637	John Ford	Rector of Northleigh
1640	Edmund Hunt	Rector of Uplyme

Kenn Deanery

1561	Thomas Younge	Rector of Stokeinteignhead
1573	William Jones	Rector of Powderham
1580	Christopher More	Rector of East Ogwell
1581	Henry Dotten	Rector of Stokeinteignhead
1582	William Lewcombe	Rector of Shillingford
1583	Richard Sheere	Rector of West Ogwell
1591	Henry Gregory	Rector of Mamhead
1594	John Robbins	Rector of Kenn
1595	William Randle	Vicar of Exminster
1596	Zachary Hooker	Rector of Haccombe
1597	Richard Sheere	Rector of West Ogwell
1598	John Harte	Rector of East Ogwell
1599	Simon Peake	Vicar of St Thomas near Exeter
1610	Roger Wills	Rector of Powderham
1614	Robert Buckland	Rector of Combeinteignhead
1615	William Hutchinson	Rector of Kenn
1616	William Hellyer	Rector of Dunchideock
1618	John Doughtie	Rector of Alphington
1623	Thomas Collins	Rector of Powderham
1624	William Randle	Vicar of Exminster
1625	William Hellyer	Rector of Dunchideock
1627	Zachary Hooker	Rector of Haccombe
1629	John Shenton	Rector of Ashcombe
1630	George Oram	Vicar of Kenton
1631	John Bartlett	Vicar of St Thomas near Exeter
1632	Thomas Buckland	Rector of Combeinteignhead
1637	Robert Wade	Rector of Mamhead
1640	John Stephens	Rector of East Ogwell

Plymtree Deanery

1561	John Ockley	Rector of Plymtree
1562	Baldwin Hill	Rector of Talaton
1573	James More	Rector of Feniton
1580	William Hobbes	Rector of Butterleigh
1582	Willliam Jeninges	Vicar of Cullompton
1583	Thomas Wakelyn	Rector of Kentisbeare
1591	John Plimpton	Rector of Butterleigh
1594	Thomas Payne	Rector of Plymtree
1595	John Leach	Rector of Talaton
1596	Thomas Richards	Rector of Kentisbeare

1597	George Skinner	Rector of Feniton
1598	John Foster	Vicar of Payhembury
1599	Richard Moore	Vicar of Buckerell
1605	Thomas Payne	Rector of Plymtree
1610	John Leach	Rector of Washfield
1614	William Orford	Rector of Clyst Hydon
1615	John Eedes	Rector of Clyst St Lawrence
1616	William Cotton	Rector of Silverton
1618	Thomas Payne	Rector of Plymtree
1623	John Flavell	Rector of Talaton
1624	John Foster	Vicar of Payhembury
1627	Richard Peck	Vicar of Cullompton
1629	Hugh Chomeleye	Rector of Rewe
1630	William Cotton	Rector of Silverton
1631	Robert Bagbeare	Rector of Blackborough
1632	Bartholomew Parr	Rector of Rewe
1640	John Parsons	Rector of Blackborough

Tiverton Deanery

1561	John Langdon	Rector of Willand
1562	Hugh Atwill	Rector of Calverleigh
1573	William Nightgale	Rector of Uplowman
1580	Richard Pickeringe	Rector of Huntsham
1581	William Torr	Rector of Clayhanger
1582	Andrew Lake	Vicar of Morebath
1583	Lewis Sweete	Rector of Uplowman
1594	Andrew Lake	Vicar of Morebath
1595	Thomas Ceeley	Rector of Huntsham
1596	Robert Chollacombe	Rector of Clayhanger
1597	James Collerd	Vicar of Holcombe Rogus
1598	William Bestie	Vicar of Burlescombe
1599	Andrew Lake	Vicar of Morebath
1604	Lionel Sharpe	Rector of Pitt Portion Tiverton
1607	Lionel Sharpe	Rector of Pitt Portion Tiverton
1610	John leach	Rector of Washfield
1614	John Norrice	Vicar of Hockworthy
1615	George Bridgeman	Vicar of Holcombe Rogus
1618	Richard Sweete	Rector of Uplowman
1621	Thomas Stokes	Rector of Willand
1623	Lionel Sharpe	Rector of Pitt Portion Tiverton

1624	George Trevylian	Vicar of Holcombe Rogus
1627	John Norrice	Vicar of Hockwoorthy
1629	Philip Hall	Rector of Willand
1630	William Sharpe	Rector of Huntsham
1631	James Hartnoll	Rector of Pitt Portion Tiverton
1632	William Whitway	Vicar of Morebath
1640	Seymour Kirton	Rector of Uplowman

Archdeaconry of Totnes

Holsworthy Deanery

1561	Andrew Mychill	Rector of West Putford
1573	William Mill	Rector of West Putford
1580	Thomas Williams	Rector of Ashwater
1581	William Cavell	Rector of Holsworthy
1582	David Walter	Rector of Tetcott
1583	Roger Alley	Rector of Pyworthy
1594	George Close	Rector of Bradford
1595	Roger Squire	Rector of Tetcott
1596	Nicholas Beckett	Rector of Holsworthy
1597	William Currie	Vicar of Bridgerule
1598	Mark Twiggs	Vicar of Bradworthy
1599	William Mill	Rector of West Putford
1615	Richard James	Rector of Thornbury
1618	Thomas Saltern	Rector of Bradford
1627	Thomas Bradford	Curate of Cookworthy
1629	Hugh Mill	Rector of West Putford
1630	Thomas Blight	Rector of Pyworthy
1631	Thomas Seymor	Rector of Luffincott
1632	Thomas Bradford	Rector of Milton Damerel
1637	Thomas Saltern	Rector of Bradford
1640	Richard Baylie	Rector of Hollacombe

Ippelepen Deanery

1561	John Baylie	Rector of Denbury
1573	Ambrose Torrye	Vicar of Berry Pomeroy
1580	William Rotherford	Vicar of Brixham
1581	Thomas Wright	Vicar of Berry Pomeroy

1582	Thomas Blackaller	Rector of Littlehempston
1583	Philip Mendos	Rector of Denbury
1594	John Harte	Rector of Torbryan
1595	Edward Proctor	Vicar of Berry Pomeroy
1596	Sampson Strode	Rector of Littlehempston
1597	Philip Mendos	Rector of Denbury
1598	John Irishe	Vicar of Broadhempston
1599	John Harte	Rector of Torbryan
1615	Walter More	Rector of Denbury
1618	John Travers	Vicar of Brixham
1627	John Travers	Vicar of Brixham
1629	James Forbesse	Vicar of Bovey Tracey
1630	Nathaniel Delawne	Vicar of Broadhempston
1631	Laurence Hart	Vicar of Ipplepen
1632	Edward Gosewell	Rector of Torbryan
1633	Walter Moore	Rector of Denbury
1637	William Randell	Vicar of Berry Pomeroy
1640	William Gibbs	Vicar of Ipplepen

Moreton Deanery

1561	Stephen White	Rector of Manaton-in-the-Moor
1573	William Merreck	Vicar of Bovey Tracey
1580	Nicholas Copleston	Rector of Lustleigh
1581	Nicholas Marston	Rector of Moretonhampstead
1582	Richard Derlove	Vicar of Bovey Tracey
1583	Nicholas Whiddon	Rector of North Bovey
1594	Benedict Parker	Vicar of Ilsington
1595	Robert Rider	Vicar of Kingsteignton
1596	Richard Derlove	Vicar of Bovey Tracey
1597	Robert Rider	Vicar of Kingsteignton
1598	John Lamberte	Rector of North Bovey
1615	Ralph Maverick	Vicar of Ilsington
1618	Thomas Comyng	Rector of Lustleigh
1623	John Challis	Rector of Teigngrace
1627	Thomas Clifford	Vicar of Ilsington
1629	John Haycroft	Vicar of Abbotskerswell
1630	William Hill	Rector of Manaton-in-the-Moor
1631	Francis Strode	Rector of Ideford
1632	Thomas Comminge	Rector of Lustleigh
1637	George Lyde	Vicar of Widecombe-in-the-Moor

1640	Thomas Strode	Vicar of Kingsteignton
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Okehampton Deanery

1561	George Verney	Rector of Jacobstowe
1573	James Cortes	Vicar of Hatherleigh
1580	Richard Phillips	Rector of Northlew
1581	Richard Bowdon	Rector of Belstone
1582	John Hatch	Rector of Highampton
1583	William Vowler	Rector of Jacobstowe
1594	Richard Bowdon	Vicar of Okehampton
1595	Roger Seelie	Vicar of Hatherleigh
1596	William Vowler	Rector of Jacobstowe
1597	Lewis Parker	Rector of Inwardleigh
1598	Thomas Brooke	Rector of Broadwoodkelly
1599	Roger Sentle	Rector of Ashbury
1615	Lewis Parker	Rector of Inwardleigh
1616	John Maverick	Rector of Beaworthy
1618	Lewis Parker	Rector of Inwardleigh
1627	John Hussey	Vicar of Okehampton
1629	John Maverick	Rector of Beaworthy
1630	John Raynolds	Rector of Honeychurch
1631	John Crought	Rector of Beaworthy
1632	Thomas Hutton	Rector of Northlew
1633	Ricihard Eveleigh	Rector of Bratton Clovelly
1637	John Hore	Rector of Ashbury
1640	William Trevethick	Vicar of Hatherleigh

Plympton Deanery

1573	John Castlen	Vicar of Holbeton
1580	Andrew Helliar	Rector of Harford
1581	John Atkins	Rector of Newton Ferrers
1582	Francis Cox	Rector of Ermington
1583	John Collens	Rector of North Huish
1594	Martin Key	Vicar of Yealmpton
1595	James Watson	Vicar of Ermington
1596	Thomas Parr	Vicar of Ugborough
1597	John Atkins	Rector of Newton Ferrers
1598	John Collins	Rector of North Huish
1599	James Watson	Vicar of Ermington
1614	John Cooke	Curate and preacher Plympton St Mary

1615	Samuel Hieron	Vicar of Modbury
1616	James Watson	Vicar of Ermington
1618	Henry Wallys	Vicar of Plymouth
1627	William Phillips	Vicar of Holbeton
1629	Francis Barnard	Vicar of Ugborough
1630	Henry Smith	Vicar of Cornwood
1631	John Sprott	Rector of Newton Ferrers
1632	Edward Elliott	Rector of Newton Ferrers
1633	Henry Bagley	Vicar of Modbury
1637	Aaron Wilson	Vicar of Plymouth
1640	John Edgcombe	Rector of North Huish

Tamerton Deanery

1561	John Huxstaple	Vicar of Whitchurch
1573	John Berry	Vicar of Walkhampton
1581	Thomas Pepper	Rector of Meavy
1582	Richard Discomb	Rector of Peter Tavy
1583	Arthur Coade	Rector of Mary Tavy
1594	Roger Bennett	Vicar of Egg Buckland
1595	Germanus Gouldston	Rector of Stoke Damerel
1596	Thomas Pepper	Rector of Meavy
1597	George Newman	Vicar of Walkhampton
1598	Arthur Coade	Rector of Mary Tavy
1599	William Hellyer	Vicar of Bickleigh
1604	Edmund Lawry	Vicar of Buckland Monachorum
1615	Edmund Lawry	Vicar of Buckland Monachorum
1618	Germanus Gouldston	Rector of Stoke Damerel
1625	Germanus Gouldston	Rector of Stoke Damerel
1627	Lewis Land	Vicar of Tamerton Foliot
1629	Joseph Shute	Rector of Meavy
1630	John Pyne	Rector of Bere Ferrers
1631	Christopher Lawrey	Vicar of Buckland Monachorum
1632	James Bache	Vicar of Egg Buckland
1637	Lewis Land	Vicar of Tamerton Foliot
1640	John Pyne	Rector of Bere Ferrers

Tavistock Deanery

1561	John Perins	Vicar of Tavistock
1573	Anthony Randell	Rector of Lydford
1580	Robert Underhill	Rector of Stowford
1581	Walter Mounse	Vicar of Marystow
1582	James Kellie	Rector of Kelly
1583	Arthur Beare	Rector of Lewtrenchard
1594	Thomas Askram	Rector of Stowford
1595	James Kellie	Rector of Kelly
1596	Edward Tuke	Vicar of Marystow
1597	William Heale	Rector of Lydford
1598	William Sheere	Rector of Virginstow
1599	Gilbert Germyn	Rector of Bridestowe
1615	Arthur Beare	Rector of Lewtrenchard
1616	Henry Battishill	Rector of Lifton
1618	Hugh Hill	Rector of Kelly
1627	Hugh Hill	Rector of Kelly
1629	William Barber	Rector of Lydford
1630	John Band	Rector of Virginstow
1631	John Cooper	Vicar of Lamerton
1632	Thomas Wreyford	Rector of Dunterton
1637	Arthur Beare	Rector of Lewtrenchard
1640	Bernard Hearnaman	Rector of Lifton

Totnes Deanery

1561	Richard Fountayne	Vicar of South Brent
1573	Richard Fountayne	Vicar of South Brent
1580	Richard Fountayne	Vicar of South Brent
1581	Henry Evans	Rector of Ashprington
1582	George Carew	Rector of Dittisham
1583	Anthony Hartley	Vicar of Townstall
1594	Henry Evans	Rector of Ashprington
1595	Sampson Strode	Rector of Dittisham
1596	Paul Tabb	Rector of Diptford
1597	Henry Marten	Vicar of Rattery
1598	Walter Roche	Vicar of Townstall
1599	Giles Askham	Rector of Stoke Fleming
1615	Richard Reynolds	Rector of Stoke Fleming
1618	Edward Procter	Rector of Ashprington
1627	Edward Procter	Rector of Ashprington
1629	Sampson Strode	Rector of Dittisham

1630	Nicholas Gill	Vicar of South Brent
1631	Robert Herrick	Vicar of Dean Prior
1632	John Carewe	Vicar of Harberton
1637	Anthony Hartford	Vicar of Townstall
1640	John Lithbridge	Rector of Ashburton

Woodleigh Deanery

1561	William Randell	Rector of East Allington
1580	John Pynder	Rector of Sampford Courtenay
1581	Richard Edwards	Rector of South Pool
1582	Richard Cleyland	Rector of East Portlemouth
1583	Theophilus Jones	Vicar of West Alvington
1594	Lewis Sweete	Rector of East Allington
1595	William Helliar	Rector of Charleton
1596	Richard Edwards	Rector of South Pool
1597	Richard Cleland	Rector of East Portlemouth
1598	Matthew Sufcliffe	Vicar of West Alvington
1599	Matthew Sutcliffe	Vicar of West Alvington
1611	Richard Costard	Vicar of Churchstow
1615	Clement Ellys	Vicar of Loddiswell
1618	Otho Morcombe	Rector of Dodbrooke
1627	Timothy Basil	Vicar of Stokenham
1629	Francis Torkington	Rector of Ringmore
1630	John Rombelow	Rector of Bigbury
1631	Nathaniel Nanscawen	Rector of South Pool
1632	Nathaniel Nanscawem	Rector of South Pool
1637	Edward Eakyns	Rector of Dodbrooke
1640	Jonas Styles	Vicar of Stokenham

Table 1: Bishop Oldham's Accounts 1505-1518

	Temporal Revenues	Spiritual Revenues	Total Income	Household Expenditure	Surplus
1505-6 ¹⁹⁸⁹	£1147 ¹⁹⁹⁰	£136	£1283	£664	£619
1506-7	£662	£202	£864	£631	£233
1507-8	£821	£295v ¹⁹⁹¹	£1116	£429	£687
1508-9	£633	£156	£789	£720	£69
1509-10	£1278	£233	£1511	£602	£909
1510-11	£1429	£212v	£1641	£902	£739
1511-12	£1418	£155	£1573	£1021	£552
1512-13	£1403	£165	£1568	£730	£829
1513-14	£1298	£275v	£1573	£818	£755
1514-15	£1448	£134	£1582	£765	£817
1515-16	£1442	£161	£1603	£838	£765
1516-17	£1539	£302v	£1841	£903	£938
1517-18	£1416	£165	£1581	£1068	£513

Source: ECA, D&C.3690

¹⁹⁸⁹ The accounting year ran from Michaelmas to Michaelmas.

¹⁹⁹⁰ To the nearest pound.

¹⁹⁹¹ Year of triennial visitation.

Table 2: Episcopal Income 1522-1536

	Temporal Revenues	Spiritual Revenues	Total Income
1522 ¹⁹⁹²	£1332 ¹⁹⁹³	£129	£1461
1526- 7 ¹⁹⁹⁴	£1496	?	?
1535 ¹⁹⁹⁵	£1545	£163	£1708
1535	£1408	£163	£1708
1536 ¹⁹⁹⁶	£1400	£131	£1531

Sources: DHC, 382/ER1; Chanter 1072; 382/ER3; *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, eds. J. Caley and J. Hunter (6 vols., 1810-34), ii. 289-91; G. Oliver, *Ecclesiastical Antiquities in Devon* (3 vols., Exeter, 1839), ii. 153-6.

¹⁹⁹² Rental of episcopal income.

¹⁹⁹³ To the nearest pound.

¹⁹⁹⁴ Receiver-General's roll.

¹⁹⁹⁵ Draft of *Valor Ecclesiasticus*.

¹⁹⁹⁶ Survey of diocese conducted by Veysey at the king's command.

Table 3: Manors alienated from the Bishopric of Exeter 1545-1550

Manor ¹⁹⁹⁷	Date of Alienation	Recipient	Valuation ¹⁹⁹⁸
Farringdon	27 Apr. 1545	King ¹⁹⁹⁹	£32
Exeter Place London	12 Feb. 1548	Sir William Paget ²⁰⁰⁰	£48
Morchard Bishop Crediton	4 June 1548	Sir Thomas Darcy ²⁰⁰¹	£19 £146
Chidham, Thorney, East Horsley, Tyting, Harringay	9 Aug. 1548	Thomas Fisher ²⁰⁰²	£4 £12 £10
Ashburton Burgus Ashburton Foreign	30 Dec. 1548	Francis Pole	£28 £52
Paignton	21 Dec. 1549	Sir Thomas Speke	£199
Bishopsteignton, Pawton, Radway, West Teignmouth	10 Jan. 1550	Sir Andrew Dudley	£56 £106 £12 £18
Bishop's Clyst Bishop's Tawton	12 Jan. 1550	Earl of Bedford	£37 £158
Chudleigh Burgus Chudleigh Foreign	? Jan. 1550	Thomas Bridges	£26 £64

Sources: ECA, D&C.3551, fos. 169, 209-10v, 214-15v, 215-6v, 239v-41v, 250-2, 255-6, 259-61, 262v-3v.

¹⁹⁹⁷ Includes relevant advowson(s) unless otherwise stated.

¹⁹⁹⁸ As in *Valor Ecclesiasticus*. Values to nearest whole pound.

¹⁹⁹⁹ Exchanged for inappropriate rectories of Brampford Speke and Pinhoe (both Devon), the priory of St Nicholas Exeter and the inappropriate rectory of South Mimms (Middx).

²⁰⁰⁰ Save for the advowson (St Clement Danes) which had been granted to Protector Somerset the previous year (*CPR 1547-8*, p. 131).

²⁰⁰¹ Save for the advowson of Morchard Bishop. Darcy agreed to pay Veysey and his successors a £40 annuity for the alienation of Morchard and Crediton.

²⁰⁰² Included the rectory of South Mimms (Middx).

Table 4: Long-Term Grants of Episcopal Manors 1521-1553

Manor	Grant	Lessee	Term ²⁰⁰³	Rent ²⁰⁰⁴
Petershays	3/7/25	Thomas Yard & wife	60	£10
East Horsley	1/12/28	Marquis of Exeter	60	£?
East Horsley	4/7/36	Marquis of Exeter	99	£8
Penryn Burgus	12/9/43	William Fisher	60	£10
Paignton	1/12/45	Sir Thomas Speke	99	£199
Crediton	10/1/46	Sir Thomas Darcy ²⁰⁰⁵	80	£146
Bishop's Clyst	1/3/46	Lord Russell ²⁰⁰⁶	50	£37
Bishop's Tawton				£158
Bishopsteignton	8/3/46	Humphrey Worth	60	£56
Radway				£12
Lawhitton	1/4/46	John Ailworth ²⁰⁰⁷	60	£62
Morchar Bishop	7/4/46	Sir Thomas Darcy ²⁰⁰⁸	80	£19
Penryn Foreign	6/5/46	John Killigrew	99	£48
Cargoll	1/1/47	Clement Throgmorton	80	£60
Pawton	24/1/47	Sir Anthony Denny	80	£106
Chudleigh Burgus	6/2/47	Duke of Somerset	99	£73
Chudleigh Foreign				
Cuddenbeak	30/4/47	Sir Andrew Flamancke	80	£64
Tyting	20/2/48	Sir Edward Walsingham		
Burneyre	13/11/48	Sir Anthony Cope	80	£67
Tregear				£35
Bishop's Nympton	?/?5/46	Sir Hugh Pollard ²⁰⁰⁹	?	?
Ashburton Burgus	?/?46	Sir John Poulett	30	?
Ashburton Foreign	10/9/?47?48	? Saintclere	?	?

²⁰⁰³ In years.

²⁰⁰⁴ The annual rents levied were those assessed in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*. Sums to nearest whole pound.

²⁰⁰⁵ Includes advowson of Crediton.

²⁰⁰⁶ Includes advowsons of Sowton and Farringdon (both Devon). Russell's lease was extended for a further 30 years on 31 Jan. 1547. The annual rent for these additional years remained at £195 (ECA, D&C.3551, fos. 199v-201v).

²⁰⁰⁷ Includes advowson of Lawhitton (by a separate grant dated 1 Apr. 1546: ECA, D&C.3551, fo. 187).

²⁰⁰⁸ Crediton was regranted with Morchar Bishop.

²⁰⁰⁹ The last three leases are not recorded in the chapter register book. However, they probably occurred; certainly the Pollards were in possession of Bishop's Nympton in the later seventeenth century (DHC, 382/E5/1).

Sources: DHC, 382/E2, pp. 71-2; ECA, D&C.3551, fos. 110v-11, 155, 174-7v, 183-6v, 196v-7v, 201-5v, 210v-11, 222-5, 232-3v, 268-9; LP, 21(I), nos. 963(63), 1536; ECA, D&C.3498/118.

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**Table 5: Civil Suits commenced in the Bishop of Exeter's Consistory Court
1561-1641**

Year	M	Te	D	Ti	O	Total
1561*	12(10)	4(3)	29(24)	55(46)	19(17)	119
1562	20(10)	6(3)	49(25)	99(51)	20(11)	194
1563*	11(13)	6(7)	24(28)	33(38)	13(16)	87
1572*	3(5)	5(9)	7(12)	34(60)	8(14)	57
1573*	3(5)	8(15)	13(24)	23(47)	8(14)	55
1574*	6(11)	5(9)	7(13)	31(56)	6(11)	55
1580	36(8)	34(8)	121(27)	209(47)	44(10)	444
1581	18(5)	25(6)	84(22)	207(53)	56(14)	390
1582	22(6)	20(6)	101(28)	178(49)	39(11)	360
1583	34(7)	29(6)	128(28)	223(48)	51(11)	465
1584*	19(8)	21(9)	75(32)	95(40)	27(11)	237
1589*	3(3)	10(9)	48(41)	49(42)	6(6)	116
1590*	20(8)	21(9)	75(32)	95(40)	27(11)	237
1591*	5(5)	7(8)	17(19)	54(59)	8(9)	116
1592*	15&7)	18(8)	57(27)	99(46)	26(12)	215
1594*	9(7)	10(7)	31(22)	69(50)	19(14)	138
1595	28(9)	28(9)	90(28)	145(44)	36(10)	327
1596	37(9)	23(6)	98(25)	175(44)	61(16)	394
1597	30(8)	38(10)	78(20)	189(49)	49(13)	384
1598	26(7)	30(8)	97(26)	166(45)	54(14)	373
1599	23(6)	22(6)	93(25)	167(45)	68(18)	373
1600	15(4)	20(5)	112(30)	163(44)	59(17)	369
1601	20(4)	30(6)	149(31)	217(44)	72(15)	488
1602*	11(6)	8(4)	66(33)	90(45)	25(12)	200
1604*	2(1)	10(6)	65(36)	78(43)	25(14)	180
1605	27(6)	32(7)	146(31)	209(44)	64(12)	478
1606	18(4)	34(8)	144(35)	158(38)	60(15)	414
1607	26(7)	21(6)	131(35)	143(38)	54(14)	375
1608	29(6)	33(7)	161(33)	198(40)	72(14)	493
1609	27(5)	24(5)	158(31)	237(46)	72(13)	513
1610	18(4)	37(8)	170(36)	186(39)	62(13)	473
1611	20(4)	44(9)	189(39)	175(36)	58(12)	486
1612	19(4)	41(9)	150(33)	177(38)	74(16)	461
1613	17(4)	38(8)	152(32)	200(42)	72(14)	479
1614	15(3)	28(6)	125(28)	215(48)	64(15)	447
1615	18(4)	35(8)	131(29)	196(44)	68(15)	448
1616	8(2)	40(10)	123(30)	176(43)	59(15)	406
1617*	7(2)	38(12)	108(35)	114(37)	44(14)	311
1618	11(3)	27(8)	125(37)	123(37)	49(15)	335
1619	8(2)	40(12)	123(37)	105(31)	59(18)	335
1620	11(3)	36(9)	139(36)	147(38)	55(14)	388

1621*	8(4)	21(10)	47(23)	109(53)	22(10)	207
1622*	19(7)	37(4)	88(33)	85(32)	39(14)	268
1623*	10(8)	12(9)	50(38)	39(29)	22(16)	133
1624*	7(2)	35(12)	108(38)	98(35)	33(13)	281
1625	15(5)	47(15)	101(32)	107(34)	47(14)	317
1626*	9(4)	31(14)	74(35)	66(31)	34(16)	214
1627*	5(3)	11(7)	63(40)	46(29)	32(21)	157
1628	11(3)	37(11)	98(28)	140(40)	64(18)	350
1629	7(2)	39(11)	131(36)	126(35)	57(16)	360
1630	9(3)	40(12)	111(33)	106(32)	67(20)	333
1631	10(2)	52(13)	133(32)	142(34)	78(19)	415
1632	5(2)	37(13)	94(33)	105(36)	47(16)	288
1633	8(2)	38(10)	131(34)	146(38)	64(16)	387
1634*	13(4)	39(12)	107(34)	110(35)	47(15)	316
1637*	0	13(9)	30(21)	76(52)	26(18)	145
1638*	10(3)	26(7)	97(27)	135(38)	85(25)	353
1640*	2(1)	14(8)	69(39)	56(32)	35(20)	176
1641*	3(1)	37(16)	81(35)	68(19)	45(19)	234
Totals	858(5)	1552(9)	5593(31)	7484(41)	2647(14)	18134

Key

*	incomplete years
M	matrimonial suits
Te	testamentary suits
D	defamation suits
Ti	tithe suits
O	other suits

The figures in brackets are percentages.

Sources: DHC, Chanter 779, 782a, 783, 783a-c, 784, 784a-f, 785, 785a-b, 785d-e, 786, 786a, 786c, 787, 787a-b, 788-99, 801-8, 812; BL, Egerton 2631.

Table 6: Outcomes of Suits of the Four Major Types brought in the Exeter Consistory Court 1513-1640²⁰¹⁰

Sept 1513-Jul 1514	Total	a	b	c	da	dr	d?	e	f
Matrimonial	6	3	-	-	-	1	2	-	-
Testamentary	7	5	-	1	-	1	-	-	-
Defamation	28	17	-	5	2	4	-	1	-
Tithes	9	7	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	50	32	0	8	2	6	2	1	0

Sept 1561-July 1562	Total	a	b	c	da	dr	d?	e	f
Matrimonial	26	13	-	1	1	-	-	1	-
Testamentary	8	6	-	3	6	4	-	-	-
Defamation	48	19	4	21	4	-	-	1	1
Tithes	92	35	3	49	5	-	-	2	2
Totals	174	73	7	74	16	4	-	4	3

Jan-Dec 1580	Total	a	b	c	da	dr	d?	e	f
Matrimonial	36	17	-	9	2	8	-	4	0
Testamentary	34	27	-	4	2	1	-	1	1
Defamation	121	76	1	31	9	4	-	1	1
Tithes	209	138	4	55	9	3	-	3	3
Totals	400	258	5	99	22	16	-	9	5

Jan-Dec 1596	Total	a	b	c	da	dr	d?	e	f
Matrimonial	37	30	-	-	3	4	-	6	-
Testamentary	23	21	-	1	1	-	-	-	-
Defamation	98	82	3	5	6	2	-	3	1
Tithes	175	164	-	3	7	1	-	3	2
Totals	333	297	3	9	17	7	-	12	3

Jan-Dec 1612	Total	a	b	c	da	dr	d?	e	f
Matrimonial	19	14	-	-	3	2	-	1	1
Testamentary	41	34	2	3	2	-	-	1	-
Defamation	149	130	1	2	14	2	-	8	3
Tithes	178	169	-	7	1	1	-	1	-
Totals	387	347	3	12	20	5	-	11	4

Sept 1623-July 1624	Total	a	b	c	da	dr	d?	e	f
Matrimonial	14	12	-	-	1	1	-	1	1
Testamentary	41	28	2	5	6	-	-	6	2
Defamation	133	122	1	-	7	3	-	2	1
Tithes	117	107	2	3	4	1	-	2	2

²⁰¹⁰ I have followed Houlbrooke, *Church Courts and the People*, pp. 275-7 in constructing this table.

Totals	305	269	5	8	18	5	-	11	6
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Jan-Dec 1632	Total	a	b	c	da	dr	d?	e	f
Matrimonial	5	3	-	-	-	2	-	1	-
Testamentary	37	29	1	3	3	1	-	-	-
Defamation	94	82	1	3	6	2	-	5	4
Tithes	105	92	1	7	5	-	-	4	3
Totals	241	206	3	13	14	5	-	10	7

Sept 1640-Dec 1640	Total	a	b	c	da	dr	d?	e	f
Matrimonial	2	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Testamentary	14	11	1	1	-	1	-	-	-
Defamation	69	53	6	4	4	2	-	3	1
Tithes	56	52	-	4	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	141	117	7	9	4	4	-	3	1

Key

a	outcome unknown
b	hope of agreement
c	peaceful conclusion
da	definitive sentence in favour of plaintiff (actor)
dr	definitive sentence in favour of defendant (reus)
d?	unclear in whose favour sentence given
e	appeals from sentences
f	inhibition from higher courts

Sources: DHC, Chanter 775, 779, 782, 784, 786-7, 798, 805-6, 812.

Table 7: Civil Suits commenced in the Archdeacon of Cornwall's Court 1605-1631

Year	M	Te	D	Ti	O	Total
1605*	-	2(15)	3(23)	8(62)	-	13
1606*	3(3)	14(15)	16(17)	55(57)	8(8)	96
1607*	2(5)	8(20)	10(25)	14(34)	7(16)	41
1608*	2(2)	20(17)	23(20)	54(46)	18(15)	117
1609*	2(2)	25(25)	27(27)	36(36)	11(10)	101
1610*	1(1)	12(15)	6(7)	51(62)	12(15)	82
1611*	4(2)	24(13)	29(16)	93(51)	32(18)	182
1612	4(2)	23(13)	45(26)	81(46)	23(13)	176
1613	1(1)	38(23)	36(22)	64(40)	23(14)	162
1614*	-	5(8)	14(23)	30(50)	12(19)	61
1615*	-	5(14)	5(14)	21(60)	4(12)	35
1616	2(2)	19(15)	19(15)	73(58)	13(10)	126
1617	2(2)	21(16)	20(15)	77(58)	13(9)	133
1618*	4(3)	26(19)	17(12)	66(48)	24(18)	137
1619*	3(2)	9(7)	18(15)	80(65)	13(11)	123
1620	4(3)	20(15)	26(19)	81(59)	6(4)	137
1621	1(1)	24(25)	19(19)	47(48)	7(7)	98
1622	6(4)	23(15)	20(13)	95(60)	14(8)	158
1623	4(2)	50(24)	29(14)	102(49)	23(11)	208
1624	3(2)	37(21)	21(12)	103(59)	10(6)	174
1625*	2(1)	27(20)	28(21)	58(43)	21(15)	136
1626*	2(3)	9(13)	9(13)	32(48)	15(23)	67
1629*	-	11(14)	12(15)	37(47)	19(24)	79
1630	2(1)	49(14)	69(21)	149(44)	65(20)	335
1631*	-	15(14)	10(9)	70(64)	14(13)	109
Totals	54(2)	516(17)	531(17)	1577(51)	408(13)	3086

Key

*	incomplete years
M	matrimonial suits
Te	testamentary suits
D	defamation suits
Ti	tithe suits
O	other suits

The figures in brackets are percentages.

Sources: CRO, ARD/3-6, 8.

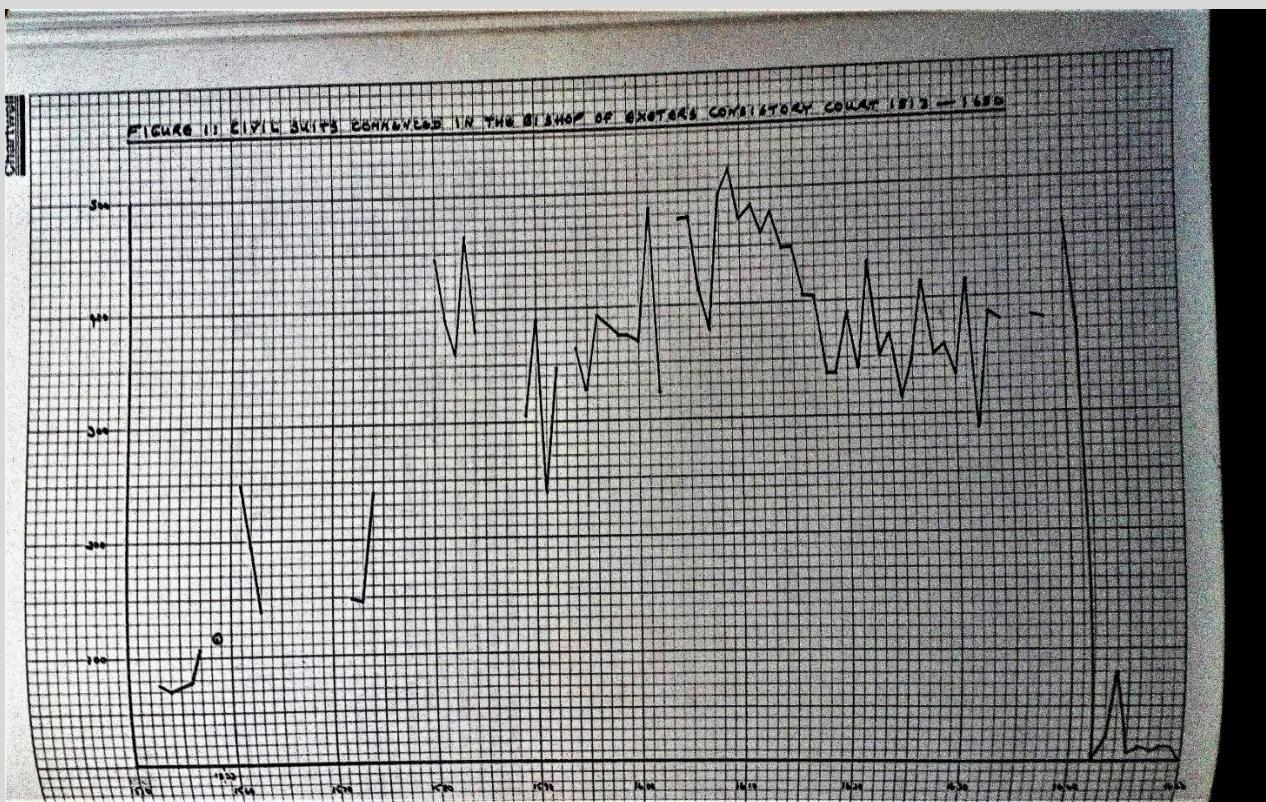
Table 8: Criminal Prosecutions brought in the Bishop of Exeter's Consistory Court in 1621 and 1630

Type of Offence	1621	1630*
Sexual misbehaviour causing pregnancy	203	143
Other sexual misbehaviour	491	297
Conniving at sexual misbehaviour	10	7
Leaving, maltreating spouse	4	3
Clandestine marriages	21	7
Non-reception of communion	3	-
Absence from church	6	4
Non-observance of Sabbath, Saints' days	36	61
Disturbance in church	10	11
Defiling churchyard	4	4
Neglect of duties by clergy	8	7
Neglect of duties by churchwardens	2	10
Testamentary	5	1
Other	22	12
Unknown	23	39
Totals	848	606

* incomplete year

Sources: DHC, Chanter 763-4.

Figure 1: Civil Suits commenced in the Bishop of Exeter's Consistory Court 1513-1650

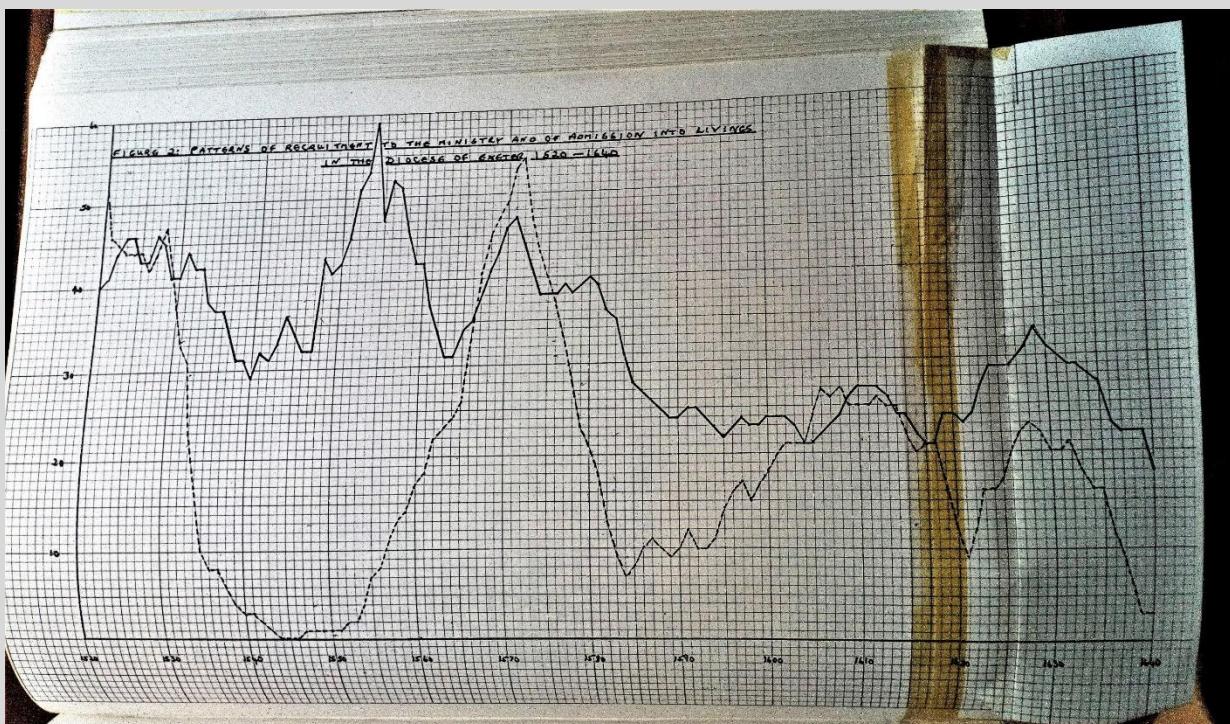


Notes

As a point of comparison, fragmentary published statistics for the consistory courts of Norwich and York suggest that Exeter was an especially busy tribunal in the early seventeenth century (Houlbrooke, *Church Courts and the People*, pp. 273-4; Marchant, *Church under the Law*, pp. 20, 62). Such statistics also indicate that the pinnacle of the post-Reformation upsurge may have been experienced somewhat earlier in other dioceses; certainly the Norwich consistory seems to have been particularly busy under Elizabeth but less so under James and Charles.

Sources: DHC, Chanter 779-82, 782a, 783, 783a-c, 784, 784a-f, 785, 785a-b, 785d-e, 786, 786a, 786c, 787, 787a-b, 788-99, 801-8, 812; BL, Egerton 2631.

Figure 2: Patterns of Clerical Recruitment and of Admissions to Livings in the Diocese of Exeter 1520-1640



Key

_____	admissions to living
-----	ordinations to priesthood

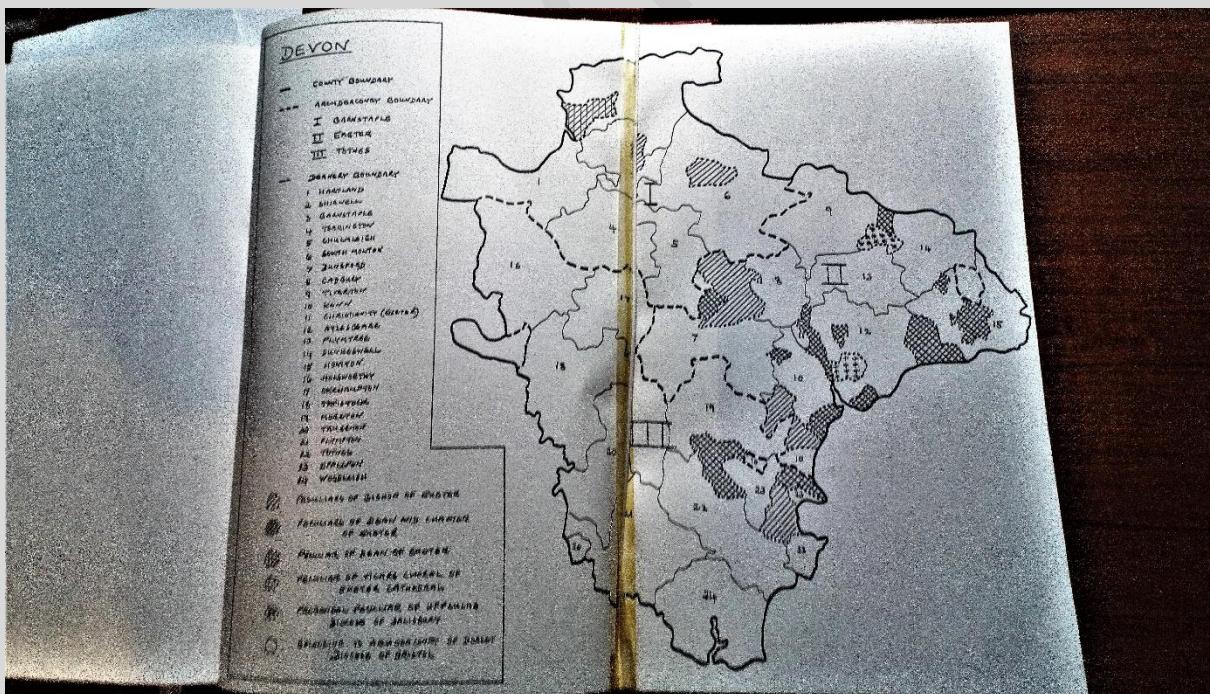
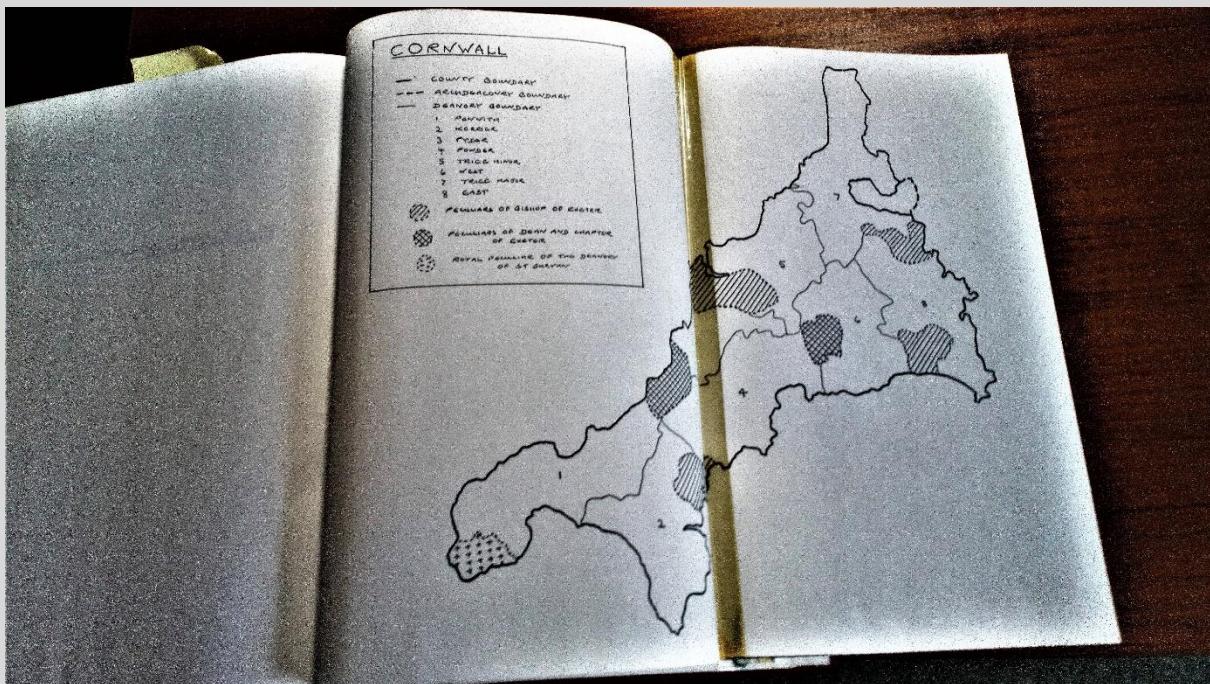
Notes

This figure uses six-year moving averages in order to show the long-term trends more clearly. It begins at the fag-end of the late medieval recruitment regime when more men were entering the Church than there were places for. This comes a sharp contraction in supply and an equally noteworthy rise in admissions to livings. The latter had much to do with the advent of Marianism; in 1554 some 122 institutions were made in order to replace those married or reformist clergy who had been deprived from their benefices. The first twenty years of Elizabeth's reign witnesses a brief reassertion of the late medieval pattern of recruitment. Large numbers of men were ordained to make good the shortfall of the previous decades. They were probably of poor quality. The early 1580s mark the start of a new

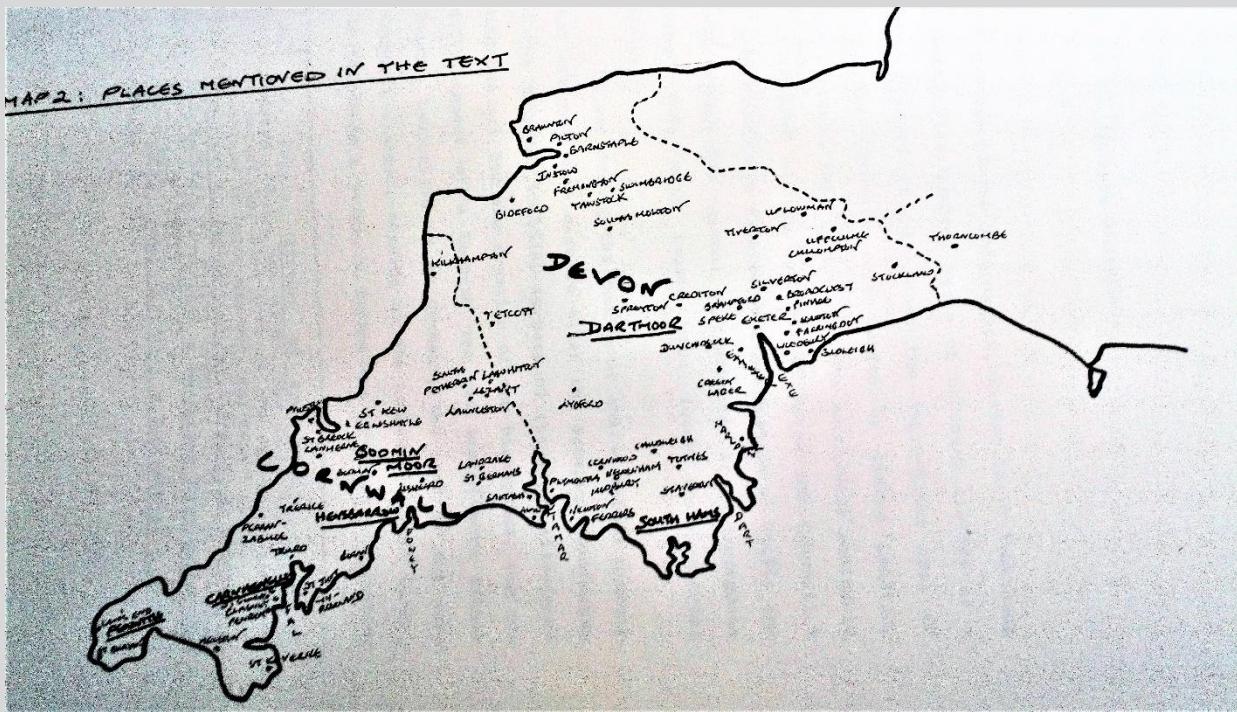
regime. Candidates for the ministry faced stiffer tests of fitness. Soon only university graduates got the nod. This strategy enabled a period of equilibrium to be reached under James. Under Charles, contrary to what we are often led to believe, there was once again a shortfall of new blood compared to the number of vacant livings on hand. Overall, it seems that the period 1530-80 should be seen as one of seismic shifts in the fortunes of the English clergy.

Sources: DHC, Chanter 14, 16, 18-21, 50.

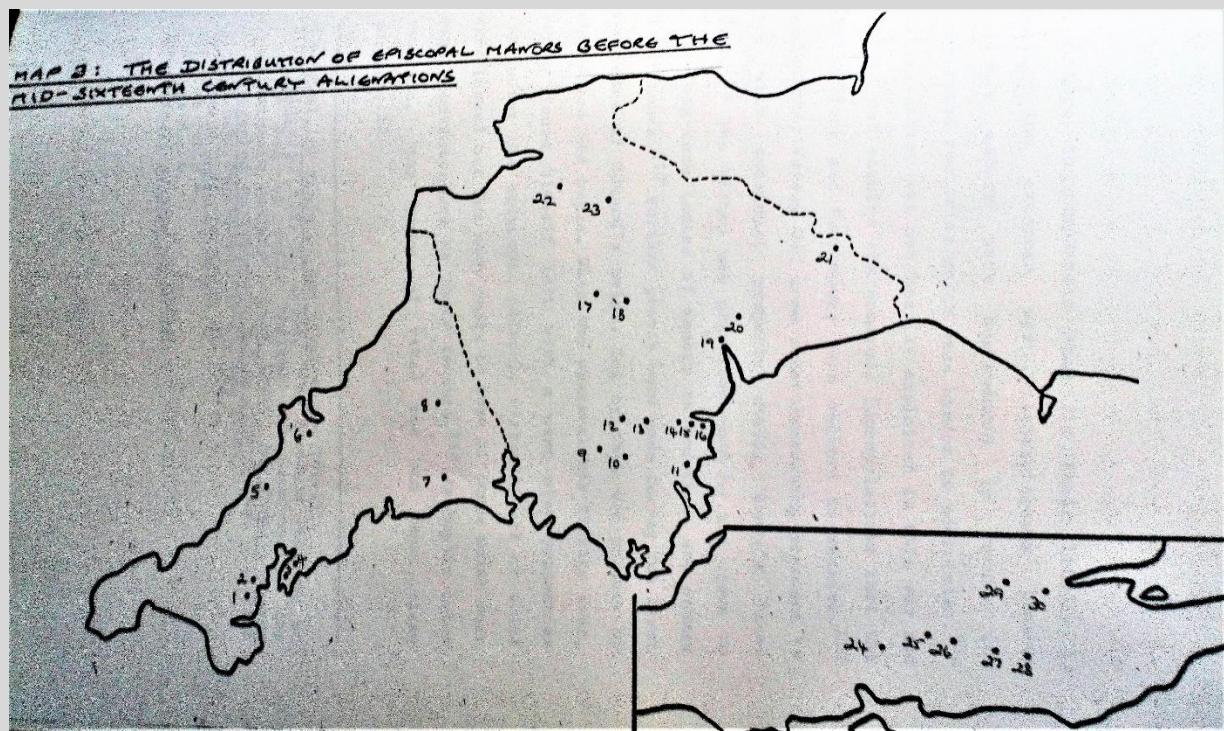
Maps 1a&b: The Diocese of Exeter during the Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries



Map 2: Places mentioned in the Text



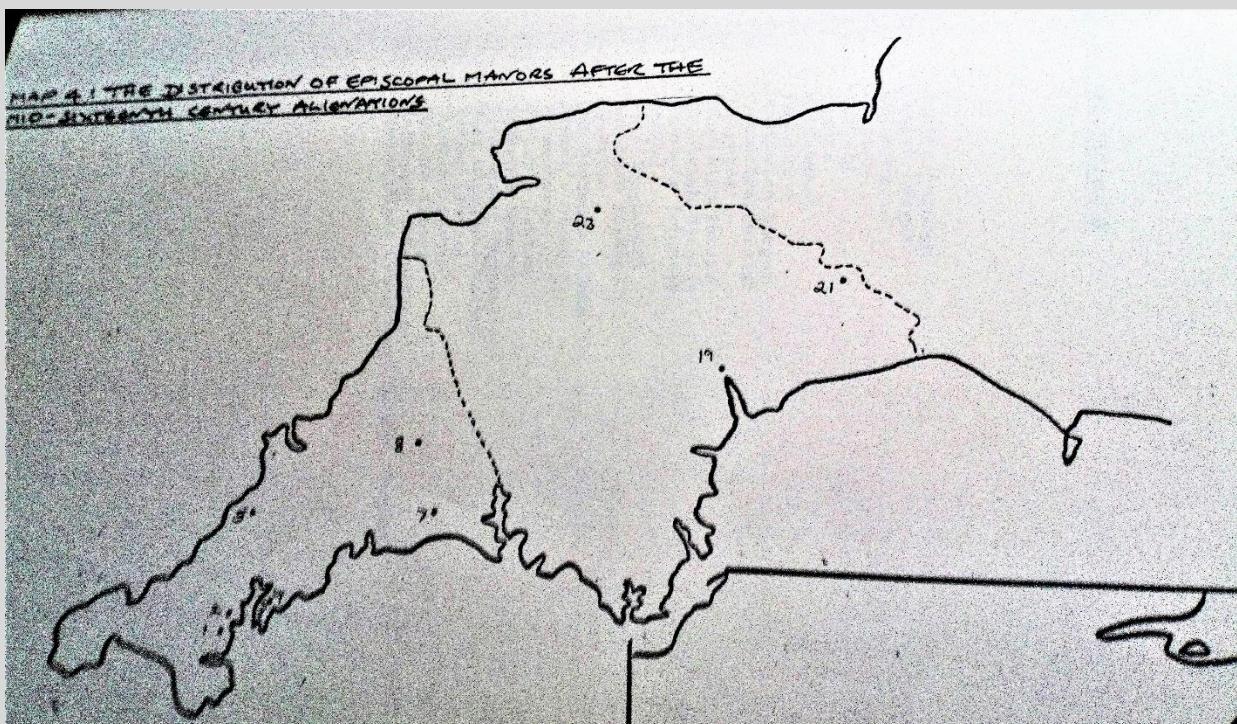
Map 3: The Distribution of Episcopal Manors before the Mid-Sixteenth Century Alienations



Key to Maps 3 and 4

1	Penryn Foreign
2	Penryn Burgus
3	Burneyre
4	Tregear
5	Cargoll
6	Pawton
7	Cuddenbeak
8	Lawhitton
9	Ashburton Burgus
10	Ashburton Foreign
11	Paignton
12	Chudleigh Burgus
13	Chudleigh Foreign
14	Bishopsteignton
15	Radway

Map 4: The Distribution of Episcopal Manors after the Mid-Sixteenth century Alienations



Key to Maps 3 and 4 continued

16	West Teignmouth
17	Morchard Bishop
18	Crediton
19	The Bishop's Place Exeter
20	Bishop's Clyst
21	Petershayes
22	Bishop's Tawton
23	Bishop's Nympton
24	Faringdon (Hampshire)
25	East Horsley (Surrey)
26	Tyting (Surrey)
27	Chidham (Sussex)
28	Thorney (Sussex)
29	Harringay (Middlesex)
30	Exeter Place (St Clement Danes London)

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N.B. This Bibliography lists only those materials cited in the footnotes of the text; it is not a list of the manuscripts and books that have been consulted in the course of preparing this study.

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Lansdowne 71	Burghley Papers
Lansdowne 79	Burghley Papers
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Chanter 785e	Liber Ad Instantiam (CC) 1608-09
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