

*Ecclesia Reformata* – John Morton’s Contemporaries and the Re-making of the English Church

Submitted by Desmond Paul Atkinson to the University of Exeter as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, April, 2021

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(Signature)

D.P. Atkinson

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## **Abstract**

This thesis examines the path to secular prelacy in the changing landscape of the English Church during the 'long' fifteenth century (1400-1520). It takes as a key exemplar the career of John Morton, archbishop of Canterbury and chancellor under Henry VII. This was a different world from the high medieval Church: the effective force of papal provision was much diminished; the Lancastrians were completing what Edward III had started, the building of a state Church. To achieve prelacy, an aspiring clerk had to position himself within a pool of candidates from which the king would undoubtedly choose his new bishops. This was a well-defined set of men, and they were distinguished by their education, experience, network of contacts and closeness to the king. The focus of this study is the early careers of that cadre. Their time at university was crucial to their formation, and it could be lengthy with many future bishops obtaining doctorates in law or theology. In addition to high qualifications, universities provided unparalleled opportunities to build networks of contacts and patrons. They were also ideal forums for clerks to display their skills in legal practice and rhetoric. Such men were becoming members of an exclusive ecclesiastical cohort. For the clerical lawyers, their time practising as advocates in the church courts was the next critical stage in their career development. Attracting ecclesiastical patrons with benefices at their disposal was essential, as aspiring prelates needed benefices to support themselves and enhance their reputations. But the most crucial requirement for an ambitious clerk was to make his way into royal service. It was the king's chosen man who would fill a vacant bishopric, and eligibility had to be carefully earned. This thesis explores all of those themes as they developed across the century, and adopts some novel and systematic forms of prosopographical analysis through the creation of a set of databases to elucidate the careers of this cohort of clerks. The conclusion looks forward to the 1520s and beyond, to the end of the grand, late medieval prelate. It seeks to explain the submission of the prelacy to Henry VIII through the developments in the background, training and recruitment of prelates in the fifteenth century.

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## Abbreviations

Titles are given in full in the Bibliography

BL	British Library, London
BNF	Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris
<i>BRUC</i>	Emden, <i>A Biographical Register of the University of Cambridge to A.D. 1500</i>
<i>BRUO</i>	Emden, <i>A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to A.D. 1500</i>
<i>CCR</i>	<i>Calendar of Close Rolls</i>
<i>CPR</i>	<i>Calendar of Patent Rolls</i>
<i>CPL</i>	<i>Calendar of Papal Registers. Papal Letters</i>
D&C	Dean and chapter
<i>DBDI</i>	<i>Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani</i>
DCL	Doctor of Civil Law
DCnL	Doctor of Canon Law
DTh	Doctor of Theology
EETS	Early English Text Society
<i>EHR</i>	<i>English Historical Review</i>
<i>L&amp;P</i>	<i>Calendar of Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII</i>
LMA	London Metropolitan Archives, Clerkenwell
MS	Manuscript
<i>ODNB</i>	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i>
PCC	Prerogative Court of Canterbury
PRO	Public Record Office
<i>PROME</i>	<i>Parliament Rolls of Medieval England</i>
Reg.	Register
<i>Taxatio</i>	<i>Taxatio</i> of Pope Nicholas IV, c.1291
TNA	The National Archives, Kew
<i>Valor, VE</i>	<i>Valor Ecclesiasticus</i>
<i>VCH</i>	<i>Victoria County History</i>

## Chapter 1 - Introduction

The theme of this thesis is the path to secular prelacy in the late medieval English Church. It was the prelates who set the direction of the Church under the attentive eye of the English king. The intimate relationship between the national Church and its prince evolved across the fifteenth century, and it was within that relationship that the seismic changes of the 1520s and 1530s took place. This thesis studies the formation of prelacy in the period after the Council of Constance and thereby attempts to understand how and why the episcopate later submitted to Henry VIII's break with Rome. It will seek to determine how far the background, training and selection of the members of the episcopal bench can explain the final one hundred years of the late medieval Church of England.

This study takes as a key exemplar the career of Dr John Morton (1420-1500). Morton was the last of the great prelates of the fifteenth century, and he stands as a point of comparison and contrast to his close successor, William Warham. Both Morton and Warham shared so many characteristics, but it fell to Warham to make a choice that would have tested any of his predecessors. Morton had faced stern tests of his own. He was not a typical prelate of the fifteenth century – he was partisan in his support for the Lancastrian regime and suffered many years of exile during the 1460s as a consequence. But in other ways he was characteristic of that cohort of prelates who rose to the bench of bishops during the second half of the century. Like many of his peers he came from a gentry background and achieved academic distinction through the study and practice of law at the University of Oxford. His time at Oxford was surely critical in establishing Morton and a group of his peers within an ecclesiastical 'fast stream'. After Oxford it seems likely that Morton continued to practice law in the ecclesiastical courts and was identified by a network of patronage that sought out men for high preferment. Morton came to the attention of the Lancastrian royal court where he became chancellor to the infant Edward, Prince of Wales and was ready for promotion to yet higher positions in both royal and Church service. However his career suffered a sharp reversal in the 1460s when he chose to go into exile with Margaret of Anjou and her entourage after the



seizure of the English throne by Edward, earl of March. Once Morton submitted to Edward's rule in 1471 after the battle of Tewkesbury, his career is well-documented – he became Master of the Rolls in 1472 and was appointed bishop of Ely in 1478 upon the death of William Grey. A detailed consideration of Morton's stellar career from 1471 onwards lies beyond the scope of this thesis.

The image of the prelate and the practice of prelacy have been the subject of much debate and comment. The views of church historians have developed significantly from the very negative stance taken by men such as Thomas Fuller writing in the middle of the seventeenth century (see below).<sup>1</sup> However, as regards the popular imagination, the late medieval or Renaissance prelate has been cogently summarised by Peter Gwyn. In his magisterial study of Thomas Wolsey, Gwyn points to the portrayal on screen by Orson Welles of the Cardinal which he characterises as “everybody's idea of a Renaissance cardinal, an overweight and overdressed spider occupying the centre of a web of intrigue and bearing a much closer resemblance to the emperor Nero than to anyone remotely religious”.<sup>2</sup> This enduring stereotype can be traced back to commentators writing shortly after Wolsey's death in the tumult of the English Reformation. Edward Hall, writing in 1548, said how “the pride and ambicion of the Cardinal & clergie was so high” and that “vnder colour of reformacion he gat mucche tresure”.<sup>3</sup> Polydore Vergil in his *Anglica Historia* talked of Wolsey's arrogance, insolence, great ambition and avarice and how the “rascally” Wolsey was “inflated with pride”.<sup>4</sup> Vergil's *Historia* had been long in the drafting but was

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1 The term ‘prelate’ is the rendition into English of several different usages within Latin texts. It has been used as a translation for the terms *prelatus*, *presul*, and *pontifex*. “When modern scholars speak of ‘prelates’ they are referring to men who held high ecclesiastical offices, generally bishops and heads of male religious houses” - Rebecca Springer, ‘Prelacy, Pastoral Care and the Instruction of Subordinates in Late Twelfth-Century England’, *Studies in Church History*, 55 (2019), 114–28 (p. 119). Thomas More, when writing about the arrest of John Morton by Richard duke of Gloucester in June 1483, described him as *Eliensi Presule* (Thomas More, *The Complete Works of St Thomas More*, ed. by Daniel Kinney, The Yale Edition of the Complete Works of St. Thomas More (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1986), xv, p. 400.

2 Peter Gwyn, *The King's Cardinal: The Rise and Fall of Thomas Wolsey* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1990), p. xvi.

3 Edward Hall, *Hall's Chronicle: Containing the History of England, during the Reign of Henry the Fourth, and the Succeeding Monarchs, to the End of the Reign of Henry the Eighth* (London: J. Johnson [etc.], 1809), p. 593 <<http://archive.org/stream/hallschronicleco00hall#page/n5/mode/2up>> [accessed 26 May 2020].

4 Polydore Vergil, *The Anglica Historia, A.D.1485-1537*, Camden Society 3rd Series, vol. 74 (London: R.H.S., 1950), Book 27, section 27 <<http://www.philological.bham.ac.uk/polverg/>> [accessed 26 May

finally published in 1534, just four years after Wolsey's disgrace and death. The Elizabethan chronicler Raphael Holinshed, writing at a time of intense animosity to the papacy within England, directed his opprobrium at another great prelate of the late Middle Ages, Henry Beaufort. He described how Henry V had grave misgivings that Beaufort should ever achieve the cardinalate, "righte deeplie persing into the vnrestrainable ambitious mind of the man", and that Henry V had "also right well ascertained with what intollerable pride his head should soone be swollen vnder such a hat".<sup>5</sup>

These views were taken up and given huge additional power in the works of William Shakespeare. In the first part of *Henry VI*, Beaufort is repeatedly characterised as an arrogant and haughty prelate (Act 1, Scene III), and in Act 3, Scene 1 Duke Humphrey accuses the Cardinal of pride, usury, forwardness, love of war, lasciviousness, wantonness, the attempted murder of Gloucester, and evil intentions against the King. Cardinal Wolsey is similarly castigated in Act 1, Scene I of *King Henry VIII* where he is given the qualities of the spider spinning its web. His pride is emphasised, and his vanity. The power and appeal of Shakespeare's characterisations have endured, and little seems to separate his portrayals from those of modern dramatists and popular writers.<sup>6</sup> Within a short time of Shakespeare's death, Thomas Fuller in his extensive writing on Church history took up many of these images: "Wolsey would never leave his pride, till life first left him".<sup>7</sup> He also characterised him as vengeful and cunning. Fuller even claimed that the whole idea of divorcing Katherine of Aragon was something that Wolsey conceived and put to the king.<sup>8</sup> Both Beaufort and Wolsey continued to be singled out by subsequent writers, and William Stubbs argued that they represented a true pairing: "he appears in history as a lesser

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2020].

5 Raphael Holinshed, *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland* (London : J. Johnson [etc.], 1807), vol. III, p. 156 <<http://archive.org/details/chroniclesofengl03holiuoft>> [accessed 14 January 2020].

6 John Morton gets only a passing mention by the bard. Apart from his brief appearance in Act III, Scene 4 of *Richard III*, the plays are almost silent about him. In *Richard III*, Morton is the bishop of Ely with the 'good strawberries', but he takes little part in the action. The setting is the council meeting of 13 June 1483 where both Morton and Thomas Rotherham, archbishop of York were arrested. However Shakespeare does not bother to include Rotherham, and Morton simply exits with Gloucester after the latter has announced the death sentence on William Lord Hastings. There is no mention of Morton's arrest. Later in Act IV, Scene 3, there is one other mention of Morton where Richard says: 'Ely with Richmond troubles me more near than Buckingham'.

7 Thomas Fuller, *The Church-History of Britain: From the Birth of Jesus Christ Untill the Year MDCXLVIII* (London: for John Williams, 1655), vol. III, p. 178.

8 *Ibid.*, p. 171.

Wolsey ... Beaufort was the great minister of an expiring system, Wolsey of an age of grand transitions.”<sup>9</sup>

However the criticism of the great secular prelates of the pre-Reformation Church was not extended to all members of that cohort. In particular those churchmen who had worked to found notable educational institutions were granted praise and recognition. Holinshed described William of Wickham as a 'worthie prelat' for his foundations of Winchester College and New College Oxford.<sup>10</sup> When considering the late 1450s, Edward Hall noted the attempts by churchmen to mediate between the Yorkist and Lancastrian factions, and he described them as 'vertuous prelates'.<sup>11</sup> If we select Thomas Bourchier as being one of these prelates, then subsequent writers have been less sympathetic to him. Thorold Rogers was utterly dismissive: “Among the odious prelates of the fifteenth century this selfish, sordid, heartless, time-serving churchman is the least respectable.”<sup>12</sup> Writing over a century later, R.G. Davies was similarly critical of Bourchier, seeing his attempts at mediation as humiliating acts of appeasement while “managing to feather his own nest quietly”.<sup>13</sup> However the same author, in his assessment of John Kemp, states that “Had he survived until the king recovered his health, the civil wars might not have happened; with his death [in 1454], they were certain”.<sup>14</sup>

The contemporaries of these grand fifteenth-century prelates were not looking back through the lens of Reformation polemic. Their viewpoints are therefore of particular interest. Thomas Gascoigne, that hard-edged commentator from mid-century Oxford, could be characteristically caustic about many bishops. He was much concerned with their lack of residency within their dioceses, and how that

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9 William Stubbs, *The Constitutional History of England: In Its Origin and Development*. Vol. 3, Clarendon Press Series, 5th ed (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1903), p. 662.

10 Raphael Holinshed, *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland* (London: J. Johnson [etc.], 1807), p. 32.

11 Edward Hall, *Hall's Chronicle* (London: J. Johnson [etc.], 1809), p. 238.

12 Thomas Gascoigne, *Loci e Libro Veritatum: Passages Selected from Gascoigne's Theological Dictionary Illustrating the Condition of Church and State 1403-1458*, ed. by James E. Thorold Rogers (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1881), p. lxxv.

13 Richard G. Davies, 'The Church and the Wars of the Roses', in *The Wars of the Roses*, ed. by A. J. Pollard, Problems in Focus (London: Macmillan, 1995), pp. 134–61 (p. 139).

14 See Davies's *ODNB* entry for Kemp, dating from 2011, at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/15328>.

led, in his view, to the neglect of souls.<sup>15</sup> But his harsh analysis was not widely shared by other churchmen at the time. In her study of Thomas Arundel, Margaret Aston describes some high praise for Arundel among his contemporaries, with John Gower putting such sentiments into verse.<sup>16</sup> Henry Chichele certainly earned great praise from Henry VI in a letter drafted by Thomas Beckington.<sup>17</sup> Beckington himself was part of a network of graduates from New College, Oxford, and a group of churchmen around him such as Thomas Chaundler (who was around thirty years his junior) were fulsome in their praise.<sup>18</sup> The most startling clerical recipient of praise after his death was Richard Scrope, the rebellious archbishop of York executed by Henry IV in 1405. To the Trinitarian Friar, Clement Maidstone, Scrope was a true Christian martyr and a clear candidate for sainthood.<sup>19</sup> Almost eighty years later, John Morton was potentially threatened with Scrope's fate by Richard duke of Gloucester but escaped imprisonment to enter his final golden period under Henry Tudor. Morton's reputation by time of his death was high. To the monks of Christ Church Canterbury he was a most cherished lord, faithful, eminent and diligent in his duties for both Church and king.<sup>20</sup> Thomas More, who had served in the archbishop's household while in his teens, was fulsome in his praise, describing Morton's intelligence, prodigious memory and skill in law, and how he had "learned practical wisdom in the midst of many and serious perils, and wisdom so won is not easily forgotten."<sup>21</sup> Morton was of course famously

15 Gascoigne, *Loci e libro veritatum*, p. 3, where he says "*Jam enim in Anglia perit cura animarum per ecclesias appropriatas, et per non residenciam curatorum et prelatorum*". His particular attack on John Kemp, and his attitude to prelates spending their time in royal service, not on Church affairs, is discussed later in this thesis.

16 Margaret Aston, *Thomas Arundel: A Study of Church Life in the Reign of Richard II* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), p. 1.

17 Thomas Bekynton, *Official Correspondence of Thomas Bekynton, Secretary to King Henry VI., and Bishop of Bath and Wells*, ed. by George Williams, Rolls Series, 56, 2 vols (London: Longman, 1872), vol. I, p.148 as referenced by Jeremy Catto in his *ODNB* entry for Chichele at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/5271>.

18 See the rather curious dialogue in Bekynton, *Official Correspondence*, vol. ii, pp. 321–27 where Beckington, Chaundler and also William of Wykeham are all greatly lauded.

19 Steven K. Wright, 'Genres of Sanctity: Literary Representations of Archbishop Scrope', in *Richard Scrope: Archbishop, Rebel, Martyr*, ed. by P. J. P. Goldberg (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2007), pp. 115–37 (pp. 116–17). Scrope never achieved sainthood, unlike John Tweng, prior of Bridlington, who was venerated by Henry IV and his dynasty. Scrope was one of the prelates officiating at the translation of Tweng's body in 1404 (see Michael J. Curley's *ODNB* article at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/14856>). Other prelates were similarly praised for their sanctity, e.g. Edmund Lacy, bishop of Exeter, whose cult within the cathedral was suppressed in 1538 (see Nicholas Orme's *ODNB* article at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/15846>).

20 BL Arundel MS 68 (Register Book of the Priory of the Holy Trinity, Canterbury), fo. 65v.

21 See *Utopia*, Book 1, p. 18 in Thomas More, *The Essential Works of Thomas More*, ed. by Gerard B. Wegemer and Stephen W. Smith (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020). More also described

associated with Henry VII's thirst for money (Francis Bacon's idea of 'Morton's Fork'), although even as early as Thomas Fuller, Morton was seen as perhaps moderating rather than encouraging Henry's tactics.<sup>22</sup> Morton was nevertheless closely associated with Henry's taxation policy in the minds of the Cornish rebels of 1497 who "especially blamed John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Reginald Bray, because they were the leaders of the Privy Council".<sup>23</sup> The other misfortune for Morton's reputation was his part in the overthrow of Richard III. The negative opinions of George Buck writing in 1619 continue to be shared by the ardent supporters of Richard active in the present.<sup>24</sup>

From the preceding discussion it becomes clear that any assessment of the early career of a prelate and his rise to prominence requires a careful unpicking of the views and reactions of several centuries of commentators. The fact that a highly capable churchman might have ambitions, coupled with energy and determination, should not subject him to immediate censure. Moreover a man such as Morton, studying in the 1440s and achieving his doctorate in the early 1450s could not have foreseen the tumultuous period to come in which he took such an overtly political stance. Such a stance, and Morton's success in overcoming the ups and downs of the period from 1455 onwards, highlight his exceptionalism, even among that small cohort who at the same time achieved episcopal rank. There is a real danger, however, in assuming that the later career of a man like Morton can simply be anticipated from the character of his earlier years. It will be fruitful therefore to examine and assess Morton's rise to prominence in the period up to 1461 (before the Yorkist triumph at Towton). The details of Morton's early career, together with those of his peer group, draw out several key themes that will form the basis of the four main chapters that follow.

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Morton as the "mainstay of the commonwealth".

- 22 Fuller, *The Church-history of Britain*, p. 510 where he says "many condemned him in his life for acting and putting the king forward to be burthensome to his subjects with taxes; but his innocence appeared after his death, that he rather tempered the king's covetousness than otherwise". Bacon's comments can be found in Francis Bacon, *The History of the Reign of King Henry VII and Selected Works*, ed. by Brian Vickers, Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 86.
- 23 Vergil, *Anglica Historia*, p. 93.
- 24 George Buck and A. N. Kincaid, *The History of King Richard the Third {1619}* (Gloucester: A. Sutton, 1979). For the Richard III Society, see <http://www.richardiii.net/>. Writing in 1906, Clements R. Markham paints Morton as a thoroughly wicked intriguer for his role in the Buckingham rebellion and the overthrow of Richard. The same approach is exhibited in the subsequent writing of John Ashdown-Hill and others (see Clements R. Markham, *Richard III: His Life and Character Reviewed in the Light of Recent Research* (London: Smith, Elder, 1906), pp. 206-7).

Chapter 2 will focus on the graduate clerk and education, especially education in the law, both civil and canon. For men such as Morton, their early career advanced significantly before they took on major orders in the Church (Morton was only ordained a priest in his late thirties).<sup>25</sup> Their practice of the law was the solid platform on which many burgeoning careers in both Church and state were built. Chapter 3 examines the working of the church courts and their importance in bringing aspiring clerks to the notice of potential patrons. The courts brought clerical advocates into close contact with both ecclesiastics and laymen – it demonstrated their personal and professional qualities and enriched greatly their network of acquaintances. They also became part of a distinct and developing legal community. Chapter 4 examines the process of patronage to consider its critical importance in propelling the most able candidates upwards. The contention that patronage was everything for the aspiring cleric will be examined and reviewed. Patronage networks within the Church, whether from the secular or regular arm, were very influential. However patronage across lay society also assisted the rising clerk, especially from those resident at and active within the royal court. Chapter 5 therefore considers the step that was most crucial for those men who were to achieve episcopal rank, namely their part in royal service and the rewards that followed. The balance between ecclesiastical and lay participants in the administration of the king's government was shifting over the course of the century. Whether it should be classed as 'de-skilling' or as an evolution to a new model is perhaps open to debate.<sup>26</sup> Although the role of service to the king was certainly of great importance, the fact that the mid fifteenth century was one of high factional tension needs to be kept in view when considering the effect of changes of occupant of the English throne.

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25 The dates for Morton's ordination ceremonies are listed in *BRUO*, ii, 1318 and *BRUC*, 412. However Emden wrongly identifies Morton as becoming a priest in March 1458: the ceremony actually took place in March 1459 in the ninth year of Bishop Richard Beauchamp's translation to Salisbury.

26 Christine Carpenter is in no doubt that under Henry VI the bureaucratic system in central government was both deskilled and destabilised (Christine Carpenter, 'Henry VI and the Deskilling of the Royal Bureaucracy', in *English and Continental Perspectives*, ed. by Linda Clark, The Fifteenth Century, 9 (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2010), pp. 1–37, especially pp. 20, 22). Despite such changes, the prelates and other high churchmen continued to fill great offices of state such as those of chancellor, keeper of the privy seal and master of the rolls (a matter discussed further in Chapter 5 of this thesis).

Within each of these chapters, space will be given to evaluate whether England can be seen as exceptional and distinct from its near neighbours, with a particular focus on comparisons with northern France (see the two paragraphs that follow for the reasoning behind this choice). There is a danger that, because of developments specific to England such as the Wars of the Roses, the broader trends common to much of Western Christendom could be overlooked. International comparisons guard against that.<sup>27</sup> Finally conclusions will be drawn to assess how far a close study of the rising prelate can help in re-defining the role of Church and state in fifteenth century England. These will help to define areas for further research and analysis. The concluding chapter will also look well beyond 1500 to the break with Rome, and the role of the bishops as a whole in the support of the Henrician changes. It will suggest just how much the formation and culture of the bishops through the fifteenth century can help to explain their response to the bewildering changes of the 1530s.

The choice of the French Church as a model for comparison is made for several compelling reasons. In the first half of the fifteenth century, various parts of France were, for periods of time, under the rule or effective control of the English crown, in particular Normandy and Gascony;<sup>28</sup> for English clerics this created opportunities for interaction, office and study there.<sup>29</sup> The Lancastrian period saw very close ties developing, especially during the reign of Henry V and immediately afterwards, with clerks such as Alan Kirketon holding many valuable benefices, and acting on behalf of the crown while resident in France.<sup>30</sup> The cathedral chapter at Rouen was a particular focus, with English clerks such

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27 Jean-Philippe Genêt explicitly makes 'a plea for comparative history' with respect to England and France which he regards as 'a common political space' (Jean-Philippe Genêt, 'The Government of Later Medieval France and England: A Plea for Comparative History', in *Government and Political Life in England and France, c.1300-c.1500*, ed. by Christopher David Fletcher, Jean-Philippe Genêt, and John Watts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 1–23 (the quotations are from pp. 1 & 5 respectively).

28 With the successful campaigns of Henry V, the duchy of Normandy came under English rule for approximately thirty years: see Christopher T. Allmand, 'The English and the Church in Lancastrian Normandy', in *England and Normandy in the Middle Ages*, ed. by David Bates and Anne Curry (London ; Rio Grande, Ohio: Hambledon Press, 1994), pp. 287–97.

29 It is also worth noting that all three Lancastrian kings married royal brides from France. Such matches invariably called on the services of prominent clerics on both sides, providing the opportunity for contacts to be developed and strengthened.

30 Christopher T. Allmand, 'Alan Kirketon: A Clerical Royal Councillor in Normandy during the English Occupation in the Fifteenth Century', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 15 (1964), 33–39. The great advantage of a prebend to the ambitious clerk was that it did not require cure of souls.

as John Stopyndon and Thomas Brouns being presented to prebends there, as indeed was Kirketon.<sup>31</sup> Benjamin Thompson has noted how monarchs in both England and France made more and more use of clerks and graduates.<sup>32</sup> With respect to clerks in royal service, 'the situation at the end of the Middle Ages was comparable, although with some important differences, in France and in England.'<sup>33</sup> The University of Paris had long been a destination for English clerical scholars, although in the fifteenth century it was Scottish rather than English prelates who featured most prominently among its graduates.<sup>34</sup> One of the most foremost figures at Paris was its renowned theologian and chancellor, Jean Gerson, 'arguably the most influential church figure in the fifteenth century'.<sup>35</sup>

During the Lancastrian monarchy, French clerics were brought into royal service of whom the most prominent was Louis de Luxembourg.<sup>36</sup> Louis was already bishop of Thérouanne when, in 1420, he transferred his allegiance to the English crown. By 1425 the duke of Bedford, Henry VI's regent in France, had appointed Louis as chancellor of France for the English. After the loss of Paris he retreated to Rouen where, with the support of the duke of York, he was appointed archbishop and was subsequently provided to the see of Ely, holding it *in commendam*. All of these factors suggest that the French Church, especially in the areas of English rule, provides the best model to compare and contrast with its English cousin. Key topics concerning the French church, and how it compares and contrasts with that of England, will all be discussed further in Chapter 5 of this thesis. These themes include the nature of the Church's national identity, the role of the crown, the Church's response to papal authority, and the pace of change during the fifteenth century. The Iberian Church might

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31 Ibid., pp. 33, 36. Stopyndon went on to become Master of the Rolls under Henry VI; Brouns was to become bishop of Norwich.

32 Benjamin Thompson and Jacques Verger, 'Church and State, Clerks and Graduates', in *Government and Political Life in England and France, c.1300-c.1500*, ed. by Christopher David Fletcher, Jean-Philippe Genêt, and John Watts (Cambridge: University Press, 2015), pp. 183–216 (pp. 186-7).

33 Ibid., p. 192.

34 Future Scottish bishops who studied at Paris included Robert Blackadder, William Elphinstone and Thomas Lauder; notable English scholars of the late fourteenth century included the regular clerks Henry Bederic and Thomas Colyngham (see the *ODNB* for biographies of all these men). The printer Richard Pynson also studied there.

35 John Van Engen, 'The World of the Fifteenth-Century Church', *Church History*, 77.2 (2008), 257–84 (p. 259).

36 See Lucia Diaz Pascual's *ODNB* article at <https://doi-org.uoelibrary.idm.oclc.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/95142>.



also be taken as a comparator, but Spain was a polity that was changing rapidly during the fifteenth century, with the unification of its kingdoms, and the final conquest of the Islamic kingdom of Granada in January 1492.<sup>37</sup> Other kingdoms and jurisdictions, whether Italy, the Empire or elsewhere were more fragmented and therefore of less value than France for comparative purposes.

The historiography concerning the late medieval Church is extensive, but it has struggled to escape the intense gravitational field of Reformation thought and ideology. Writing as late as 1964, A.G. Dickens spoke in terms that had been broadly accepted throughout much of the historical profession when he said 'In the field of religion many weaknesses of the late medieval Church were plainly apparent to intelligent but orthodox contemporaries ... Scholastic religion, having overestimated its powers, had ended in disharmony, irrelevance and discredit.'<sup>38</sup> In the second half of the twentieth century historians had begun to re-examine that orthodoxy in what Bernard has described as a 'revisionist tide'.<sup>39</sup> For some authors that revisionism has gone too far, or lacks a coherent and critical reflection on the totality of the issues involved. One such issue is the topic of prelaty which has received less intense treatment than other aspects of church life. Biographies of individual prelates are relatively infrequent, with Thomas Wolsey and Thomas Becket attracting by far the most attention.<sup>40</sup> By contrast archbishops such as Thomas Bourchier or William Warham await a modern biographer. John Morton has attracted significant attention in the past few decades, much of it negative, from his association with the fall of Richard III. He has been the subject of a recent biography aimed at a broad audience, but there has been no modern academic biography of his life and work.<sup>41</sup> Other

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37 Some authors would not even accept the term 'Spanish Church' as applicable to this period, preferring the terms *Peninsular* or *Iberian* – see Ana Echevarria, *The Fortress of Faith: The Attitude towards Muslims in Fifteenth Century Spain*, Medieval Iberian Peninsula, 12 (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 1999), p 5.

38 A. G. Dickens, *The English Reformation*, 1st edn (London: Batsford, 1964), p. 326.

39 George W. Bernard, *The Late Medieval English Church: Vitality and Vulnerability before the Break with Rome* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), p. ix.

40 Gwyn, *The King's Cardinal*; Steven J. Gunn and P. G. Lindley eds, *Cardinal Wolsey: Church, State and Art* (Cambridge: University Press, 1991); Frank Barlow, *Thomas Becket* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1986); Anne J. Duggan, *Thomas Becket, Reputations* (London: Arnold, 2004).

41 John Budden, *Reverendissimi Patris Ac Domini Iohannis Mortoni Cantuariensis Olim Archiepiscopi ... Vita Obitusque* (London: Richardus Field, 1607); Henry Wharton, *Anglia Sacra; Sive, Collectio Historiarum...de Archiepiscopis & Episcopis Angliae: ...Ad Annum MDXL... Pars Prima*, 2 vols (Londini: Impensis Richardi Chiswel, 1691), i, pp. 673–4  
<<https://archive.org/stream/AngliaSacra/WhartonAngliaSacra1#page/n7/mode/2up>> [accessed 26

prelates who have received detailed individual studies include William Courtenay, Thomas Arundel and Henry Chichele, but those biographies all date from the 1960s.<sup>42</sup> The most recent biography of Christopher Bainbridge is of a similar vintage.<sup>43</sup> More recent studies include those of William Waynflete by Virginia Davis and of Henry Beaufort by G.L. Harriss.<sup>44</sup> For many figures, therefore, the chief biographical sources are their entries in the *ODNB*, in Emden's biographical registers for Oxford and Cambridge, and in the introductions to the published editions of their episcopal registers.<sup>45</sup> Some doctoral theses also act as useful sources. These biographical studies are of great value, but their focus is on the life and works of the individual concerned. They do not attempt to consider prelacy as a concept, or to consider the body of prelates as a whole. On the subject of prelacy itself, there have been several important recent contributions.<sup>46</sup> Significant work has also been done by

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May 2020]; Walter Farquhar Hook, *Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury*, ed. by C. E. Woodruff, 12 vols (London: Richard Bentley, 1867), v, pp. 387–499. The following is based largely on Hooks' life: Reginald Illingworth Woodhouse, *The Life of John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1895). The following thesis cannot be recommended as it contains a number of inaccuracies and, at times, a lack of proper historical analysis: Roger John Jones, 'The Life of John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury and Chancellor of England' (unpublished doctoral thesis, State University of New York, Buffalo, 1979). Much more recent is Stuart C. Bradley, 'The Itineraries of John Morton, Bishop of Ely, Then Cardinal Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Chancellor of England; and King Henry VII, 1485-1500' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Bangor University, 2015) <[https://ethos.bl.uk/OrderDetails.do? did=1&uin=uk.bl.ethos.765744](https://ethos.bl.uk/OrderDetails.do?did=1&uin=uk.bl.ethos.765744)> [accessed 27 November 2019]. The following is the 'popular' book based on his PhD thesis: Stuart Bradley, *John Morton: Adversary of Richard III, Power behind the Tudors* (Stroud: Amberley Publishing, 2019). The three items that follow are all important contributions to an understanding of Morton: C. S. L. Davies, 'Bishop John Morton, the Holy See, and the Accession of Henry VII', *English Historical Review*, 102 (1987), 2–30; Christopher Harper-Bill, 'An Edition of the Register of John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury 1486-1500, with Critical Introduction' (unpublished doctoral thesis, King's College, London, 1977); R. J. Knecht, 'The Episcopate and the Wars of the Roses', *University of Birmingham Historical Journal*, 6.2 (1958), 108–31. Emden's entry for Morton is compendious but contains errors: *BRUO*, ii, pp. 1318–20.

- 42 Joseph Henry Dahmus, *William Courtenay, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1381-1396* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1966); Margaret Aston, *Thomas Arundel: A Study of Church Life in the Reign of Richard II* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967); E. F. Jacob, *Archbishop Henry Chichele*, Leaders of Religion Series (London: Nelson, 1967).
- 43 David Chambers, *Cardinal Bainbridge in the Court of Rome, 1509-1514*, Oxford Historical Series (London: Oxford University Press, 1965).
- 44 V. Davis, *William Waynflete: Bishop and Educationalist*, Studies in the History of Medieval Religion, 6 (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1993); Gerald Leslie Harriss, *Cardinal Beaufort: A Study of Lancastrian Ascendancy and Decline* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988).
- 45 A good example of a relatively neglected prelate is Robert Hallum, bishop of Salisbury. Apart from his *ODNB* entry by Robert Swanson at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/12005>, the other source for his life is the introduction to Joyce M. Horn, ed., *The Register of Robert Hallum, Bishop of Salisbury, 1407-17*, The Canterbury and York Society, 72 (York: Society, 1982). Men such as Peter Courtenay and Richard Beauchamp are worthy of detailed studies.
- 46 Martin Heale, ed., *The Prelate in England and Europe, 1300-1560* (Suffolk, England; Rochester, New York: York Medieval Press, 2014); Bernard, *The Late Medieval English Church*, chapter 3 - 'The Bishops'.

Benjamin Thompson.<sup>47</sup> Joel T. Rosenthal's work on the bench of bishops remains an indispensable reference.<sup>48</sup> Although this thesis has secular prelates as its focus, the work of many authors such as Martin Heale and James Clark on the regular clergy and on the abbot as prelate must not be overlooked.<sup>49</sup> As regards the subject of the late medieval Church as a whole, there have been a series of authors who have published books and lengthy articles. The most notable include Robert Swanson, Peter Heath, J.A.F. Thomson and Christopher Harper-Bill.<sup>50</sup> Much of their work has been summarised and discussed by George W. Bernard.<sup>51</sup> Their picture is one of a church in good health in 1500, one where orthodox belief was still strong, where new strands of piety were developing, and where the subsequent turmoil of the Reformation was by no means inevitable. However, as Bernard points out, the developments we call the Reformation, or the break with Rome, or whatever term we choose, do need to be explained and understood.<sup>52</sup>

Studying the path to prelates is integral to this debate. It helps characterise the changing nature of the late medieval Church, indicating the kinds of men who were chosen to be its leaders and what qualities they had. It highlights the importance of the law for the Church, encompassing not just canon and civil law, but also the exercise of the prelate's judicial role in both spiritual and temporal matters. It shows us how men who went on to occupy some of the highest positions in government, and who acted as ambassadors and diplomats

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47 Benjamin Thompson, 'Prelates and Politics from Winchelsey to Warham', in *Political Culture in Late Medieval Britain*, ed. by Christine Carpenter and L. S. Clark, The Fifteenth Century Series, 4 (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. 69–95.

48 Joel Rosenthal's work in the 1970s looked at the bishops as a group: J.T. Rosenthal, 'The Training of an Elite Group: English Bishops in the Fifteenth Century', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, New series, 60.5 (1970), 1–54; J.T. Rosenthal, 'The Fifteenth-Century Episcopate: Careers and Bequests', *Studies in Church History*, 10 (1973), 117–28.

49 For example: Barrie Dobson, 'English and Welsh Monastic Bishops: The Final Century, 1433-1533', in *Monasteries and Society in Medieval Britain: Proceedings of the 1994 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. by Benjamin Thompson, Harlaxton Medieval Studies, 6 (Stamford: Paul Watkins, 1999), pp. 348–67; Martin Heale, *The Abbots and Priors of Late Medieval and Reformation England*, 1st edn (Oxford: University Press, 2016); Aloyse Marie Reich, *The Parliamentary Abbots to 1470: A Study in English Constitutional History*, University of California Publications in History, 17.4 (Berkeley ; Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1941).

50 Examples of their work include: R. N. Swanson, *Church and Society in Late Medieval England* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989); Peter Heath, *Church and Realm 1272-1461* (London: Fontana Press, 1988); J.A.F. Thomson, *The Early Tudor Church and Society, 1485-1529* (London: Longmans, 1993); Christopher Harper-Bill, *The Pre-Reformation Church in England 1400-1530* (Harlow: Addison Wesley, 1996).

51 Bernard, *The Late Medieval English Church*, passim.

52 Ibid., p. ix.

for the king, were moulded and selected. It helps to explain how and why the men who made key decisions on matters such as heresy and heretics acted in the way they did. While there is currently a general consensus about what the early fifteenth-century Church represented 'after Arundel', there is much less unanimity (or indeed understanding) about what the later fifteenth-century Church represented 'after Chichele'.<sup>53</sup> Yet a probing analysis of the period from the end of Henry VI's minority until the death of Henry VII is essential if subsequent events are to be fully understood. The study of the prelate and his rise to prominence can help to dispel the mist that envelops this later period. Too many historians treat the institutional Church and its leading clerics in isolation from the rest of English society. Although the study of particular churchmen as great individuals has value, this thesis seeks to see these men as part of a cohort, and to assess how that broader group of clerics thought and acted within both Church and state. Where the Church is looked at by historians as part of a broader historical study, it is often as a late chapter or closing section, and the integral role of churchmen in English society is diluted or even overlooked. Such an approach dismembers the social realities of the time where clerics were also a key part of lay society. Alongside the lay aristocrats in government were the archbishops and bishops; alongside those gentry active in parliament and in the counties were industrious churchmen active in government, the courts and elsewhere. The king himself was a prince with both temporal and spiritual roles. The clergy and non-clergy did not exist in separate worlds, and even the enclosed clergy such as the monks and nuns were major participants in the broader life of the kingdom through their temporal possessions and other roles. The predominant contemporary view of the Church in fifteenth-century Christendom was that of a living body, a vital force that encompassed all people, both living and dead, in communion with God and

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53 A conference looking at the legacy of Thomas Arundel ('After Arundel') was held at St John's College, Oxford in April 2009. The discussions were summarised in Kantik Ghosk, and Vincent Gillespie, eds, *After Arundel: Religious Writing in Fifteenth-Century England*, Medieval Church Studies, 21 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011). It was followed in June 2017 by a conference looking at the legacy of Henry Chichele ('After Chichele') held at St Anne's College, Oxford (for details see <https://www.english.ox.ac.uk/event/after-chichele-intellectual-and-cultural-dynamics-english-church-1443-1517>) [accessed 26 May 2020]. In his *ODNB* entry, Jeremy Catto says that Chichele's "long career imparted a cool professionalism to the service of crown and church" – <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/5271>.

his saints. The clergy had a special position in that Church, but it was nevertheless a Church of all the faithful.

Although the Church had a distinctive national flavour throughout the fifteenth century, it was in full communion with Rome, and it had as one of its central concerns the maintenance of orthodoxy and the suppression of heresy.<sup>54</sup> In its role as the guardian of the faith, the Church received unwavering support from successive English monarchs. The part played by Henry V has been subject to particularly vigorous debate among historians. J.R. Lander's description of him as a 'bigot' might not be shared by all, but for Maureen Jurkowski Henry fell far short of his reputation as the 'king of justice' with his 'flagrant disrespect' for the principles of the common law as displayed by his arbitrary arrest and imprisonment of suspected Lollards.<sup>55</sup> By way of contrast, Malcolm Vale characterises Henry as a man who exercised 'clemency and a lack of vindictiveness'.<sup>56</sup> Jeremy Catto sees Henry as a reformer with his ambitious monastic foundations 'designed to place the monarchy at the spiritual centre of English life'; 'In all but name ... Henry V had begun to act as the supreme governor of the Church of England.'<sup>57</sup> Catto's analysis of the private and public faces of Henry's piety is one shared by Alison McHardy who says of the king that 'the private Christian was inseparable from the public ruler'.<sup>58</sup>

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54 The term 'churche of England' is used almost casually on the first page of *Historie of the Arrivall of Edward IV in England and the Finall Recouerye of His Kingdomes from Henry VI*, ed. by John Bruce, Camden Society, 1st Series, 1 (London: Camden Society, 1838). There is no sense that the author is making a schismatic statement.

55 J. R. Lander, *Conflict and Stability in Fifteenth-Century England*, Hutchinson University Library (London: Hutchinson, 1969), p. 58; Maureen Jurkowski, 'Henry V's Suppression of the Oldcastle Revolt', in *Henry V: New Interpretations*, ed. by Gwilym Dodd (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2013), pp. 103–30 (see especially pp. 127–9).

56 J. R. Lander, *Conflict and Stability in Fifteenth-Century England*, Hutchinson University Library (London: Hutchinson, 1969), p. 58; Malcolm Vale, *Henry V: The Conscience of the King* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2016), p. 275. Vale 'detects' a kind of 'Anglicanism' under Henry, and that Henry 'gave the Church the backing of a secular power when and where it was needed – but on his own terms, and in the expectation of a return', *Ibid.*, pp. 163, 199.

57 Jeremy Catto, 'Religious Change under Henry V', in *Henry V: The Practice of Kingship*, ed. by Gerald Leslie Harriss (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 97–115 (see pp. 107, 115).

58 Alison McHardy, 'Religion, Court Culture and Propaganda: The Chapel Royal in the Reign of Henry V', in *Henry V: New Interpretations*, ed. by Gwilym Dodd (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2013), pp. 131–56 (p. 131).

Henry V's innovations affected the Church in other ways, especially his championing the use of the English language.<sup>59</sup> His reign represented something of a watershed, with the official use of French in particular in decline while English increasingly became the language of royal business and of correspondence. Major monastic institutions such as Durham Cathedral Priory and the Abbey of Bury moved quickly to adopt the vernacular.<sup>60</sup> The use of English within the royal administration also reduced the need to employ churchmen whose skills in Latin became of lesser importance.<sup>61</sup> It was the 'conscious decision' of the king himself to encourage this development, both as a practical move, but also 'an emotive appeal to language as the true sign of a nation'.<sup>62</sup> What Henry did not challenge was the primacy of the Latin liturgy within the English Church.

The intimate interdependence of the king and his Church is a theme that will recur throughout this thesis. The ambitious clerk who wanted to rise to a position of prelacy had to win the favour of the king and of those who advised him. In the first half of the century, with the stability of the Lancastrian succession after 1422, the inheritance of the existing bench of bishops by the new king could be seen as relatively unproblematic. Although those men had been chosen by his predecessors, the new monarch could know that these clerics had a shared interest in the continuing stability of the current polity. From the late 1450s onwards, these certainties were being challenged. The Lancastrian orthodoxy had to be rapidly reassessed by churchmen who wished to accommodate themselves to the new Yorkist ascendancy. Under Henry VI's pious monarchy the Church had evolved, with a growing participation by the gentry classes on the episcopal bench, and a strong emphasis on education with the foundation of new establishments at Eton, Cambridge, Oxford and elsewhere.<sup>63</sup> Whether the new king, Edward IV, would combine his martial prowess with those strong religious sentiments shown by Henry VI and his

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59 For a lengthy discussion on Henry V and his role in the growing use of English in correspondence and government business, see Christopher T. Allmand, *Henry V*, English Monarchs (London: Methuen London, 1992), pp. 419-25.

60 *Ibid.*, p. 423.

61 The decline in the number of king's clerks recorded in the Patent Rolls is discussed in Chapter 5.

62 *Ibid.*, p. 424. The classic text on the history of the English language remains Albert C. Baugh and Thomas Cable, *A History of the English Language*, 6th edn (London: Routledge, 2013).

63 David Grummitt, *Henry VI*, Routledge Historical Biographies (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017), p. 108.

father was much less certain. A very few churchmen such as Morton chose not to accept the Yorkist usurpation, but most other prelates and aspiring 'high-fliers' decided to submit to the political realities, whether willingly or not. An alternative path for the Church could have been to become detached from this turbulent political scene, to see its future as requiring a more independent approach. That this did not happen would indicate just how enmeshed the Church was within the English polity.

That lack of independence was to prove a profound weakness when faced with the overwhelming strength of Henry VIII's kingship in the next century. The prelates who had been trained and marked out for promotion within the fifteenth-century Church found themselves having to respond to a prince who was leading them in a wholly new direction. How and why John Morton's successors, men such as William Warham, submitted to Henry's break with Rome can only be fully explained by an understanding of the Church as it was in the previous century. But the meek end of that late medieval institution requires an excursion into the 1520s and beyond that will be given in the concluding chapter.<sup>64</sup>

The remarkable politics of the fifteenth century in England when the relative stability of the Lancastrian monarchy was undone during the 1450s and 1460s, may appear to stand in contrast to the life of the national Church.<sup>65</sup> That life can seem fixed, almost immovable until the events of the reign of Henry VIII. The period 1470 to 1485 witnessed five different individuals occupying the English throne. At the same time there was only one man occupying the archiepiscopal see of Canterbury, and he has been roundly criticised by some historians for not using his authority more effectively to combat the political turmoil.<sup>66</sup> However,

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64 There is a strong historiography for this period that will be discussed in Chapter 6. Key authors include Arthur Dickens, Geoffrey Elton, John Scarisbrick, George Bernard, Richard Rex, Diarmaid MacCulloch and Peter Marshall.

65 The early reign of Henry IV was, of course, anything but stable. Churchmen were part of that unrest, and Richard Scrope was the unfortunate archbishop of York who paid with his life for his part in the insurrection against the king's rule. A subsequent execution was that of the renegade abbot of Hailes who was captured in arms. Chris Given-Wilson, *Henry IV* (New Haven ; London: Yale University Press, 2016), pp. 269, 351.

66 Richard G. Davies, 'The Church and the Wars of the Roses', in *The Wars of the Roses*, ed. by A. J. Pollard, Problems in Focus (London: Macmillan, 1995), pp. 134–61 (p. 140). In the opinion of Davies, Bourchier was a 'Teflon' archbishop and a 'congenital appeaser'.

the idea of stasis in the Church, especially in the period 1450 to 1520, is thoroughly misplaced. This was a Church with a clear interest in reform. Distinct trends are clearly evident such as the desire to centralize authority and to rationalise the overlapping and confused area of jurisdiction within the Church.

The social make-up of the bishops' bench progressed across the century from one in which aristocrats were present, albeit in small numbers, to one when they had almost all disappeared.<sup>67</sup> Whereas William Courtenay, Thomas Arundel and Thomas Bouchier were of noble origin, the occupants of the see of Canterbury thereafter were men who had risen from the gentry. And the educational standards of the clergy continued to rise. Henry Chichele's desire to foster and reward a graduate clergy was a legacy that survived his death, and was built upon over the succeeding decades.<sup>68</sup> Many more clerks spent time at Oxford and Cambridge than are recorded in the registers of degrees awarded. Some spent only a year or two away from their parishes and benefices, but their reward included an expanded network of contacts and potential patrons. At the highest levels of the Church, bishops, archbishops and abbots were fully prepared to engage in open legal conflict to safeguard their privileges. In a time of change, there was also a clear desire to protect the status quo from encroachment by others.<sup>69</sup> The religious houses were placed at the forefront of the reform movement, gathering pace with the suppression and absorption of the alien houses in the reign of Henry V, a development that had been

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67 By the time James Stanley was provided to the bishopric of Ely in 1506, he was one of a vanishingly small group of aristocratic bishops.

68 For a summary of Chichele's struggles to support the graduate clergy, see Jeremy Catto's *ODNB* entry at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/5271>. Chichele's approach superseded that of the previous generation, when clerks, either singly or in concert, had petitioned the holy see directly in search of preferment. E. F. Jacob discussed this in his review of three petition rolls for the University of Cambridge, looking at the period 1370-1399 (see E. F. Jacob, 'Petitions for Benefices from English Universities during the Great Schism', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 27 (1945), 41-59; reproduced at E. F. Jacob, *Essays in the Conciliar Epoch*, 3rd edn (Manchester: University Press, 1963), pp. 223-39). Jessie Lloyd took the names from those rolls to produce a detailed description of 165 clerks with surnames in the range A to H. (Jessie Lloyd, 'Notes on Cambridge Clerks Petitioning for Benefices, 1370-1399', *Historical Research*, 20.60 (1944), 75-96). Of her list, almost two thirds had studied law in some form, whether canon, civil or both laws. Theologians made up around 12%. That preponderance of legists over theologians in this period is noted elsewhere (Aston, T. H., G. D. Duncan, and T. A. R. Evans, 'The Medieval Alumni of the University of Cambridge', *Past and Present*, 86 (1980), 9-86 (p. 59). Although Jessie Lloyd's study only encompassed surnames beginning with the first eight letters of the alphabet, they typically make up almost half of all the surnames at Cambridge, based on the contents of *BRUC*.

69 For example see Christopher Harper-Bill, 'Bishop Richard Hill and the Court of Canterbury, 1494-96', *Guildhall Studies in London History*, 3.1 (1977), 1-12.



underway for several decades.<sup>70</sup> A closure of other houses followed, with their resources used for the creation of new educational institutions.<sup>71</sup> As part of this trajectory of change, the law as both study and practice, rose inexorably in volume and importance. Canon law was naturally one focus of attention, but the civil or Roman law was of increasing interest to secular churchmen. Knowledge of the law, and the skill in making use of it, provided churchmen both with the means to defend their own interests but also to extend their role within lay society. The study of civil law led these men quite naturally into royal government, especially in such roles as chancery clerks and as diplomatic envoys. Those who rose to the highest positions in the Church made use of their legal skills and theological knowledge to uphold the king's justice, acting as judges with a special emphasis on discretionary justice.<sup>72</sup>

John van Engen's observation that "... church historians have learned to be ... wary of church life [being] treated apart from its social embedding" needs to be expanded to include other key factors such as the economic circumstances of the time and associated issues such as population and disease, and advances in technology.<sup>73</sup> Just how far the fifteenth century can be regarded as one of change or of stasis, even stagnation, has become a subject of strong debate. For Michael Hicks even the turbulent political culture has been characterised as showing an underlying harmony and stability, in spite of seismic events such as the Wars of the Roses.<sup>74</sup> Such a view is not fully shared by historians such as Christine Carpenter. She sees the crisis of mid-century as one of kingship, and eventually as a crisis of the crown itself.<sup>75</sup> For her, the period leading up to the

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70 Vale, *Henry V*, p. 149. The period between 1350 and 1414 saw the confiscation and final suppression of some seventy alien priories: David Knowles and R. Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses, England and Wales*, 2nd edn (London: Longmans, 1971), p. 46. At the Leicester parliament of 1414, 'the act generally described as the suppression of the alien priories' was passed: Marjorie M. Morgan, 'The Suppression of the Alien Priors', *History*, 26 (1914), 204-212 (p. 209).

71 A good example was John Alcock's suppression of the convent of St Radegund in Cambridge in 1496 to found what is now known as Jesus College (see R.J. Schoek's *ODNB* article on Alcock at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/289>).

72 Gwilym Dodd, 'Reason, Conscience and Equity: Bishops as the King's Judges in Later Medieval England', *History*, 99.335 (2014), 213-40.

73 John Van Engen, 'The World of the Fifteenth-Century Church', *Church History*, 77 (2008), 257-84 (271).

74 Michael Hicks, *English Political Culture in the Fifteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 1-2.

75 Christine Carpenter, *The Wars of the Roses: Politics and the Constitution in England, c.1437-1509*, Cambridge Medieval Textbooks (Cambridge: University Press, 1997), p. 255.

Wars and beyond had profound reverberations well into the reign of Henry VIII. As regards the Wars themselves, opinions are also divided, although few would go so far as to characterise them as 'a brief and harmless episode'.<sup>76</sup> J. R. Lander detects continuity from previous times: 'Most probably England was no more war-ridden in the fifteenth century than in earlier centuries'.<sup>77</sup> That view is not shared by historians such as Michael Hicks. For him the Wars 'are actually the longest period of civil war in England's post-conquest history'.<sup>78</sup> His analysis is much closer to that of Christine Carpenter and others when he says that 'There is a great deal to explain, for never before and never again after the Wars of the Roses was the government of England to be so insecure.' However Hicks also points to the constrained scale of the Wars in terms of time and space: 'Brevity made the Wars much less destructive and economically disruptive than had been the English raids on and occupations of France'.<sup>79</sup>

As regards the effects of the Wars and the crisis of mid-century on the Church, there is again a range of views. R. J. Knecht's contrasts the organisational stability and continuing integrity of the Church with the fate of the bishops who 'suffered greatly as a result of political happenings. None was slain, but several were imprisoned, exiled or even deprived. Indeed, it would have been well-nigh impossible for the bishops, recruited as they mostly were for political ends, not to have become involved in the political controversies of the day'.<sup>80</sup> To more recent historians, that viewpoint seems exaggerated, and they would see the Church as largely 'untouched' by the crisis.<sup>81</sup> Indeed no English bishop (other

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76 See J. B. Gillingham, *The Wars of the Roses: Peace and Conflict in Fifteenth-Century England* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1981), p. 14 as quoted in Carpenter, *Wars*, p. 258. Gillingham describes such a viewpoint as a new 'counter-legend'.

77 See Lander, J. R., *The Wars of the Roses* (Stroud: The History Press, 2009), p. 7 (Lander's book was first published in 1965). He points out that the period of active warfare was not great: 'During the Wars of the Roses the total period of active campaigning between the first battle of St Albans (1455) and the battle of Stoke (1487) amounted to a little more than a year - one year out of thirty-two years.' He describes them as 'almost miniature campaigns'.

78 M. A. Hicks, *The Wars of the Roses* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), p.3.

79 *Ibid.*, p. 9.

80 R. J. Knecht, 'The Episcopate and the Wars of the Roses', *University of Birmingham Historical Journal*, 6.2 (1958), 108–31 (p. 108).

81 Carpenter, *Wars*, p. 260: 'Even though some of the higher clergy seem to have meddled dangerously in politics, remarkably few suffered for it. A few had to put up with temporary imprisonment or disgrace, mostly of a brief nature'.

than Bishop Reginald Pecock of Chichester who can be regarded as a special case) was removed from his see across the whole period of the Wars.<sup>82</sup>

Much broader trends are also pertinent to any discussion of the fifteenth century, and the Church's place within the English polity. One example is our current understanding of population changes and demography for England over the century, where our knowledge of the numbers remains 'thin'.<sup>83</sup> However the general opinion is that the population figures were at best stagnant.<sup>84</sup> Three studies in particular have informed our understanding, based on the religious houses of Christ Church Cathedral Priory, Canterbury and Westminster Abbey, as well as on a study of rural Essex.<sup>85</sup> They suggest periods of high mortality, especially in the second half of the century, and a fertility rate that could only just maintain population numbers. In urban communities too there were signs of population falls, for example in Winchester, Lincoln and York.<sup>86</sup> In such places, any reduction or changes in trade patterns could exacerbate the impact of national population movements across the period. For the Church these population issues were important. In periods of attrition, new recruits to the

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82 But there were changes in Wales. In the summer of 1460 when the Yorkists were resurgent, John de la Bere resigned his see of St David's. As regards Thomas Bird and his bishopric of St Asaph there is some uncertainty. According to E. B. Fryde, Diana E. Greenway, S. Porter, and Ian Roy, eds., *Handbook of British Chronology*, Guides and Handbooks/Royal Historical Society, 2, 3rd ed (London: Royal Historical Society, 1986), p. 296, Bird was 'compelled to resign in 1460'; however the *Fasti* entry at <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/fasti-ecclesiae/1300-1541/vol11/pp37-39> says that he was deprived 'c. 1463'. The temporalities were certainly in the king's hands by January 1463 (see F. R. H. Du Boulay, ed., *Registrum Thome Bourghier, Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi: A.D. 1454-1486*, Canterbury and York Society, 54 (Oxford: University Press, 1957), p. 270. Given such information, it is unclear why Roy Martin Haines shows Bird's possession of St Asaph as ending 'c. 1470[?]' (Roy Martin Haines, 'Regular Clergy and the Episcopate in the Provinces of Canterbury and York during the Later Middle Ages', *Revue Bénédictine*, 113.2 (2003), 407–47 (p. 444)). There is no ODNB entry for Bird and his register does not survive (David M. Smith, *Guide to Bishops' Registers of England and Wales: A Survey from the Middle Ages to the Abolition of Episcopacy in 1646*, Guides and Handbooks/Royal Historical Society, 11 (London: Royal Historical Society, 1981), p. 180. For a further discussion of Bird, see Nanette Yvonne Mollere, 'Crown and Mitre, 1461-1483: The Episcopate during the Reign of Edward IV' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Tulane University, 1993), pp. 74-8.

83 John Hatcher, 'The Great Slump of the Mid-Fifteenth Century', in *Progress and Problems in Medieval England: Essays in Honour of Edward Miller*, ed. by R. H. Britnell, John Hatcher, and Edward Miller (Cambridge: University Press, 1996), pp. 237–72 (p. 245).

84 Andrew Hinde, *England's Population: A History from the Domesday Survey* (London: Hodder Arnold, 2003), p. 64.

85 John Hatcher, 'Mortality in the Fifteenth Century: Some New Evidence', *Economic History Review*, Second, 39 (1986), 19–38; Barbara F. Harvey, *Living and Dying in England, 1100-1540: The Monastic Experience*, Ford Lectures (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993); Lawrence R. Poos, *A Rural Society after the Black Death: Essex, 1350-1525*, Cambridge Studies in Population, Economy and Society in Past Time, 18 (Cambridge: University Press, 1991).

86 Christopher Dyer, *Making a Living in the Middle Ages: The People of Britain, 850-1520*, The Penguin Economic History of Britain (London: Penguin, 2003), p. 300.

clergy were required. The income from its temporal resources might suffer from increased mortality among its tenants, leaseholders and parishioners. A continuing effort was therefore required to maintain a stable level of income in times of change. Disease could have a sudden and major impact on the Church at any level. The year 1500 alone saw two archbishops and three bishops swept away by an outbreak of pestilence.<sup>87</sup> For the king this provided an opportunity to mould the bishops' bench ever more to his liking.

The changing and sometimes difficult economic environment did not constrain the activities of the prelates.<sup>88</sup> The deep economic recession mid-century has been given particular emphasis (the 'Great Slump' of 1440-1480).<sup>89</sup> The estimates of GDP per head of population suggest that wealth was little changed in 1500 from its level in 1400.<sup>90</sup> The loss of possessions in France resulted in a major reduction in income for aristocrats such as Sir John Fastolf. As late as 1445, Fastolf's French lands provided him with an annual income of £401, a very useful addition to the annual income from his English lands of £1061.<sup>91</sup> For the Church, the changing economic circumstances had multiple consequences. Among the religious houses, the prospect of costs that were increasing, especially for labour, had to be weighed against income from rents etc. that were potentially in decline. Some studies suggest a deepening crisis for religious institutions, with rents tending to fall, and income from their manors reducing.<sup>92</sup> However there were some strong regional variations. In the south west of England, agricultural productivity had been noted for its progress.<sup>93</sup> At Tavistock Abbey rental values for certain manors rose strongly between 1358 and 1535, although the known figures for 1408 and 1471 show only a very

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87 *The Register of John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1486-1500*, ed. by Christopher Harper-Bill, Canterbury and York Society, 75, 78, 89, 3 vols (York, Woodbridge: Canterbury and York Society, Boydell Press, 1987), i, pp. x-xi.

88 Even prelates who were provided to poorer dioceses such as Carlisle or St Asaph found ways to supplement their income (Barrie Dobson, 'Richard Bell, Prior of Durham (1464-1478) and Bishop of Carlisle (1478-95)', *Transactions of the Cumberland & Westmorland Antiquarian & Archaeological Society*, New Series, 66 (1965), 182-221, (p. 209)).

89 Hatcher, 'The Great Slump of the Mid-Fifteenth Century'.

90 S. N. Broadberry, *British Economic Growth, 1270-1870* (Cambridge: University Press, 2015), p. 197.

91 See G. L. Harriss's ODNB entry at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/9199>.

92 Christopher Dyer, *An Age of Transition? Economy and Society in England In the Later Middle Ages*, The Ford Lectures, 2001 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 30.

93 *The Agrarian History of England and Wales. Vol.4: 1500-1640*, ed. by Joan Thirsk (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), pp. 74-75.

modest increase.<sup>94</sup> In the north of England, the monks of Durham cathedral and the bishops of Durham sought to combat the mid-century slump in income by differing means – the former had a focus on enhanced rent collection and the leasing out of properties, while the bishops diversified into such areas as mining and forests.<sup>95</sup> Other religious houses including nunneries showed signs of sophisticated financial management, with the farming out of their properties to leaseholders, many of whom were local gentry. Across the parishes of England, there was a continuing programme of church extension and reconstruction financed by loans, gifts and other mechanisms. The evidence for this is provided in surviving churchwardens' accounts.<sup>96</sup> There was clearly therefore sufficient money available in the economy to fund the series of magnificent church towers visible in counties such as Somerset.<sup>97</sup> The prelates themselves continued to commit large resources to great building works, whether cathedral buildings, residences, or works that benefited the broader community such as John Morton's drainage work on the fens of his Ely diocese, "work of singular consequence".<sup>98</sup> The overall picture for the Church is therefore one of adaptation and resilience in the face of changing economic circumstances.

Italy represented a key focus for prelates and for those aspiring to prelacy. With the effective ending of the papal schism in 1418, Rome became once again the focal point of western Christendom.<sup>99</sup> Many English churchmen journeyed there, crossing over to the Low Countries before reaching the Rhine valley at Cologne and thence down to the Alps and into Italy. The Italian financial network was of great use to prelates, and had been used by bishops to assist with the cost of

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94 H. P. R. Finberg, *Tavistock Abbey: A Study in the Social and Economic History of Devon* (New York: Kelley, 1969), p. 256.

95 A. T. Brown, 'Estate Management and Institutional Constraints in Pre-Industrial England: The Ecclesiastical Estates of Durham, c.1400-1640.', *Economic History Review*, 67.3 (2014), 699–719 (p. 702).

96 Gabriel Thomas Gustav Byng, *Church Building and Society in the Later Middle Ages*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought. Fourth Series, 107 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), pp. 55–61, 108-9.

97 Julian Orbach and Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Somerset: South and West*, The Buildings of England (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), p. 390.

98 William Dugdale, *The History of Imbanking and Drayning of Divers Fenns and Marshes*. (London, 1662), p. 364.

99 Although Martin V was generally acclaimed as the sole, true pontiff in 1417, the Aragonese 'anti-pope' Benedict XIII still maintained his claim. However his authority was effectively restricted to the kingdom of Aragon. His successor, Clement VIII, eventually submitted to the authority of Martin V in 1429.

trips to Rome since at least the thirteenth century.<sup>100</sup> All of these developments helped to foster a broader international perspective among the ecclesiastical fast-stream. The study of the law and legal practice were of increasing importance to churchmen on the rise. The school at Bologna was a destination of choice for students of civil or canon law who wished to study abroad, and Italian jurists of the previous century such as Bartolo de Sassoferrato and Baldus de Ubaldis were compulsory reading.<sup>101</sup> The rich and vibrant culture of the Italian Renaissance was itself a major attraction, as well as a major influence on the burgeoning humanist culture of western Europe. However the relationship with Rome became closer and more intense towards the end of the period. Henry Tudor's claim to the throne of England was strongly underwritten by papal support, both for his marriage to Elizabeth of York and for his legitimacy as the conquering overthrewer of Richard III.<sup>102</sup> Throughout his reign, Henry was keen to maintain his links with Rome, not simply to foster ecclesiastical relations but also for strategic diplomatic reasons. He appointed various Italian clerics as his proctors to the papal court, and it was in Henry's reign that England's first cardinal protector was appointed in the person of Francesco Piccolomini, the future Pope Pius III.<sup>103</sup> This relationship with Rome was one that both strengthened and deepened in the fifty years leading up to Henry VIII's rupture with the papacy. English prelates continued to play a key part in that relationship right into the early decades of the sixteenth century - Christopher Bainbridge was the king's resident proctor in Rome while archbishop of York and later as cardinal.<sup>104</sup>

A key characteristic of prelates in this period was the keen interest shown by churchmen in fostering and participating in developments in humane letters and in the visual and performing arts. Such patronage was clearly a role they

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100 Olivia Robinson, 'Bishops and Bankers', in *Law as Profession and Practice in Medieval Europe: Essays in Honour of James A. Brundage*, ed. by Kenneth Pennington and Melanie Harris Eichbauer (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), pp. 11–26 (p. 18).

101 Christopher T. Allmand, 'The Civil Lawyers', in *Profession, Vocation and Culture in Later Medieval England: Essays Dedicated to the Memory of A.R. Myers*, ed. by Cecil H. Clough (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1982), pp. 155–80 (pp. 155–68).

102 John A. F. Thomson, *The Transformation of Medieval England 1370-1529*, Foundations of Modern Britain (New York: Longman, 1983), pp. 321–22.

103 *DBDI*, v.83, 803-8.

104 For an overview of Bainbridge's life and career, see D.S. Chambers' *ODNB* article at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/1081>.

relished; it contributed to their sense of identity in a changing intellectual landscape, and it enhanced their stature as prelates and as patrons. The discussion by historians of the artistic and cultural tastes of the prelates has had as its focus the rise of humanism.<sup>105</sup> Figures such as Robert Flemming, dean of Lincoln, and William Gray, bishop of Ely, have been identified as key actors in the spread of humanistic texts and ideas across English clerical and literary circles.<sup>106</sup> However the developing taste for and support of other aspects of culture in terms of music, drama and visual art must not be overlooked. Although he lacked the flamboyance of Thomas Wolsey, Morton was nevertheless a prelate who displayed many of the characteristics of his continental peers. He had after all spent long years of exile in the 1460s moving around France, the Low Countries and Italy, and he clearly absorbed influences from the cultures of all those places. Once back in England he spent significant sums on grand building programmes, both as bishop of Ely and later at Canterbury.<sup>107</sup> He kept a grand household as archbishop, attended by young esquires such as Thomas More, and patronised new artistic forms such as the plays of his household clerk, Henry Medwall.<sup>108</sup> Music, especially choral performance, was of great importance to the households of great churchmen, but above all in liturgical practice. For the Lancastrian kings their special devotion to St John of Bridlington gave rise to the rich musical observance of the Wollaton Antiphonal. Other surviving manuscripts such as the Lucca Choir book, the Old Hall Manuscript and the Eton Choir book all provide examples of a polyphonic style that developed into one of the greatest complexity, and show just how skilled and professional the best choirs had to be. This musical tradition drew in particular on influences from France and the Low Countries.<sup>109</sup> Through the century a steady stream of choral vicars appear in the ordination records for cathedrals such as Salisbury, Morton's home diocese.<sup>110</sup> The

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105 Roberto Weiss, *Humanism in England during the Fifteenth Century*, Medium Aevum Monographs, no. 4 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1941).

106 For a discussion of Flemming see Cecil H. Clough's *ODNB* article at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/9714>. For Gray see Roy Martin Haines at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/11567>.

107 Heale, *The Prelate in England and Europe*, p. 264.

108 For Alan H. Nelson's *ODNB* article on Medwall see <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/18504>.

109 'Wollaton Antiphonal', University of Nottingham, MS 250; 'Lucca Choirbook', Lucca, Archivio Di Stato, MS 238; 'Old Hall Manuscript', London, British Library, Add MS 57950; 'Eton Choirbook', Eton College, MS 178.

110 *Vicars Choral at English Cathedrals: Cantate Domino; History, Architecture and Archaeology*, ed. by Richard Hall and David Stocker (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2005).

excellence of the choir boys in Thomas Wolsey's chapel had its roots in the Church's richly developing musical tradition of the previous century.<sup>111</sup> The late medieval Church was a significant force in supporting and fostering broad artistic and cultural developments, and its prelates were among the key proponents.

There is clear evidence of the enthusiastic adoption by prelates and other churchmen of new technologies such as the printed book. They were keen to explore and act as patrons for innovation in many areas. Although showing great reverence for the wisdom of the past, and for the 'fixed' truths of their religion, many clerics were intensely interested in new ideas and technologies. Even before 1476 when William Caxton set up his print shop in London, printed works were already in circulation in England through purchases made from producers in Italy, Germany and elsewhere. Now that it could be sourced locally, the printed word was taken up with energy by English churchmen for the dissemination of many religious texts.<sup>112</sup> Printers such as Richard Pynson were called upon by prelates to produce devotional works, as well as items such as exemplifications of papal bulls.<sup>113</sup> Seaborne travel too was revolutionised in the second half of the century by the development of new and enhanced designs of ship such as the carrack and the caravel. Bristol merchants and seafarers used their knowledge of Portuguese explorers, and their own expertise in travel as far north as Iceland, to plan voyages across the Atlantic. Finance from Italian merchant capitalists enabled voyages to the New World in the 1490s, and the Cabot brothers sailed from Bristol to Newfoundland where there is the possibility that they founded a settlement that might even have included an outpost of the late medieval English Church.<sup>114</sup> John Cabot was certainly accompanied by an Augustinian friar, Fra Giovanni Antonio de Carbonariis, who

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111 Gwyn, *The King's Cardinal*, p. xv.

112 Christopher Harper-Bill, *The Pre-Reformation Church in England 1400-1530*, Revised Edition (Harlow: Addison Wesley Longman Limited, 1996), p. 84.

113 See Canterbury Cathedral Archives, CCA-Dcc/ChAnt/Z/206 (details viewable at <https://archives.canterbury-cathedral.org/CalmView/Record.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&id=CCA-Dcc-ChAnt%2fZ%2f206&pos=1>) [accessed 26 May 2020]. Here is an item showing the Church putting the new technology of printing at the service of the state. The bull gave uncompromising support to Henry VII and promised full remission of sins for those who died fighting in support of his right to the throne; large printed copies were made by the Church to be circulated and displayed throughout England.

114 For details of Cabot's financial support by the Bardi company of Florence see Francesco Guidi-Bruscoli, 'John Cabot and His Italian Financiers\*', *Historical Research*, 85.229 (2012), 372–93.



amongst other roles had been deputy papal collector in England to Adriano Castellesi, a future bishop of Hereford before his translation to Bath & Wells.<sup>115</sup>

The relationship between a bishop and the seat of his diocese was one that greatly exercised his critics and commentators. At Salisbury for example contrasts can be drawn between Bishop William Aiscough and his immediate successor, Richard Beauchamp.<sup>116</sup> The latter showed a greater personal commitment to his diocesan duties during his lengthy episcopate. On the issue of residency, historians have arrived at contrasting views. In an earlier Protestant tradition, late medieval prelates were criticised, even lampooned, for their absences from their dioceses. However more recent scholarship has emphasized the heavy workload that such prelates were under. The king might expect them to be in his presence or away on royal duties such as diplomatic missions, the foundation of new institutions and the more general work of royal administration. The time left for duties in their dioceses might be severely constrained, and the use of deputies and suffragans was therefore a necessity rather than a preference. The work of David Lepine and others on individual dioceses has thrown much light on their administrative machinery; indeed they demonstrate how a diocese could function perfectly well, whether the bishop was frequently resident or not.<sup>117</sup> The broad mix of duties that a bishop was expected to fulfil was also a determinant for the selection of candidates for the episcopate. Many of these themes will be explored in the chapters that follow.

The practice of prelacy in this period was also shaped by major reforms within the wider Roman church, and by key events beyond England that act as milestones across the century. The Council of Constance (1414-1418) was a major turning point. The re-establishment of a unified papacy resident in Rome removed a grave problem for the Western Church. It also shifted the balance of power with respect to France, the Empire and Rome. England remained at war

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115 Evan T. Jones, 'Alwyn Ruddock: "John Cabot and the Discovery of America"', *Historical Research*, 81 (2008), 224–54 (pp. 232–33).<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/174>.

116 For details of Aiscough and of his relationship with the city of Salisbury see Margaret Kekewich's *ODNB* article at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/954>. The *ODNB* entry for Beauchamp, written by R.G. Davies, can be found at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/1839>.

117 David Lepine, *Brotherhood of Canons Serving God. English Secular Cathedrals in the Later Middle Ages*, *Studies in the History of Medieval Religion*, 8 (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1995).

with France for the next thirty-five years, but by 1453 a series of French victories meant that England was left only with the region around Calais. The close relationship with the French Church in the areas of English occupation was lost, as was any income from that source. Even before that final defeat, there was much unrest within England. 1450 was a year of clerical murders, with bishops William Aiscough and Adam Moleyns falling victim to mob violence. 1453 was a year of grave defeat elsewhere with the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman forces under Sultan Mehmed II. The looming threat that the Islamic forces posed, although geographically distant, was viewed with great concern, even in England. The English Church was a very active participant in moves by the pope to raise money for a new crusade against the Turk.<sup>118</sup> The sceptical view of Thomas Gascoigne that English bishops had a very parochial perspective was not borne out by their support for the Jubilee Indulgence of 1455. That did not prevent Gascoigne from berating the episcopate for, as he saw it, not celebrating the victory over the Turks at Belgrade in 1456.<sup>119</sup>

One result of the changed international order, was that England perceived its interests as being served by a closer relationship to states such as Spain, but in particular to Rome. A regular stream of clerics acted as proctors and ambassadors for the English king at Rome across the century, and by the time of Henry VII, England employed a series of cardinal protectors to work and lobby on its behalf. Perhaps the high point of this relationship was the appointment of Christopher Bainbridge, then archbishop of York, as the king's resident ambassador at the court of pope Julius II. Bainbridge's key role was to 'embolden the papacy against France and in favour of England.'<sup>120</sup> The role of the papacy in supporting Henry Tudor in his seizure of the English throne was, at least in part, the result of the work of John Morton. Pope Innocent VIII was forthright in supporting Henry's marriage to Elizabeth of York, as well as making clear that Henry's claim to the throne was legitimate and should be supported by all the faithful of England. The clear success of Morton's diplomacy at this crucial time was one example of the skills that prelates could exercise in direct

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118 For a discussion of the Jubilee Indulgence of 1455 see Jonathan Harris, 'Publicising the Crusade : English Bishops and the Jubilee Indulgence of 1455', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 50.1 (1999), 23–37.

119 Gascoigne, *Loci e Libro Veritatum*, p. 48.

120 See D.S. Chambers' *ODNB* article from 2008 at doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/1081.

support of the civil power. As regards Spain, the previous hostility to the kingdom of Castile was superseded by the desire of Henry VII to outmanoeuvre France, leading to the dynastic marriage of his son Arthur to Catherine of Aragon. The betrothal was secured by the treaty of Medina del Campo concluded in 1489, whereby Henry pledged mutual support with Ferdinand and Isabella for any military action against France. In all of these diplomatic entanglements, the Church and its prelates were central players.

For the study of prelacy across a century or more, the identification and choice of source materials provides a challenge for the researcher. For certain figures such as Henry Beaufort or Thomas Becket, it is possible to delve with some success into their character and motivations. However for others, even for ones as prominent as John Morton, the sources are lacking. To obtain an overview of the secular prelacy, no one source or group of materials is sufficient to provide the breadth and depth of information required. The primary sources used in this thesis have therefore ranged as widely as the scope of the task allows, and can be broken down into four main headings: governmental, ecclesiastical, legal and educational. The governmental sources include the patent rolls as a main source, with other rolls series such as the close rolls and parliament rolls as secondary items. Sundry records from the National Archives, have been studied, especially those for the Court of Chancery, as well as some for the Courts of Requests and Star Chamber.<sup>121</sup>

Among the ecclesiastical sources, the bishops' registers are some of the most important, especially for ordination records, together with the *Fasti Ecclesiae* for details of clerical personnel and their changes of office. Across the fifteenth century there are variations in the scope of and level of detail within the archiepiscopal registers of the province of Canterbury. These registers have certainly been well-served by the Canterbury and York Society. Henry Chichele's almost thirty-year archiepiscopate (1414-1443) is richly documented

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<sup>121</sup> Upon examination of their catalogue entries, some extensive sets of TNA documents were found to be of little relevance to the themes of this thesis, for example those in SC 8 (Special Collections: Ancient Petitions), C 142 (Chancery: Inquisitions Post Mortem, Series II) and E 101 (Exchequer: King's Remembrancer: Accounts Various).

by the four volume set of his register published between 1937 and 1947.<sup>122</sup> The register of Thomas Bourchier (1454-1486) does have some curious omissions as discussed within this thesis, but it is nevertheless an essential source, meriting the printed edition as published in 1957.<sup>123</sup> Thereafter the three volume set of Archbishop Morton's register (1486-1500) edited by Christopher Harper-Bill between 1987 and 2000 is again a significant asset. However, as Harper-Bill points out, Morton's register is less systematic than that of Chichele.<sup>124</sup> As regards the Salisbury episcopal registers, several were studied for this thesis and all were fruitful sources. Those of Robert Hallum, Thomas Langton and John Blythe are available in published form and contain much relevant information.<sup>125</sup> The lengthy episcopate of Richard Beauchamp (1450-81) produced a register that, while only available in manuscript form, is a large and informative two-volume item that has been looked at by the author in detail.<sup>126</sup> Whatever their deficiencies, these registers contain much that is valuable,<sup>127</sup> and the author was able to work within the limitations they impose. Other

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122 E. F. Jacob and H. C. Johnson, eds, *The Register of Henry Chichele, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1414-1443*, Canterbury and York Society, 42, 45-7, 4 vols (Oxford: University Press, 1937-47).

123 F. R. H. Du Boulay, ed., *Registrum Thome Bourgchier, Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi: A.D. 1454-1486*, Canterbury and York Society, 54 (Oxford: University Press, 1957). With respect to omissions, the list of institutions and collations appears to be incomplete, including those for the Deanery of the Arches (a further discussion concerning the Arches is contained within Chapter 3 of this thesis). Regarding the incompleteness, see Du Boulay's comments on pp. xxiii-xxv. See also F. Donald Logan, 'Archbishop Thomas Bourgchier Revisited', in *The Church in Pre-Reformation Society: Essays in Honour of F.R.H. Du Boulay*, ed. by Caroline M. Barron and Christopher Harper-Bill (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1985), pp. 170-88 (p. 171).

124 Christopher Harper-Bill, ed., *The Register of John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1486-1500*, Canterbury and York Society, 75, 78, 89, 3 vols (Leeds & Woodbridge: C&Y Society & Boydell, 1987-2000). There are shortcomings. In his introduction to Volume 1, the editor points out that 'The register is far less systematic than those of Chichele or Kempe earlier in the fifteenth century, and in this it is akin to that of Bourgchier' (p. xiv).

125 Joyce Madeleine Horn, ed., *The Register of Robert Hallum, Bishop of Salisbury, 1407-17*, The Canterbury and York Society, 72 (Torquay: Canterbury & York Society, 1982); David Wright, ed., *The Register of Thomas Langton Bishop of Salisbury 1485-93*, The Canterbury and York Society, 74 (Canterbury and York Society, 1985); David Wright, ed., *The Register of John Blyth, Bishop of Salisbury 1493-1499*, Wiltshire Record Society Publications, 68 (Chippenham: Wiltshire Record Society, 2015).

126 'Register of Richard Beauchamp, Bishop of Salisbury (1450-81)', Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre, D1/2/11. By way of example, an entry for 16 September 1454 shows John Morton, together with Robert Ayscogh (both doctors of law), supervising the election of the new abbot at Cerne Abbey (John Helyer). Although Morton was already a notary, the two doctors were accompanied by Simon Hutchyns, notary public (Vol 1, part 2, fo. 23v). Elsewhere the register describes how John Morton, Lionel Woodville and other canons of Salisbury were absent for the election of the new dean, John Davyson, in April 1473 (Vol 1, part 2, fo. 143v).

127 Many of the entries in the *Fasti Ecclesiae* are derived from these registers, and much use has been made of that source in this thesis (<https://www.british-history.ac.uk/search/series/fasti-ecclesiae>). For example, the Lincoln register of John Chedworth shows John Morton being collated as sub-dean of Lincoln on 9<sup>th</sup> May 1458 at the Old Temple in London, although Morton never entered (Reg. John Chedworth, Lincoln, fo. 318v).

dioceses may well provide a contrast. The London register for Thomas Kemp's lengthy episcopate is decidedly patchy, as are those of his immediate successors.<sup>128</sup> Those for Coventry & Lichfield are of variable quality, although that for Reginald Bowers has been described as having 'sufficient range of detail and interest'.<sup>129</sup>

Diocesan records, especially those for Salisbury (Morton's home diocese) have been utilised. Legal sources include the records of the York Cause Papers and the London Metropolitan Archive for records of the London courts. For the Court of Arches, the work by F. Donald Logan is indispensable, with fragmentary remains elsewhere.<sup>130</sup> For information on individuals, Emden's biographical registers for Oxford and Cambridge are key resources. Although Emden is normally a very reliable source, there are instances of inaccurate information – for instance the claim that John Morton was Dean of Arches. Educational records have also been drawn upon, including the registers of the University of Oxford. Sundry other data sources have been studied to provide background and support in various parts of the thesis. These include the state papers for Milan and Venice, and the calendars of papal registers relating to Great Britain and Ireland. Where appropriate, sources relating to northern France have also been studied, for example the *Fasti Ecclesiae Gallicanae*, and relevant biographical dictionaries. The detailed information for each source is provided in the bibliography, and the specific sources used are referenced in full within each of the chapters that follow.

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128 So much is clear from the details provided in David M. Smith, *Guide to Bishops' Registers of England and Wales: A Survey from the Middle Ages to the Abolition of Episcopacy in 1646*, Guides and Handbooks/Royal Historical Society, 11 (London: Royal Historical Society, 1981); David M. Smith, *Supplement to the 'Guide to Bishop's Registers of England and Wales: A Survey from the Middle Ages to the Abolition of Episcopacy in 1646'*, Canterbury and York Society, Centenary Supplement (Canterbury: Canterbury and York Society, 2004). Virginia Davis highlights that the main ordination register for Kemp's episcopate 'must have been kept separately and has not survived' (Virginia Davis, *Clergy in London in the Late Middle Ages. A Register of Clergy Ordained in the Diocese of London Based on the Episcopal Ordination Lists 1361-1539* (London: Institute of Historical Research, 2000), p. 2, n. 6).

129 Paul Hosker, 'An Edition of the Register of Reginald Bowers, Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, 1453-1459' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Liverpool, 1978), Vol. 1, p. 22.

130 F. Donald Logan, 'The Court of Arches and the Bishop of Salisbury', in *The Foundations of Medieval English Ecclesiastical History. Studies Presented to David Smith.*, ed. by Philippa Hoskin, Christopher Brooke, and Barrie Dobson, Studies in the History of Medieval Religion, 27 (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005), pp. 159–72; F. Donald Logan, *The Medieval Court of Arches*, The Canterbury and York Society, 95 (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005).

The principal components of a clerical career are examined in turn in the chapters that follow. Within each of those themes, prosopographical approaches have been used where appropriate with the creation of a series of computerised databases. These have included one for bishops and their benefices, one for the ordinands of the Salisbury diocese, and one for archdeacons and their benefices. These databases are based on a detailed study of some key primary sources, many of which have not been exploited with the thoroughness they deserve. For example Virginia Davis has shown in her study of ordinations within the diocese of London just how fruitful such an approach can be.<sup>131</sup> A similar database has therefore been created for the diocese of Salisbury, containing a sample of ordination ceremonies from across the fifteenth century. It highlights a close relationship between the diocese and previously unidentified scholars studying at the University of Oxford.<sup>132</sup> Men such as John Morton appear as quite exceptional figures among the great mass of their contemporary ordinands. He is one of a small proportion of “high-fliers”, men with advanced academic qualifications coming relatively late to ordination after years of practising their skills in the law. The database of bishops and all the benefices they were granted on their way to the episcopal bench provides many new insights into the patronage they enjoyed. Some prelates enjoyed frequent patronage directly by the king, whereas others (such as Morton) took much of their patronage as benefices awarded by fellow churchmen. When taken just for an individual, such information is useful but hardly compelling; however, when looked at across the whole cohort, coherent patterns and characteristics emerge that will be discussed in subsequent chapters. In displaying all of this information, use is made of appendices so that the reader is not submerged in detail that might otherwise obscure the narrative. The databases are based on freely available tools and so are amenable for sharing with other scholars.<sup>133</sup> These databases have allowed a more systematic study

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131 Virginia Davis, *Clergy in London in the Late Middle Ages. A Register of Clergy Ordained in the Diocese of London Based on the Episcopal Ordination Lists 1361-1539* (London: Institute of Historical Research, 2000).

132 Des Atkinson, ‘Getting Connected: The Medieval Ordinand and His Search for Titulus’, in *Examining Identity*, ed. by Linda Clark, *The Fifteenth Century*, 16 (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2018), pp. 45–61.

133 The database tool used is LibreOffice Base, a freely available open-source technology that can be installed on many platforms. For details see <https://www.libreoffice.org/discover/base/> [accessed 26 May 2020].

of sub-themes to be undertaken. Some exploratory work has also been carried using computerised visual tools such as Gephi to see how far they can help illuminate patronage relationships. But the ability of tools such as databases and visualisation software to clarify historical situations should not be overstated. The level of precision that they seem to offer could be misleading without suitable caveats being provided. A broader review of the other evidence, however fragmentary, and a balanced discussion of the arguments and viewpoints of existing scholarship are all still required to arrive at a convincing historical analysis of the subject matter under scrutiny.

The contention of this thesis is that the Church in which John Morton came to his maturity and was to lead, was one of reformation. The inspirational centre for that reformation was the pair of universities where clerks were educated, employed, and joined networks of patronage and acquaintance that were to drive their early rise in the fast stream of the Church. It is therefore appropriate to begin with the study of the able and ambitious young clerk and his path to graduate status.

## Chapter 2 – The graduate clerk in fifteenth-century England

At beginning of the fifteenth century, those men of noble birth who wished to pursue a career in the Church could still expect to rise rapidly.<sup>1</sup> For aspiring clerks from humbler origins it was through education, and in particular the universities, that they might hope to achieve preferment. The proportion of bishops from noble backgrounds fell as the fifteenth century progressed, and men from the gentry made up more and more of the episcopal bench. The route to and through university, and the networks of patronage and relationships that resulted, were critical for the career chances of this gentry cohort.<sup>2</sup> This chapter will therefore focus on the initial stages of a clerical career. It will seek to demonstrate how a select cadre of clerks developed; these were the men who made up a pool of candidates from which future prelates would be nurtured and selected. Henry Chichele, with his focus on the careers of his university graduates, was seeking to raise still further the standards of the prelacy.<sup>3</sup> Education was therefore the route by which men without high social status might aspire to progress within the Church. A good early schooling was critical to allow aspirants to gain proficiency in reading, writing and Latin grammar so they could attend a university, either in England or in countries such as France or Italy.

The varied routes that young clerks might take through their time in education will be discussed, taking John Morton as an exemplar. Once at university, men such as Morton were increasingly choosing law to study at higher levels, and

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<sup>1</sup> Robert and George Neville, and William Percy all achieved episcopal rank while still in their twenties (see Table 4.16 in Chapter 4 for further details). The fact that all three became the occupants of northern sees (Durham, York and Carlisle respectively) reflected broader strategic aims to their promotions.

<sup>2</sup> The number of students at Oxford and Cambridge was not high in the fifteenth century, and may even have fallen from 1400 to 1450 before recovering thereafter (see Ralph Evans, 'The Number, Origins and Careers of Scholars', in *The History of the University of Oxford, Vol. 2, Late Medieval Oxford*, ed. by J. I. Catto and Ralph Evans (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), pp. 485–538 (pp. 487–9). By contrast the number of students coming to the two universities to study civil law rose very strongly after 1400 (see Christopher T. Allmand, 'The Civil Lawyers', in *Profession, Vocation and Culture in Later Medieval England: Essays Dedicated to the Memory of A.R. Myers*, ed. by Cecil H. Clough (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1982), pp. 155–80 (p. 172). The gentry were a significant proportion of those 'civilians'.

<sup>3</sup> Evans, 'The Number, Origins and Careers of Scholars', pp. 535–7. Chichele initiated several attempts to replace the older system whereby graduates petitioned the holy see for benefices on a *rotulus beneficiandorum*. His efforts finally achieved a good measure of success in the ordinance of 1438 (E. F. Jacob, *Archbishop Henry Chichele*, Leaders of Religion Series (London: Nelson, 1967), p. 76.



the nature of that study and how it could influence their future careers will be reviewed and discussed. A fundamental requirement for any clerk seeking to move up the Church hierarchy was early preferment to a benefice.<sup>4</sup> How that system worked will be considered and analysed. Throughout the chapter the focus will usually be on men from gentry families who made up a significant proportion of students at the universities. However there certainly were men from low status backgrounds who rose through their own great ability, allied to good patronage.<sup>5</sup>

The primary source material for any one individual at this early point in his career is patchy at best. Indeed for nearly all the bishops of the fifteenth century, even the precise year of their birth can only be estimated. However, by adopting a prosopographical approach and assembling information across this whole cohort of men from a variety of sources, some real insights can be gained. Such sources include contemporary writers such as Thomas Gascoigne.<sup>6</sup> There have also been several systematic sources of information compiled such as Emden's biographical directories, the records in *Fasti Ecclesiae*, as well as the discussion of nearly all these men in places such as the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. As well as exploiting these sources more systematically than has hitherto been attempted, a wholly new database of ordinands for the Salisbury diocese (Morton's home diocese) has been constructed. Based on information from over 100 ordination ceremonies for over 2,400 men, this database provides solid evidence of the importance of the graduate clerk, and how he stands out from the broader population of young men seeking ordination. All of this analysis will be informed by existing scholarship that has already superseded an old narrative of decay, decline and

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<sup>4</sup> There is terminology specific to the obtaining of a benefice (or living). The patron (the holder of the right to present, or advowson) presented their chosen candidate. The bishop then instituted (or admitted) the chosen clerk into the benefice, unless the bishop himself was the patron in which case his act was one of collation. The new occupant of the benefice was described as the incumbent, and he took possession by a ceremony known as induction. For an episcopal see the new holder was formally appointed to it by papal provision, or if being moved from one see to another, the act was one of translation.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas Beckington, the weaver's son whose career prospered so greatly, is rightly held up as an example.

<sup>6</sup> His opinionated, frequently waspish commentary was often anecdotal, but his writing provides a colourful backdrop from which a better understanding of careers in the upper ranks of the Church can be derived.

venality among the higher clergy. Work such as that by Nicholas Orme on early education, by scholars such as Jeremy Catto on life and careers at Oxford, by James Brundage and others on the study of the law and by scholars such as Robert Dunning on issues of patronage provide a strong platform on which to build. They show that the fifteenth-century Church had vitality and purpose, and that it was closely enmeshed within the fabric of royal government and administration. The starting point for this discussion will be the arrival at university of these young and able clerks, and how they moved from their early education into a selected group of higher graduates, favoured by patrons mostly within the Church, who were keen to identify men they should favour. The aim will be to establish how this small group that progressed to the rank of prelate were singled out from the mass of clerks who provided the daily cure of souls.

Perceiving his own career in the Church to have stalled, Thomas Gascoigne did not shrink from commenting on the careers of other clerks. In his opinion, many of them did not deserve the progression they achieved. Gascoigne spent much of the period from the early 1420s until his death in 1458 at Oxford where he was a prominent preacher and writer and had also held the position of chancellor on several occasions.<sup>7</sup> He was characteristically forthright about many of the clerical graduates of his period, describing how they preferred to spend their time in the courts of great worldly men, or to sojourn within universities such as Paris or Oxford, rather than attending to the care of souls:

‘Manent enim in curiis magnorum dominorum mundanorum, et ibi expendant bona ecclesiae suae, vel manent in universitatibus Parisiis vel Oxoniae vel alibi, et debite non prosunt verbo, exemplo, auxilio, subsidio spirituali et corporali.’<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Thomas Gascoigne, *Loci e Libro Veritatum: Passages Selected from Gascoigne's Theological Dictionary Illustrating the Condition of Church and State 1403-1458*, ed. by James E. Thorold Rogers (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1881), p. lxxxiii. In Gascoigne's time, the statutes of the university required the chancellor to stand down after two years in office, at which point he might seek re-election. It was with the election of George Neville as chancellor in 1453 that the office began to change, acquiring its modern character of a largely titular dignity (see R. L. Storey, 'University and Government 1430-1500', in *The History of the University of Oxford, Vol. 2, Late Medieval Oxford*, ed. by J. I. Catto and Ralph Evans (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992), pp.709-46 (p. 730).

<sup>8</sup> Gascoigne, *Loci e Libro Veritatum*, p. 198. For details of Gascoigne's life and works see *BRUO*, ii, pp. 745-8 and Christina von Nolcken's *ODNB* article at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/10425>.

One of Gascoigne's major complaints about the graduate clergy was the degree to which they were absent from their benefices or, in the case of bishops, from their dioceses. He described such absences and other pre-occupations as being *incompossibiles* with their duties of care.<sup>9</sup> The increase in church appropriation and non-residency led, he maintained, to the ruination of the care of souls, and he saw the university of Oxford and the desire for lucre as being at the heart of this issue:

‘Jam enim in Anglia periit cura animarum per ecclesias appropriates, et per non residenciam curatorum et prelatorum ...’<sup>10</sup>

Gascoigne heaped particular opprobrium upon John Kemp whose episcopal career progressed from Rochester via Chichester, London and York to Canterbury where he held the see from 1452 until his death in 1454. Kemp had been raised to the cardinalate in 1439 and by 1450 was back at the heart of secular government as chancellor.<sup>11</sup> Gascoigne attacked Kemp for the latter's almost total absence from his York diocese, and said that when Kemp was translated to Canterbury, he left his church of York in great disturbance, without remedy.<sup>12</sup> Another victim of Gascoigne's invective was Fulk Birmingham who had been appointed as archdeacon of Oxford and who is described as ‘*unus fatuus juvenis xvij annorum in aetate existens*’. To Gascoigne this scandalous youth, ‘*fere quolibet die ebrius*’, was a stark exemplar of all that was wrong within the Church of his day.<sup>13</sup> Gascoigne's editor, J.E.T. Rogers, remarked that ‘the good Chancellor and laborious preacher not unnaturally contrasts his unrewarded labours with the fortunes of this profane and illiterate idiot.’<sup>14</sup>

To Gascoigne the personal neglect of duty and the unwarranted promotion of the well-connected was compounded by the Church's system of government, and the church courts were a principal target of his censure. The Court of

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<sup>9</sup> Gascoigne, *Loci e Libro Veritatum*, p. 3.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p.3.

<sup>11</sup> For a biography of Kemp see <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/15328> where R. G. Davies assesses Kemp's career in terms that are in stark contrast to Gascoigne. See also *BRUO*, ii, pp. 1031-2.

<sup>12</sup> Gascoigne, *Loci e Libro Veritatum*, p. 37.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. lxvi. Rogers alludes to the preferments that Gascoigne either did not receive or that he turned down where he felt he could not fulfil the duties of the position (see p. xviii).

Arches, the supreme church court within the Province of Canterbury, was described by Gascoigne as vexatious; he stated that nearly all the corrections of souls were destroyed through appeals to or by the inhibitions of the Court of Arches in London.<sup>15</sup> This ascendancy of the lawyers was, in Gascoigne's eyes, eclipsing the study and primacy of theology. He was not alone in seeking to keep up the proportion of theology graduates at Oxford.<sup>16</sup>

What is striking about Gascoigne's narrative is how closely it seems to parallel the careers of such successful clerks as John Morton.<sup>17</sup> Morton was a product of the Oxford system, he held many benefices, he may have practised law in the Court of Arches, he achieved the rank of archdeacon (multiple times) before moving on to become a bishop. At the same time Morton was very closely involved in royal government and had a key role in diplomatic and political events from the 1450s onwards. As far as we can see, Morton did relatively little that could be described as theological or pastoral, and he could not be characterised as innovative so far as the growth of humanistic sentiment is concerned.<sup>18</sup> In this respect Morton was similar to many fifteenth-century occupants of the episcopal bench, including the maligned John Kemp. There is, however, an alternative perspective. Gascoigne can be viewed as taking personal umbrage at his lack of preferment when he sees others progressing up the clerical hierarchy. And those men moving upwards were needed to fill challenging positions in Church and state because that was necessary for the effective functioning of both. Gascoigne was perhaps unable to perceive that the system he saw as going wrong may in fact have been a new system emerging.<sup>19</sup> The lengthy periods that men such as Morton spent at Oxford and

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., pp. 32, 34.

<sup>16</sup> R. L. Storey, 'The Foundation and the Medieval College, 1379-1530', in *New College, Oxford, 1379-1979*, ed. by Edward John Mawley Buxton and Penry Williams (Oxford: The Warden and Fellows of New College, Oxford, 1979), pp. 1-43 (p. 20). The statutes of New College stated that the majority of fellows were required to study theology after becoming bachelors of arts. There were always to be twenty fellows studying law, divided equally between civil and canon law.

<sup>17</sup> Many of Gascoigne's criticisms of the Church were those already stated in Wycliffe's Twelve Conclusions; clause six for example highlighted the occupation of temporal offices by clerics (see M. Aston and C. Richmond (eds.), *Lollardy and the gentry in the later middle ages* (Stroud, 1997), p. 6). Gascoigne, however, was committed to reform from within the Church.

<sup>18</sup> Christopher Harper-Bill, 'The Familias, Administration, and Patronage of Archbishop John Morton', *Journal of Religious History*, 10.3 (1979), 236-52 (p. 252).

<sup>19</sup> By the mid-1450s, England's strategy of military conquest in France had failed. The pursuit of diplomatic exchanges in a complex, evolving framework of nations and principalities was needed. The prelate as diplomat was now more important than ever, and the English king called on them

other universities was necessary for them to gather the knowledge they needed for their future careers, but also to prove themselves within the network of patronage and preferment that would take them ever upwards. The knowledge of and practice of the law gave these men essential skills to manage the evolving interface between Church and state, and it enabled them to demonstrate their abilities to take on future burdens such as diplomatic missions and other aspects of royal government. It is therefore possible to interpret such career development as something which, although Gascoigne might not have liked it, was a successful process to bring men of proven skill, ability and energy into the heart of both Church and royal government. Men like Morton were not, however, theologians.<sup>20</sup>

Gascoigne's complaint about absentee benefice-holders has to be weighed against the practical needs of such men to obtain financial support. The king was not in the habit of paying salaries to his ecclesiastical servants so they needed income to sustain themselves in whatever activities they were involved. The fifteenth-century Church did not have a centralised payroll system for the remuneration of its administrators but relied instead on what might be characterised as a distributed support system of locally-based rewards, i.e. benefices. So long as arrangements were made for the effective cure of souls and other local duties by the use of vicarious clerics then the beneficiary of income from such rectorships, cathedral prebends, archdeaconries etc. would not be creating the harm that Gascoigne points up so vividly. Such an analysis must not of course attempt to obscure those abuses and misuses of the system that did occur. Gascoigne was pressing for reform of the Church's faults as he perceived them.

However, an historical narrative that takes Gascoigne as the unvarnished truth and attempts to paint the late medieval Church as being in terminal decline and thoroughly corrupt must be resisted. Men such as Kemp and Morton and, in the next century, William Warham, shouldered an immense burden. That they were

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ceaselessly in pursuit of his objectives.

<sup>20</sup> Although in July 1469, towards the end of his lengthy period of exile, Morton did matriculate at the University of Louvain to take up the study of theology: Joseph Wils, *Matricule de l'Université de Louvain* (Brussels: Kiessling, 1903), p. 217.

men of great ability who attempted to discharge their onerous responsibilities conscientiously in sometimes very difficult circumstances is a theme this thesis is attempting to tackle. A better understanding of the earliest stages of their careers, and how they were chosen for preferment is overdue. Thus the focus here is on the early careers of these men. It will seek to clarify how and why this group of clerks rose to prominence, and in particular it will attempt to characterise the increasing professionalisation of the late medieval clergy. Such an analysis will require consideration of their early education, the role of the universities (and of Oxford in particular), the relevance of their numbers, the practice of the law and the achievement of their first benefice. All of those items need to be placed within the context of the network of patronage and preferment that was essential for their progression up the hierarchy.

For a number of John Morton's contemporaries at Oxford we have clear information on their schooling and on their subsequent arrival at the university. For Morton himself the position is not clear at all. Those advanced scholars who went on to receive a university education would have already achieved a suitable standard of proficiency in the reading and writing of Latin. In particular their skills in the Latin language must have included the ability to speak it with fluency. Although Fletcher was writing about entry to the faculty of arts, the lawyers must also have been equal to his proposition that 'since the student was expected to attend lectures in Latin and to observe and take part in formal disputations, it would have been impossible for anyone to without a very good knowledge of spoken Latin to begin the course.'<sup>21</sup> For a scholar such as John Russell, the future bishop of Lincoln, his time at Winchester College would surely have given him the academic grounding he needed.<sup>22</sup> For men like John Morton who did not attend such a college, the evidence as to where they received their early schooling is lacking. The earliest accounts of Morton's early life either do not mention his schooling or state that he was educated at Cerne

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<sup>21</sup> J. M. Fletcher, 'The Faculty of Arts,' in *The History of the University of Oxford*, ed. James Kelsey McConica, vol. 3 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), pp. 169–70.

<sup>22</sup> *BRUO*, iii, pp. 1609–11; <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/24318>. Winchester College had received its first scholars in 1394, while Eton College was founded in 1440. Such grand new schools were therefore a very recent phenomenon. Orme identifies the year 1440 as the date when a movement for endowing grammar schools is discernible (Nicholas Orme, *Medieval Schools: From Roman Britain to Renaissance England* (New Haven, Conn. ; London: Yale University Press, 2006), p. 232.

Abbey.<sup>23</sup> However as Emden points out, there is no supporting evidence concerning Cerne.<sup>24</sup> That there was a school there by the time of the abbey's suppression is supported by the testimony made in two court cases in the 1570s.<sup>25</sup> It is also very possible that there was some sort of almonry school in existence there by the early fourteenth century. A number of Benedictine houses in southern England record schools by this time, meeting the need to provide a ready supply of young clerks for duties such as altar servers.<sup>26</sup> There are also alternative establishments where Morton, who was born in or near Bere Regis in Dorset, may have received a good initial education. Milton Abbey was physically even closer to Bere than Cerne, and by 1521 it appears that the abbot of this Benedictine house had decided to establish a free grammar school in the town.<sup>27</sup> It may therefore be possible that Milton Abbey had undertaken the education of local boys before that date, although Orme provides no reference to an almonry school there.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore there is a record of a schoolmaster teaching in Sherborne in 1419; although the town is more distant from Bere, it is in the same county and it had a major Benedictine Abbey. Hence it is possible that Morton could have received his early education in any of these places. It is also interesting to speculate why Morton was not sent to an establishment such

<sup>23</sup> One of the earliest references is John Budden, *Reverendissimi Patris Ac Domini Iohannis Mortoni Cantuariensis Olim Archiepiscopi, Magni Angliæ Cancellarii, Trium Regum Consiliarij, Viri Prudentissimi, Optimique, Vita Obitusque : Quum Maiorum Imagines Intuemur, Vehementissimè Tum Animus Ad Virtutem Accenditur. Salust. in Bello Iugurth.* (London: Richardus Field, 1607). Budden makes no reference to Morton's early education. A subsequent reference is Anthony à Wood, *Athenæ Oxonienses. An Exact History of All the Vvriters and Bishops Who Have Had Their Education in the Most Ancient and Famous University of Oxford, from the Fifteenth Year of King Henry the Seventh, Dom. 1500, to the End of the Year 1690. Representing the Birth, Fortune, preferment, and Death of All Those Authors and Prelates, the Great Accidents of Their Lives, and the Fate and Character of Their Writings. To Which Are Added, the Fastior Annals, of the Said University, for the Same Time. The Second Volume, Compleating the Whole Work* (London: printed for Tho. Bennet at the Half-Moon in S. Pauls Churchyard, 1692), pp. 547–9. Wood states of Morton that 'When he was a boy he was educated among the Religious in Cerne Abbey, and at ripe years was sent to Balliol coll.'

<sup>24</sup> *BRUO*, ii, p. 1318.

<sup>25</sup> J. H. Bettey, 'The Dissolution and after at Cerne Abbas,' in *The Cerne Abbey Millennium Lectures*, ed. Katherine Barker (Cerne Abbas: Cerne Abbey Millennium Committee, 1988), p. 50. In the case of William Tyser (TNA C 3/80/113) who was 90 years old, he claimed to have been a scholar at the monastery for 13 years.

<sup>26</sup> Roger Bowers, 'The Almonry Schools of the English Monasteries, c. 1265-1540', in *Monasteries and Society in Medieval Britain: Proceedings of the 1994 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. by Benjamin Thompson, Harlaxton Medieval Studies, 6 (Stamford: Paul Watkins, 1999), pp. 177–222 (pp. 190–91).

<sup>27</sup> Nicholas Orme, *Education in the West of England, 1066-1548: Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Somerset, Wiltshire* (Exeter: University of Exeter, 1976), p. 210. The small Cistercian house of Bindon Abbey was also nearby.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* Orme does mention that some form of schooling seems to have been taking place at nearby Dorchester Greyfriars in 1485 (p. 205).

as Winchester College. The future bishop of Norwich, Thomas Jane, came from Milton Abbas, a village very near to Morton's birthplace in Dorset, and enrolled at Winchester in 1449. Jane then went on to New College, Oxford, to study law.<sup>29</sup> Morton's education could have followed a very similar course (New College drew most of its students from the counties of southern England including Dorset).<sup>30</sup> The only definitive statement possible with respect to Morton's education is that there is no archival record of what school he attended, so any discussion about whether he received his schooling at Cerne must remain speculative. Also unclear is what standard of education Morton might have received at a religious house such as Cerne; the best houses appear to have provided a very solid grounding in grammar, but others were criticised for their lack of good teaching.<sup>31</sup> Despite its relatively remote rural location, there is no reason to believe that Cerne would not have received gentry boys for instruction alongside its novices, where they would have received an education that might prepare them for progression to university.<sup>32</sup> Indeed the aspiration to achieve study at a university continued to be an ideal for regular clergy, and by 1500 monasteries were producing more university graduates than in any earlier period.<sup>33</sup>

There is fragmentary evidence to show at what age scholars such as Morton would have progressed to study at Oxford. There does not appear to have been a formal qualification required for entry, and '... recent work ... has suggested that boys would most commonly have become undergraduates in their middle to late teens, and not normally before they were fourteen'.<sup>34</sup> Some clarity emerges when looking at those scholars who studied firstly at Winchester College before coming up to Oxford and entering New College. Five Wykehamists and contemporaries of John Morton (of whom four studied law) were Thomas

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<sup>29</sup> *BRUO*, ii, pp. 1013-14; <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/14649>.

<sup>30</sup> Storey, 'The foundation and the medieval college, 1379-1530', p. 31.

<sup>31</sup> Orme, *Medieval Schools*, p. 274.

<sup>32</sup> James G. Clark, 'Monasteries and Secular Education in Late Medieval England', in *Monasteries and Society in the British Isles in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. by Janet E. Burton and Karen Stöber, Studies in the History of Medieval Religion (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2008), pp. 145-67 (p. 154). The curriculum at an establishment such as Cerne may well have extended beyond simple Latin to encompass the foundational arts of grammar and logic. That would have prepared Morton for the initial university arts course, and he may also have received training in the writing of formal letters (dictamen), an indispensable skill for a man looking to specialise in the law.

<sup>33</sup> Orme, *Medieval Schools*, p. 274.

<sup>34</sup> Evans, 'The Number, Origins and Careers of Scholars', p. 499.



Chaundler (later dean of Hereford), William Colman (who was already dead by 1452), John Hamond (the rector of Chawton, Hants), John Russell (the future bishop of Rochester and then Lincoln) and Hugh Sugar (later a canon of Wells).<sup>35</sup> They all appear to have enrolled at Winchester at the age of thirteen and then went up to Oxford four or five years later. This relatively new system of linked school and university colleges appears therefore to have been working very well for such men. The Winchester and New College model was subsequently taken up by Henry VI for his foundation of Eton and Kings College, Cambridge.<sup>36</sup>

Those men who were able to get to Oxford needed money to sustain themselves. It is not clear just what the cost of studying there was in the fifteenth century.<sup>37</sup> However a scholar's most substantial expenses were probably not academic fees (although these could be substantial) but board and lodging and other domestic costs. John Morton for example is associated with Peckwater Inn, an academic hall located on the site of the modern college of Christ Church and within a few yards of the Great School of Civil Law on Jury Lane.<sup>38</sup> Clearly if students were to avoid the penury of Chaucer's poor clerk then they would have needed financial support from family and friends (assuming they did not already have a living from the Church or some other source). The period of study could then be lengthy, and we can see from the biographical information for those who, like Morton, achieved doctorates, that they remained at or associated with the university for a decade or more. What the biographical records also show is that, having achieved their bachelor degree in a subject such as law (and sometimes even before), doctoral students seemed to be drawn into legal work at the court of the chancellor or elsewhere. It appears that study was not a full-time activity in the modern sense, and that student clerks,

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<sup>35</sup> The entries produced by Emden for these men can be found respectively at *BRUO*, i, p. 398, *BRUO*, i, p. 469, *BRUO*, ii, p. 863, *BRUO*, iii, p. 1609 and *BRUO*, iii, p. 1814.

<sup>36</sup> Orme, *Medieval Schools*, p. 232. A century before, Bishop Stapledon had founded Exeter College, Oxford and had endowed scholars at the hospital of St John and the grammar school in Exeter; however this dual benefaction did not have the formal linkages of Winchester and New College (p. 210).

<sup>37</sup> See R. N. Swanson, 'Universities, Graduates and Benefices in Later Medieval England', *Past and Present*, 106 (1985), p. 38. where he suggests that £6-£7 per annum 'seems a fair estimate'.

<sup>38</sup> H. E. Salter, *Map of Mediaeval Oxford* (London: Oxford University Press, 1934), p. 5. See also *BRUO*, ii, p. 1318. Morton appears therefore to have arrived at Oxford outside of the core patronage networks that brought men into the college system. The system of halls was more ad hoc and precarious, and from such a starting point there was no guarantee that Morton would stay the course.

particularly in law, were seeking to build their reputations and experience (as well as deriving income) by practising their craft. Such experience would be indispensable for the next step in the graduate clerk's career, but nothing was guaranteed. The reason for this was the small number of opportunities that were available to progress into the fast stream of Church life.

By the middle of the fifteenth century there was a pyramid of promotion within the Church for graduate clerks. At the pinnacle were the bishops and archbishops. These were almost invariably promoted from the layer below, namely from one of the posts such as dean, chancellor or archdeacon within a cathedral or diocese. The base layer of the pyramid was the steady stream of graduates emerging from the universities. There was nevertheless a small but important group of clerks who stood outside this main sequence of progression, namely those from noble families. Men such as George Neville could be awarded their episcopal mitres while still in their early twenties, to the dismay of a scandalised Thomas Gascoigne.<sup>39</sup> However the proportion of such noble bishops was a small and constrained one, and it fell during the fifteenth century (see figure 2.6 below).

The rate at which candidates were promoted into their first episcopal position in England and Wales amounted in the period 1400 to 1484 to a little under one per year on average (during that eighty-five year period seventy-nine men received their first episcopal promotion).<sup>40</sup> Among the secular cathedrals, the rate at which new principal office-holders and archdeacons were appointed over the whole of the fifteenth century amounted on average to approximately seven per year (see Table 2.1 below). Among the monastic cathedrals the rate at

<sup>39</sup> Gascoigne, *Loci e Libro Veritatum*, p. 16. Richard Courtenay also benefited greatly from his noble birth and connections. A prebendary at age 11 with many benefices to follow, he had achieved a BCL from Oxford, aged eighteen, and required special dispensation for his ordination to the priesthood shortly after, and also to continue his studies in civil law. With the accession of Henry V in March 1413 his 'silver spoon was set to turn to gold' (see the *ODNB* article by R.G. Davies at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/6455>). He became bishop of Norwich that June, was very close to the king, and Henry had him buried in his own resting place after Richard's untimely death at Harfleur in September 1415.

<sup>40</sup> Joel T. Rosenthal, 'The training of an elite group: English bishops in the fifteenth century', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, New Series 60:5 (1970) 1-54. See especially the table on p. 50. In the forty-four years from 1485 to 1529 there were forty-six episcopal appointments in total, although some of these were promotions from other sees (for more on this in the early Tudor period see John A.F. Thompson, *The Early Tudor Church and Society, 1485-1529* (London, 1993), p. 46).

which archdeacons were appointed over the same period was a little over one per year (see Table 2.2 below). Feeding into this system was an output of graduates from the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, the scale of which is difficult to calculate. At Oxford it is calculated that there were at least 1,500 scholars at the university at any one time.<sup>41</sup> There is also no clear measure as to the proportion of men who, having attended Oxford, actually went on to supplicate for a degree. The number may be 50% or even lower. Of all the scholars at Oxford and Cambridge, some would remain at the universities for lengthy periods, so the annual rate at which they emerged ready to take up a major role outside the university was probably lower than the total number of scholars would suggest. However a rate of say 200 scholars “graduating” per year from both universities would not seem an unreasonable number to propose. Given these numbers it is clear that competition for the high-flying posts must have been intense. What emerges from the analysis of those men who made it to the rank of bishop is that their chances of promotion were greatly increased by service to the king and the practice of the law.

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<sup>41</sup> Evans, ‘The number, origins and careers of scholars’, p. 489.

**Table 2.1:** The number of office-holders appointed to English secular cathedrals during the fifteenth century.<sup>42</sup>

<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Deans</b>	<b>Chancellors</b>	<b>Precentors</b>	<b>Treasurers</b>	<b>Archdeacons</b>	<b>Source</b>
Chichester	7	7	6	8	18	<i>Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1300-1541: Volume 7, Chichester Diocese</i> , Joyce M. Horn (ed.) (London, 1964). Chichester had 2 archdeacons.
Exeter	10	11	8	12	48	<i>Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1300-1541: Volume 9, Exeter Diocese</i> , Joyce M. Horn (ed.) (London, 1964). Exeter had 4 archdeacons.
Hereford	11	14	12	14	16	<i>Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1300-1541: Volume 2, Hereford Diocese</i> , Joyce M. Horn (ed.) (London, 1962). Hereford had 2 archdeacons.
Lichfield	4	10	6	7	42	<i>Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1300-1541: Volume 10, Coventry and Lichfield Diocese</i> , B. Jones (ed.) (London, 1964). C&L had 5 archdeacons.
Lincoln	3	7	12	6	82	<i>Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1300-1541: Volume 1, Lincoln Diocese</i> , H.P.F. King (ed.) (London, 1962).

<sup>42</sup> The information in the *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae* for the Welsh dioceses is very fragmentary and so is not included.

Diocese	Deans	Chancellors	Precentors	Treasurers	Archdeacons	Source
						Lincoln had 8 archdeacons.
						<i>Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1300-1541: Volume 5, St. Paul's, London</i> , Joyce M. Horn (ed.) (London, 1962). London had 4 archdeacons.
London	10	5	3	12	40	<i>Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1300-1541: Volume 3, Salisbury Diocese</i> , Joyce M. Horn (ed.) (London, 1962). Salisbury had 4 archdeacons.
Salisbury	11	10	13	8	52	<i>Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1300-1541: Volume 8, Bath and Wells Diocese</i> , B. Jones (ed.) (London, 1964). B&W had 3 archdeacons.
Wells	12	7	0	4	21	<i>Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1300-1541: Volume 6, Northern Province (York, Carlisle and Durham)</i> , B. Jones (ed.) (London, 1963). York had 5 archdeacons.
York	13	9	12	11	55	
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>374</b>	

**Table 2.2:** The number of archdeacons appointed in English monastic cathedrals during the fifteenth century. The number of archdeacons within each diocese is given in brackets after the diocese name.

<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Archdeacons</b>	<b>Source</b>
Canterbury (1)	10	<i>Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1300-1541: Volume 4, Monastic Cathedrals (Southern Province)</i> , B. Jones (ed.) (London, 1963). Canterbury had 1 archdeacon.
Ely (1)	7	Ibid. Ely had 1 archdeacon.
Norwich (4)	35	Ibid. Norwich had 4 archdeacons.
Rochester (1)	7	Ibid. Rochester had 1 archdeacon.
Winchester (2)	14	Ibid. Winchester had 2 archdeacons.
Worcester (2)	19	Ibid. Worcester had 2 archdeacons.
Carlisle (1)	8	<i>Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1300-1541: Volume 6, Northern Province (York, Carlisle and Durham)</i> , B. Jones (ed.) (London, 1963). Carlisle had 1 archdeacon.

Durham (2)	22	Ibid. Durham had 2 archdeacons.
<b>Total:</b>	122	

That practitioners of the law made up a significant proportion of the ecclesiastical high-flyers during the fifteenth century is a fact that has been well rehearsed. Indeed the proportion of such men among the episcopate rose during the first half of the century from a quarter to two-fifths.<sup>43</sup> Why did this growth take place, and why had foundations such as that of New College in 1379 specifically made provision for a significant proportion of law students? The Church itself was a complex judicial institution with its network of nearly one hundred courts, and its immediate role required lawyers skilled in both canon and civil law; for such specialisms, training to degree level was provided by the universities.<sup>44</sup> The overlapping jurisdictions, for example between the religious orders and the authority of diocesan bishops, were being tested more and more during the century. By the time Morton occupied the archbishop's throne at Canterbury there was much internal litigation between the archbishop, his own bishops and the religious orders.<sup>45</sup> More broadly the period 1378 to 1418 was a traumatic one with the western schism provoking great division within the Church. The universities were perceived to be the one universal grouping that might arrive at the remedy for the Church's woes; such remedies would be profoundly ecclesiological, requiring legal as well as theological expertise.<sup>46</sup> Of course, it is never clear whether more lawyers result in more cases, or whether it was an increase in demand that led to the flow of more clerical legalists. The records for the highest court in the province of Canterbury have been lost, so there is no direct way of measuring the changing rate of litigation of that forum.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Richard G. Davies, 'The Episcopate', in *Profession, Vocation and Culture in Later Medieval England: Essays Dedicated to the Memory of A.R. Myers*, ed. by Cecil H. Clough (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1982), pp. 51–89 (p. 51).

<sup>44</sup> Storey, 'The foundation and the medieval college, 1379-1530', p. 23. Training in the common law was a separate discipline; it took place in London at the Inns of Court, the 'third university' (John H. Baker, 'The Third University 1450-1550: Law School or Finishing School?', in *The Intellectual and Cultural World of the Early Modern Inns of Court*, ed. by Jayne Elisabeth Archer, Elizabeth Goldring, and Sarah Knight (Manchester: University Press, 2011), pp. 8–41.

<sup>45</sup> Christopher Harper-Bill, 'Archbishop John Morton and the Province of Canterbury', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 29 (1978), 1–21.

<sup>46</sup> R. N. Swanson, *Universities, Academics and the Great Schism*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought: Third Series, no. 12 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 2.

<sup>47</sup> F. Donald Logan, *The Medieval Court of Arches*, The Canterbury and York Society, 95 (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005), p. xiv.



The rising number of lawyers does not mean that the law was the sole means of achieving preferment in the late-medieval English Church. As Rosenthal has pointed out, the proportion of theologian bishops remained significant up until the Reformation.<sup>48</sup> The immediate threat of Lollardy may have been suppressed by Henry V and Archbishop Chichele, but the latter was very conscious of the need to sweep away the *pulvis neglegentiae* from the feet of the Church.<sup>49</sup> The threat of heterodoxy was ever present, and skilled theologians were also needed to assess and, where appropriate, assimilate new concepts and practices into the mainstream of Church thinking.<sup>50</sup>

However the proportion of lawyers was high. While their knowledge of the law by itself gave such men an advantage, it was their subsequent career and their practice of the law that was to prove more important. We know that well-trained canon lawyers formed the core of the ecclesiastical bureaucracy in the fifteenth century. However the evidence of Morton's contemporaries is that such men were practising law while still at Oxford and did not simply end up as administrators and bureaucrats. They clearly also had roles as advocates within the context of the university and church courts, and this may well have been critical for bringing them to the attention of such key patrons as the archbishop of Canterbury. There are many key exemplars from among Morton's contemporaries who illustrate this process. John Boteler, who but for his relatively early death in 1472 might have achieved very high office, had no sooner achieved the degree of Bachelor of Canon Law in 1443 than he began to be employed on legal business in the Chancellor's court and elsewhere.<sup>51</sup> By 1469 Boteler's career had burgeoned greatly as he is recorded in that year to

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<sup>48</sup> Rosenthal, 'The training of an elite group', p. 14.

<sup>49</sup> Vincent Gillespie, 'Chichele's Church: Vernacular Theology in England after Thomas Arundel', in *After Arundel: Religious Writing in Fifteenth-Century England*, ed. by Kantik Ghosh and Vincent Gillespie, *Medieval Church Studies*, 21 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), pp. 3–42 (p. 13). Gillespie describes Chichele as being 'passionately interested in orthodox reform' (p. 42).

<sup>50</sup> The study of the law at Oxford and Cambridge was not the discipline favoured by the founders of colleges during the fifteenth century. At Cambridge, the foundation statutes for King's, Queens', St Catherine's and Jesus colleges all provided for theological studies, with just a small proportion allowed for law or medicine. At Oxford there were three foundations during the century. The last of these, Magdalen College, was founded in 1458 with the emphasis on philosophy and theology. Likewise bishop Richard Fleming founded Lincoln College in 1427 for the study of theology, with a view to securing orthodox beliefs and to avoid any resurgence of Lollardy. Only Henry Chichele's foundation of All Souls in 1438 made significant provision for the study of law.

<sup>51</sup> *BRUO*, i, p. 226.

be both dean of Arches and commissary general to the archbishop of Canterbury.<sup>52</sup> James Goldwell (later to be bishop of Norwich) was admitted as Bachelor of Canon Law in 1449 and, in the same year, is recorded as practising as a proctor in the Chancellor's court. Only three years later he had been appointed as commissary general to the archbishop of Canterbury (Cardinal John Kemp).<sup>53</sup> Luke Langcok (another man whose very promising career was cut short by an early death in 1457) had supplicated for the degree of Doctor of Canon Law in 1449 and was commissioner in appeals from the Court of Admiralty by 1451, around which time he was also commissary to the Chancellor of the university.<sup>54</sup> Other men who put their legal training into practice within the university at this time included Owen Lloyd (later vicar-general to the bishop of Exeter) and John Morgan (who was appointed bishop of St David's much later in his life).<sup>55</sup> Practise as a proctor within the university certainly did not act as an automatic guarantee of high office however. An example is Thomas Walton from the diocese of Carlisle whose only other legal post is recorded as being a notary public in 1473, even though he had received the higher degree of Doctor of Civil Law ten years earlier.<sup>56</sup> For some other men it seems that their legal careers were largely practised beyond Oxford. One example is Hugh Sugar of New College who is recorded as Doctor of Civil Law in 1450 and, four years later, was an advocate of the Court of Arches.<sup>57</sup>

Similarly there are men whose legal posts were taken up outside of both the university and of Canterbury. John Pakenham and William Potman were both officials of the Court of York. Pakenham went on to become chancellor of the bishop of London, while Potman later became a canon of St Paul's, London and commissary general to Archbishop Rotherham.<sup>58</sup> As well as the practice of the law in their early careers, there are examples of men who taught law at Oxford before going on to achieve high office in the Church. Richard Wetton is recorded as being admitted as principal of the Civil Law School in 1446,

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<sup>52</sup> Queen's College Oxford MS. 54, fo. 301.

<sup>53</sup> *BRUO*, ii, pp. 783-6.

<sup>54</sup> *BRUO*, ii, pp. 1092-3.

<sup>55</sup> For Lloyd see *BRUO*, ii, pp. 1153-4 and for Morgan see *BRUO*, ii, p. 1311.

<sup>56</sup> *BRUO*, iii, p. 1976.

<sup>57</sup> *BRUO*, iii, p. 1814.

<sup>58</sup> For Pakenham see *BRUO*, iii, p. 1419 and for Potman see *BRUO*, iii, p. 1506.

possibly three years before he obtained his doctorate in civil law. By 1449 he was already a master in Chancery and went on to become a baron of the Exchequer.<sup>59</sup> William Mylwyn of All Souls College who was Doctor of Civil Law by 1452 was recorded as being principal of the Civil Law Schools in 1457.<sup>60</sup> Richard Pede who was Doctor of Canon Law by 1448 is shown as being principal of the Great School of Canon Law in 1450 (he went on to become dean of Hereford and a vicar general).<sup>61</sup>

John Morton's early career had many features in common with those of his contemporaneous law graduates from Oxford. The first official reference of any kind that is currently known about him describes his appointment as a notary public; the entry is dated 7 October 1447.<sup>62</sup> If we take 1420 as the likely year of his birth then Morton would have been around 27 years of age (and thus above the minimum age required of 25), but it is only in the following year that we see a reference to him as being in possession of the degree of BCL from Oxford.<sup>63</sup> In that same year we also have sight of Morton acting alongside his fellow law graduate of promise, Luke Langcok, as proctor for the town clerk of Oxford in the Chancellor's court.<sup>64</sup> It seems very likely therefore that Morton had obtained his bachelor's qualification some time before, as only three years later in 1451 he was supplicating for his doctorate in civil law.<sup>65</sup> The office of notary public in England is one that has not been the subject of extensive study, and it is intriguing to speculate as to how and why Morton took on that post when he did.<sup>66</sup> Morton's appointment was as an apostolic rather than an imperial notary, and, as Zutshi points out, it was bishops who were most often given delegated

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<sup>59</sup> *BRUO*, iii, p. 2027.

<sup>60</sup> *BRUO*, ii, pp. 1333-4.

<sup>61</sup> *BRUO*, iii, p. 1449.

<sup>62</sup> <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-papal-registers/brit-ie/vol10/pp363-373> [accessed 30 April 2020]. The printed reference is *CPL*, 1447-55, p. 373.

<sup>63</sup> *Reg. Cancell. Oxon*, i, p. 165.

<sup>64</sup> Graham Pollard, 'The Medieval Town Clerks of Oxford', *Oxoniensia*, 31 (1966), 43-76 (p. 72).

<sup>65</sup> *BRUO*, ii, pp. 1318-20.

<sup>66</sup> Christopher Robert Cheney, *Notaries Public in England in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972); Patrick N. R. Zutshi, 'Notaries Public in England in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries', *Historia, Instituciones, Documentos*, 23 (1996), 412-33. Zutshi's paper contains useful additional material although his paper focuses more on the fourteenth than the fifteenth centuries. He points out (p. 421) that the institution of the notary public was an alien one in England. It was also not part of the English common law tradition, factors that may explain why it has not been more broadly studied.

authority by the pope to appoint to such a post.<sup>67</sup> Zutshi also states that the principal area of work for English notaries was ecclesiastical law and administration; notaries were particularly involved in recording proceedings of ecclesiastical courts, and many of the proctors who were active in the ecclesiastical courts were notaries.<sup>68</sup> He notes that it was perfectly possible for a notary employed in royal or episcopal government to work also for private clients.<sup>69</sup>

Morton's appointment needs to be positioned within this more general picture. It seems unlikely that he was seeking such a post as a career destination. Cheney notes that English bishops of the fourteenth century habitually employed at least one notary public on a permanent footing, paid by benefices or by a salary, although the precise *quid pro quo* was seldom seen.<sup>70</sup> That Morton does not fit into that mould seems obvious – he must have remained resident at Oxford and continued with his doctoral studies for several more years. Cheney goes on to observe that the nature of the work which notaries public did for their ecclesiastical employers guaranteed that the profession would attract at least some men of ability and ambition, and that it might upon occasion open the way to high posts in the Church.<sup>71</sup> If Morton were seeking to use the notarial route as his main way to achieve promotion then it would surely have been in his interests to be at work in the Salisbury diocese, not pursuing his further studies. Perhaps more likely was the fact that notaries public were needed for specific functions within the ecclesiastical court system; in particular officials such as the registrar of the Court of Arches were required to possess that qualification.<sup>72</sup> Thus Morton would be opening up opportunities for himself for his future legal and administrative career. He might also be able to use his notarial qualification to act within the chancellor's court at Oxford, as well as doing any smaller tasks for private clients that might help to strengthen existing relationships as well as developing new ones (and also providing the possibility

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<sup>67</sup> Zutshi, 'Notaries Public in England', p. 423.

<sup>68</sup> James Arthur Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law*, The Medieval World (London ; New York: Longman, 1995), p. 138. Brundage describes the 'flood of notarized records' that the court system produced.

<sup>69</sup> Zutshi, 'Notaries Public in England', pp. 426–27.

<sup>70</sup> Cheney, *Notaries Public in England*, p. 34.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43.

for income generation).<sup>73</sup> Viewed from this perspective, the action of the bishop of Salisbury in appointing Morton can be seen as an act of patronage rather than as a recruitment exercise.<sup>74</sup> It would seem unlikely that Morton acted with any frequency at Salisbury in a notarial role, but it may be that a detailed study of the diocesan archives might throw up some evidence to contradict that assertion.

Morton appears to be unusual in assuming the role of notary public when viewed within the context of Appendix 1. Only two of his contemporaries on the episcopal bench seem to have had notarial appointments. One was James Goldwell who took up the cathedral seat at Norwich in 1472. His appointment as an apostolic notary came in May 1467 by which time Goldwell was in his mid-forties, had a slew of benefices to his name and was already dean of Salisbury.<sup>75</sup> This suggests that the appointment was made for more practical reasons. From the entry in the register it seems that Goldwell was in Rome to take up his notarial appointment, and the following year he was Edward IV's orator in Rome.<sup>76</sup> It may therefore have been useful for Goldwell to have the formal role of notary within that context. The other man of gentry origin to become a bishop after a notarial appointment was John Shirwood who was consecrated bishop of Durham in 1484. His story is very similar to that of Goldwell. Shirwood too was probably in his mid-forties when appointed, already had valuable benefices to his name including the stellar prebend of Masham, had been the king's chaplain and was already resident in Rome. His notarial appointment took place in 1476 and by the following year he was the king's proctor at the curia.<sup>77</sup> Shirwood also became *camerarius* of the English Hospice

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<sup>73</sup> James A. Brundage, *The Medieval Origins of the Legal Profession: Canonists, Civilians, and Courts* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), p. 395.

<sup>74</sup> *Papal Authority and the Limits of the Law in Tudor England*, ed. by Peter D. Clarke and Michael Questier, Camden Miscellany, 36 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the Royal Historical Society, 2015), p. 8. Clarke discusses the papal bull of April 1521 that empowered Thomas Wolsey to appoint forty notaries public along with other papal titles. Clarke says that Wolsey probably saw these titles as largely a means to attract and reward familiars.

<sup>75</sup> *BRUO*, ii, pp. 783-6.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> These details of Shirwood's career all come from A. J. Pollard's short biography at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/25447>.

in Rome in 1476.<sup>78</sup> Thus the reasons for the notarial appointments of Goldwell and Shirwood look very different from those for Morton.

There is no doubt that obtaining a benefice, hopefully a remunerative one, as early as possible after graduation, was an imperative for those clerks hoping to move up the clerical hierarchy. 166 men can be identified as Morton's contemporaries studying law at Oxford – see Appendix 2 for the full details. In terms of when they obtained their degrees, 64 of them date from the 1440s and 102 from the 1450s. Seventy of them can be identified as 'high-flying' churchmen from their biographical details. We can also tentatively identify the patrons from whom they achieved their first benefices. This process has to rely on the earliest benefice listed in their biographical entry, so it is quite possible that some earlier entries have been missed. For determining who was the patron of a benefice, a helpful source of information is provided by the *Taxatio* database maintained by the Humanities Research Institute at the University of Sheffield.<sup>79</sup> For each parish the database displays the patron as recorded in 1291. There are some obvious shortcomings, in particular the disappearance of the alien priories as patrons by the middle of the fifteenth century. It is also possible that some livings recorded in the *Taxatio* as having lay patrons were subsequently transferred to religious houses. However it seems likely that such changes do not represent a high proportion of the total.

Not all of the men in this sample have details of their livings recorded in their biographical record. For the sixty-nine "high-fliers" there are details for sixty-three of them.<sup>80</sup> Among the thirty-seven who are listed as pursuing more parochial careers, there are details for thirty. The table that follows gives a breakdown of the patronage for the first benefices and allows the differences between these two groups of men to be seen.

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<sup>78</sup> Brian Newns, 'The Hospice of St Thomas and the English Crown 1474-1538', in *The English Hospice in Rome.*, by Venerable English College (Rome, Italy) (Leominster: Gracewing, 2005), p. 152.

<sup>79</sup> The database is available on-line at <https://www.dhi.ac.uk/taxatio/> [accessed 30 April 2020].

<sup>80</sup> A "high-flier" is defined here as a clerk who has achieved at least the rank of canon, archdeacon or other office-holder in a cathedral chapter, or has been appointed to a bishopric.

**Table 2.3.** A breakdown of patronage types for the first benefices of the “high-flying” clergy in the sample

Type of patron	High-fliers	Parochial clergy
Lay	16	13
Cathedral chapter	9	0
Bishop	9	1
The king	1	0
The pope	1	0
Religious houses	26 (of which 6 were nunneries)	15 (of which 3 were nunneries)
Other ecclesiastical patron	1	1

For both categories of men it seems clear that the religious houses represent a similar and significant proportion (41% in the case of the high-fliers and 50% in the case of the parochial clergy). There is greater divergence when looking at the lay patronage which constitutes 25% for the high-fliers but 43% for the parochials. This may suggest that the more successful men had been identified within the Church at an early stage as being worthy of financial support and recognition. This is further reinforced by the patronage of bishops and cathedral chapters as shown in the table. By contrast the other men in this sample may have needed to rely on other networks of family, affinity and broader patronage to obtain their first livings. The sometimes complex and overlapping networks of relationships of gentry families in the fifteenth century is a subject where much scholarship has been directed since the early 1980s. Such networks could be vertical (i.e. within the affinity of a local magnate), horizontal (links to other gentry families within the county of region) or a tangled web working at several levels.<sup>81</sup> These links were thoroughly interwoven into the Church itself, and the difficulties of the Paston family illustrate how appeals could be made at all levels, both lay and ecclesiastical, when help was needed in hard times.<sup>82</sup> The

<sup>81</sup> Eric Acheson, *A Gentry Community: Leicestershire in the Fifteenth Century, c.1442-c.1485*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, 19 (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1992); Christine Carpenter, *Locality and Polity: A Study of Warwickshire Landed Society, 1401-1499* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Nigel Saul, *Scenes from Provincial Life: Knightly Families in Sussex, 1280-1400* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986); Susan M. Wright, *The Derbyshire Gentry in the Fifteenth Century*, Derbyshire Record Society, 8 (Chesterfield: Derbyshire Record Society, 1983). These are just a sample of the many informative studies that have been produced.

<sup>82</sup> For example John Paston III in 1479, by approaching William Lord Hastings, was able to secure the ear of John Morton himself, at that time bishop of Ely (see the letters to Margaret Paston dated

Dorset gentry scene in the mid-fifteenth century looked towards the dukes of Somerset and the lordship of the Stourtons and the Hungerfords for its vertical links.<sup>83</sup>

For any secular clerk, the establishment of patronal links to religious orders and to specific houses would be an essential task for advancing their careers. Just how patronage worked for ecclesiastical preferment is something that has been described as obscure.<sup>84</sup> Nevertheless, obtaining preferment from a religious house would be of major benefit to any candidate, as such houses made almost half of all presentations in the later fifteenth century.<sup>85</sup> By the time John Morton was presented to his first benefice at Shellingford, Berks in 1453,<sup>86</sup> he would have had plenty of time to cultivate links with the Benedictine house at Abingdon which held the advowson.<sup>87</sup> He may have provided them with notarial or legal services and was possibly granted the rectorship as a *quid pro quo*. Although the evidence is entirely lacking to substantiate that particular proposition, there are examples of Morton's contemporaries receiving their first benefices from significant monastic houses. James Goldwell was made rector of St Mary Bredman in Canterbury by Christ Church Cathedral Priory.<sup>88</sup> Luke Langcok was made rector of Chinnor by the Priory of Wallingford, another house local to Oxford.<sup>89</sup>

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November and December 1479 in N. Davis, Norman, ed. *Paston Letters and Papers of the Fifteenth Century*. 2 vols. Early English Text Society Supplementary Series 20 & 21. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), i, p. 619.

<sup>83</sup> Robert Stansfield, *Political Elites in South-West England, 1450-1500: Politics, Governance, and the Wars of the Roses* (Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 2009), p. 200.

<sup>84</sup> Tim Cooper, *The Last Generation of English Catholic Clergy*, Studies in the History of Medieval Religion, 15 (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1999), p. 40.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>86</sup> Shellingford was in Berkshire until 1974 when it became part of Oxfordshire. By 1461 Morton was recorded as holding the parsonage of Bloxworth, a living in the gift of the dean of Salisbury (Gilbert Kymer for the period 1449-1463). It is unclear when he obtained that benefice as the dean's register does not survive. There are no references in the registers of the bishops of Salisbury.

<sup>87</sup> Reg. Beauchamp, Sarum, i. pt i, fo 21. Abingdon Abbey lay little more than six miles south of central Oxford. It is probable that while at Oxford, Morton came to know John Sante, a future abbot of Abingdon who, at some point, had obtained a DTh (see <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/107123> for Martin Heale's brief biography). It was Sante who, as abbot, visited Rome in 1479 and obtained confirmation by Sixtus IV of Oxford's papal privileges (see R.L. Storey, "University and government 1430-1500" in J.I. Catto and T.A.R. Evans, *The History of the University of Oxford*, Volume II, Late Medieval Oxford (Oxford, 1992), p. 713). In 1477 Sante obtained legatine powers from the pope and he appears to have exercised them with some vigour, an approach that foreshadows the later actions of Thomas Wolsey.

<sup>88</sup> *BRUO*, ii, p. 783.

<sup>89</sup> *BRUO*, ii, p. 1092.



The information regarding when each man received his first benefice and when he was ordained to the priesthood (or at least to the preceding order of deaconhood) is much more limited in the sample. Such information is available for nineteen of the high-fliers and for nine of the parochial clergy. The calculation made takes the time in years between the clerk obtaining his first benefice and achieving ordination to the priesthood (or to the diaconate if there is no information concerning priestly orders). Thus in the case of John Morton the result is a positive number (rector of Shellingford, Berks under the patronage of Abingdon Abbey in 1453, ordination to the priesthood in 1459, so subtracting 1453 from 1459 gives a result of six).<sup>90</sup> Indeed for the nineteen high-fliers overall, the mean average figure is a positive number, namely 1.4 years. By contrast the mean average figure for the nine parochial clerks is a negative number, namely -4.1 years. This means that, on average, the parochial men have been in priestly orders for over four years before obtaining their first livings. For example Thomas Bland was admitted as rector of Easthampstead in Berkshire (patron Hurley Priory) in 1458 but had been a priest since 1450. There is no indication that he achieved any higher office in the Church.<sup>91</sup>

Some especially lucky men profited directly from their family connections. Robert Flemyng who was chaplain to King Henry VI was already a canon of Lincoln Cathedral while in his early teens.<sup>92</sup> His uncle was Richard Flemyng, bishop of Lincoln, and both Robert and his uncle profited from their connections with the Waterton family.<sup>93</sup> In some dioceses the proportion of benefices in the gift of religious houses was very high, so the cultivation of links within the Church would have been essential to obtain a benefice.<sup>94</sup> However in other

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<sup>90</sup> *BRUO*, ii, pp. 1318-20. Woodhouse incorrectly states that Morton was collated to the sub-deanery of Lincoln in 1450 (R. I. Woodhouse, *The Life of John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury* (London: Longmans, Green, 1895), p. 28.)

<sup>91</sup> *BRUO*, i, p. 199.

<sup>92</sup> *BRUO*, ii, p. 699.

<sup>93</sup> See Robert Swanson's *ODNB* article on Richard Fleming at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/9709>; for J.R. Whitehead's *ODNB* article on Robert Waterton (senior) see <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/54421>.

<sup>94</sup> Nicholas Bennett, 'Pastors and Masters: The Beneficed Clergy of North-East Lincolnshire, 1290-1340.', in *The Foundations of Medieval English Ecclesiastical History. Studies Presented to David Smith.*, ed. by Philippa Hoskin, Christopher Brooke, and Barrie Dobson, *Studies in the History of Medieval Religion*, 27 (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005), pp. 40-62 (p. 44). By the middle of the fourteenth century nearly two-thirds of benefices in the extensive Lincoln diocese were in

areas, individual patrons such as the Courtenays of Devon held an array of livings with which they supported promising local graduates.<sup>95</sup>

**Table 2.4.** The time that elapsed for the high-flying clerks between obtaining their first benefice and their ordination to the priesthood or diaconate.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date of first recorded benefice</b>	<b>Date of priesthood</b>	<b>Benefice details</b>	<b>Estimated age at ordination</b>	<b>BRUO reference</b>
Thomas Bonefaunt	1454	1445	Rector of Bletchingdon, Oxon (lay patron)	24	i, pp. 217-8
Michael Carvanell	1448	1447	St Perranzabulo, Cornwall (patron Exeter Cathedral)	27	i, p. 365
Thomas Chaundler	1450	1445	Rector of Milbrook, Hants (patron the bishop of Winchester)	28	i, p. 398
Robert Flemyng	1428	1440	Canon of Lincoln	23	ii, p. 699
John Fox	1457	1459	Rector of Hedsor, Bucks (patron Little Marlow Priory)	27	ii, p. 714
James Goldwell	1450	1453	Rector of St Mary Bredman, Canterbury (patron Canterbury)	30	ii, pp. 783-6

ecclesiastical patronage.

<sup>95</sup> R.W. Dunning, 'Patronage and Promotion in the Late-Medieval Church', in *Patronage, the Crown and the Provinces in Later Medieval England*, ed. by R.A. Griffiths (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1981), pp. 167–80 (pp. 168, 170).

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date of first recorded benefice</b>	<b>Date of priesthood</b>	<b>Benefice details</b>	<b>Estimated age at ordination</b>	<b>BRUO reference</b>
			Cathedral Priory)		
Luke Langcok	1450	1453 (deacon)	Rector of Chinnor, Oxon (patron Wallingford Priory)	28	ii, pp. 1092-3
John Lowe	1452	1456	Archdeacon of Rochester	26	ii, p. 1169
John Morton	1453	1459	Rector of Shillingford, Berks (patron Abingdon Abbey)	39	ii, pp. 1318-20
John Rivett	1449	1449	Rector of Upton-on-Severn (patron the bishop of Worcester)	33	iii, p. 1578
John Russell	1461	1459	Canon of Salisbury	29	iii, p. 1609
Richard Sherborn	1445	1457	Rector of Great Dunmow, Essex (royal lay patron)	34	iii, p. 1685
John Stretton	1447	1449	Rector of Norton-sub-Hamdon, Somerset (patron Chichester Cathedral)	33	iii, p. 1805
Hugh Sugar	1452	1448	Rector of Lympsham, Somerset	33	iii, p. 1814

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date of first recorded benefice</b>	<b>Date of priesthood</b>	<b>Benefice details</b>	<b>Estimated age at ordination</b>	<b>BRUO reference</b>
			(patron Glastonbury Abbey)		
Thomas Swyft	1433	1439	Rector of Yatesbury, Wilts (lay patron)	24	iii, p. 1834
Philip Uske	1447	1447	Vicar of Wye, Kent (patron Wye Abbey)	31	iii, p. 1938
William Vaws	1440	1441	Hill Croom, Worcs (patron Pershore Abbey)	24	iii, p. 1943
Roger Walle	1436	1439	Rector of Burton, Cheshire (patron St Andrew's Hospital, Denhall)	19	iii, p. 1966
Thomas Winterborne	1450	1446	Rector of Weston-sub-Edge (lay patron)	21	iii, p. 2060

**Table 2.5.** The time that elapsed for the more parochial clerks between obtaining their first benefice and their ordination to the priesthood or diaconate.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date of first recorded benefice</b>	<b>Date of priest-hood</b>	<b>Benefice details</b>	<b>Estimated age at ordination</b>	<b>BRUO ref.</b>
Thomas Bland	1458	1450	Rector of Easthampstead, Berks (patron Hurley Priory)	24	i, p. 199
Ralph Carnarthur	1451	1450	Rector of Poyntington, Somerset (lay patron)	24	i, p. 359
John Cole	1461	1452	Vicar of Chitterne St Mary, Wilts (patron Salisbury Cathedral)	24	i, p. 461
John Hamond	1453	1453	Rector of Chawton, Hants (lay patron)	27	ii, p. 863
Hamond Leycestr	1456	1463	Rector of Garsington, Oxon (patron St Frideswide Priory)	33	ii, p. 1141
John Lydford	1478	1459	Rectorship in Lewes (patron unknown)	33	ii, pp. 1184-5
John Newland	1453	1453	Rector of Wigginton, Yorks (ecclesiastical patron)	27	ii, p. 1355
John Olney	1455	1446	Rector of Widley, Hants (patron Southwick Priory)	24	ii, p. 1398
John Wyndeyate	1449	1451	Rector of Hemyock, Devon (lay patron)	24	iii, p. 2123

For those men who achieved the higher qualification of Doctor of Civil Law there is also confirmation of the statement by Ralph Evans that the study of civil law was forbidden to those in priest's orders.<sup>96</sup> Of the sample, there are six men who were awarded the title of DCL and for whom we also know the dates of their ordination to the priesthood. In all cases they waited until completing their qualification before their priestly ordination. Usually the ordination took place within a year or two. John Morton is therefore unusual in that his doctorate predated his ordination by as much as six years, although he was not alone in this – his close successor at Canterbury, William Warham, had achieved his doctorate in civil law at Oxford by 1486 but was only ordained as sub-deacon in 1493.<sup>97</sup> As ever there are potential exceptions to such a rule. John Kemp, later archbishop of Canterbury, was ordained priest in 1407, he obtained his BCL that same year and then went on to become DCL in 1413.<sup>98</sup> Kemp may of course have obtained a dispensation from Rome to pursue his studies, a power that was later granted to Thomas Wolsey in his role as papal legate *a latere*.<sup>99</sup> However given that Kemp's studies took place during the years of the papal schism, it is perhaps understandable that such an entry may not appear in the papal registers. It seems doubtful that Kemp would have deliberately evaded the requirements of canon law, so either he was treated as an exception, or there is a gap in the documentary record.

Taking the whole sample, the total number of doctors of canon law is twenty-nine, while there are twenty-one who attained the qualification of doctor of civil law. Two among them, James Goldwell and Luke Langcok, are unusual in that they were doctors of both laws.<sup>100</sup> Why should the proportion of civil law doctors have been as high as this, especially given the restrictions placed upon ordination to the higher orders while involved in its study? The degree of

<sup>96</sup> Evans, 'The Number, Origins and Careers of Scholars', p. 520; L. E. Boyle, 'Canon Law before 1380', in *The History of the University of Oxford, Vol. 1, the Early Oxford Schools*, ed. by Jeremy Catto (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), p. 536; for the text of the decree *Super specula* of pope Honorius III see Emil Albert Friedberg, ed., *Corpus Iuris Canonici*, Editio lipsiensis secunda, 2 vols (Leipzig: Tauchnitz, 1879), ii, p. 659.

<sup>97</sup> *BRUO*, iii, p. 1988.

<sup>98</sup> *BRUO*, ii, pp. 1031-2.

<sup>99</sup> Clarke and Questier, *Papal Authority and the Limits of the Law in Tudor England*, p. 9. Clarke points out that Honorius III's constitution 'Super speculum' (1219) banned beneficed clergy from studying civil law on pain of excommunication (X 3.50.10).

<sup>100</sup> For Goldwell see *BRUO*, ii, pp. 783-6 and for Langcok see *BRUO*, ii, pp. 1092-3.

overlap between the two branches of the law was not insignificant, and each borrowed techniques and ideas from the other.<sup>101</sup> Perhaps the explanation lies in the broader scope of the civil law and its importance to both Church and state. Civil lawyers could act in the courts of both Admiralty and Chivalry, and increasingly they came to be involved in the equitable jurisdiction of the king's chancellor, especially over items such as land use and contract.<sup>102</sup> For a major landholder such as the Church, having its own qualified lawyers to act as advisors and to plead for it in such courts would be highly desirable. Canon law might have seemed the obvious focus for clerical lawyers, but a church that had such tight bonds with the secular powers needed its own appropriately qualified legal cadre. And the benefits of a civil law background would not be lost on those clerks who sought to be trained and practise within it. Their expertise could be of immediate benefit to secular lords, especially the king, and the patronage of such lords was a known route to rapid and high preferment. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the legal doctor became an indispensable part of any diplomatic mission, and he would also have been highly valued within the papal bureaucracy.<sup>103</sup> Such a combination of benefits must have been alluring.<sup>104</sup>

The focus so far has been on the graduate clerk, especially those who qualified in law, yet in every diocese such men made up only a small proportion of those coming forward for ordination. To place a man such as Morton in context it is therefore necessary to examine clerical recruitment more broadly. Our understanding of that process is, however, only partially complete. Christopher Harper-Bill provides a brisk overview of the changes in England during the fifteenth century. He tells us that the early part of the century was marked by a manpower crisis. 'In the second half of the century, however, there was a marked increase in candidates for ordination, and this was sustained almost to the eve of the Reformation.'<sup>105</sup> However it must be emphasized that such a picture is constructed from a limited number of studies that focus on particular

<sup>101</sup> Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law*, p. 97.

<sup>102</sup> Allmand, 'The Civil Lawyers', pp. 156–57.

<sup>103</sup> Brundage, *The Medieval Origins of the Legal Profession*, p. 465.

<sup>104</sup> Charles Ross, *Edward IV, English Monarchs* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1974), p. 213.

<sup>105</sup> Christopher Harper-Bill, *The Pre-Reformation Church in England 1400-1530*, Revised Edition (Harlow: Addison Wesley Longman Limited, 1996), pp. 46–47.

areas. The following exposition will take two of these, covering the York and London dioceses.<sup>106</sup> That there is no definitive nationwide picture available is a gap that needs to be filled, and the rich set of bishops registers with their ordination lists could provide such information.<sup>107</sup> What this thesis attempts to do is to provide a fruitful additional source of such information based on the registers of the bishops of Salisbury (the Salisbury diocese was where John Morton was born and where he was ordained).<sup>108</sup> This section will firstly examine in more detail the evidence for clerical numbers over the fifteenth century. It will then consider the implications of those numbers for the careers of graduate clerks such as Morton.

The work on the London diocese published by Virginia Davis has provided a wealth of detail and some clear patterns emerge. However London is perhaps not typical of England as a whole – Davis points out that in the fifteenth century over eighty per cent of men ordained as priests there came from outside the diocese.<sup>109</sup> Nevertheless the numbers are instructive. There had been a significant decline in recruitment in the second half of the fourteenth century – by the 1380s numbers were down to about half of those of two decades earlier, but the lowest ebb was reached in the first decade of the fifteenth century.<sup>110</sup> There was a major upsurge in the 1410s which continued through the first half of the century; recruitment thereafter was healthy into the sixteenth century.<sup>111</sup> The pattern for the York diocese has similarities, though it is not identical. Jo Moran's summary says that her results show a prolonged decline in recruitment from the 1390s to the 1460s and a subsequent 'surprisingly large rise'.<sup>112</sup> The vibrant level of recruitment continued into the sixteenth century with the York

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<sup>106</sup> Jo Ann Hoepfner Moran, 'Clerical Recruitment in the Diocese of York, 1340-1530: Data and Commentary', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 34.1 (1983), 19–54; Virginia Davis, *Clergy in London in the Late Middle Ages. A Register of Clergy Ordained in the Diocese of London Based on the Episcopal Ordination Lists 1361-1539* (London: Institute of Historical Research, 2000).

<sup>107</sup> David M. Smith, *Guide to Bishops' Registers of England and Wales: A Survey from the Middle Ages to the Abolition of Episcopacy in 1646*, Guides and Handbooks/Royal Historical Society, 11 (London: Royal Historical Society, 1981); David M. Smith, *Supplement to the 'Guide to Bishop's Registers of England and Wales: A Survey from the Middle Ages to the Abolition of Episcopacy in 1646'*, Publications/Canterbury and York Society, Centenary Supplement (Canterbury: Canterbury and York Society, 2004).

<sup>108</sup> Reg. Beauchamp, Sarum, i. pt ii, fos 173r, 175v.

<sup>109</sup> Davis, *Clergy in London in the Late Middle Ages*, p. 21.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 22–23.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 23–24.

<sup>112</sup> Moran, 'Clerical Recruitment in the Diocese of York', pp. 19–20.



diocese ordaining an average of 187 secular priests and 196 secular acolytes each year between 1501 and 1527.<sup>113</sup> These various numbers pose a question – how does Morton’s Salisbury diocese compare? In an attempt to throw light on that question, a database of ordination records has been drawn up. It is based on a sample of the ordination lists held in the Salisbury episcopal registers, and the table below summarises the coverage. It includes all the ceremonies from the published registers, and twenty-nine from a set of the manuscript ones:

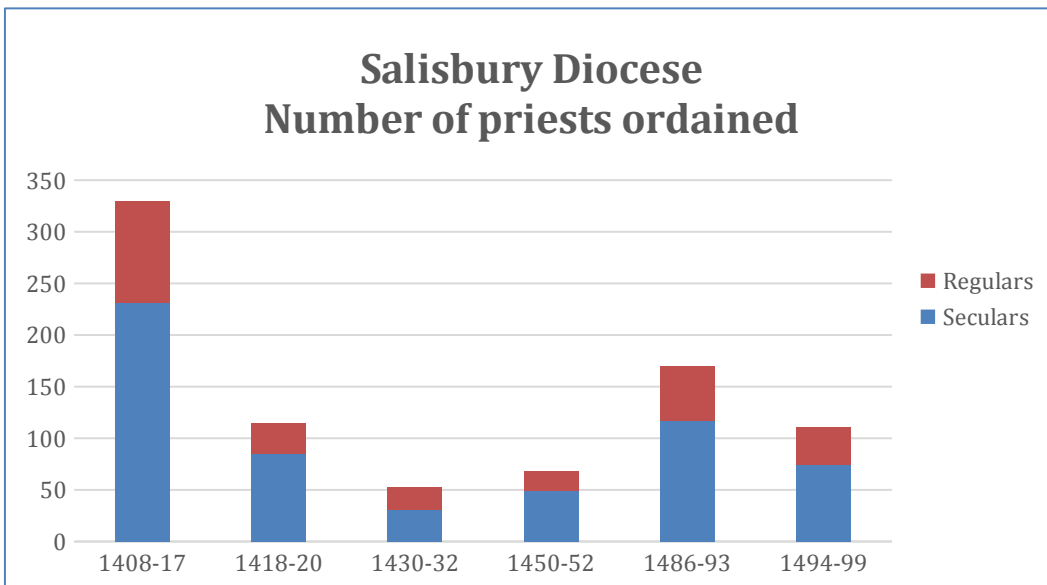
**Table 2.6.** The ordination ceremonies for which the information has been processed and stored into the database for the Salisbury diocese

<b>Date range</b>	<b>Number of ordination ceremonies</b>	<b>Source register</b>
April 1408 to June 1417	31	Robert Hallum (printed)
March 1418 to September 1420	8	John Chandler
March 1430 to December 1432	10	Robert Neville
March 1450 to March 1452	11	William Aiscough & Richard Beauchamp
February 1486 to June 1493	25	Thomas Langton (printed)
March 1494 to March 1499	18	John Blyth (printed)

The numbers of priests ordained during those time periods is summarised in the chart below:

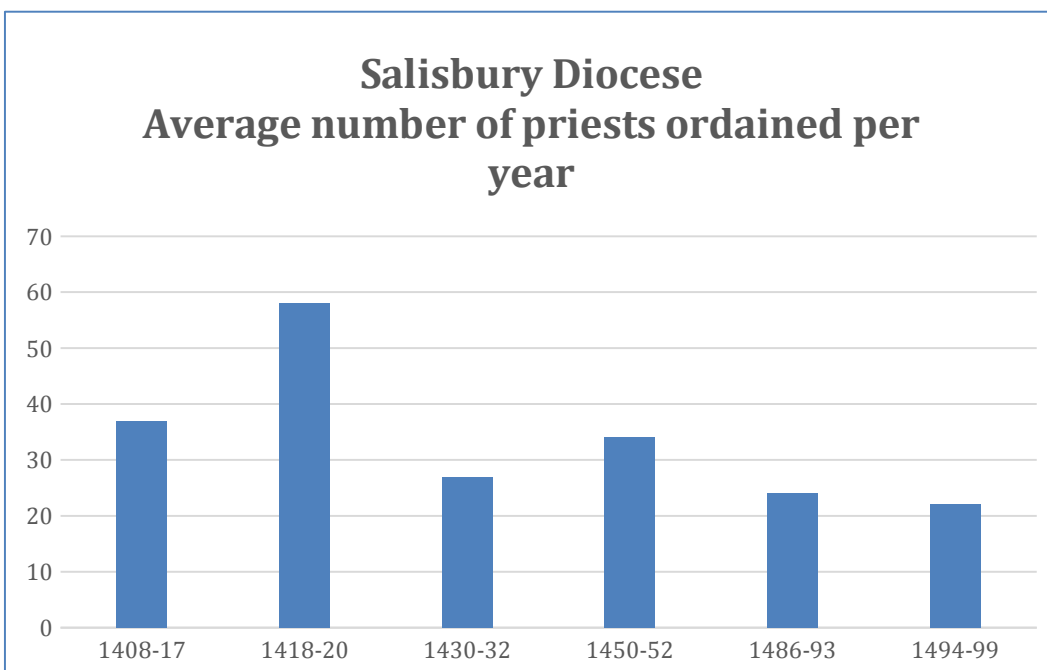
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<sup>113</sup> Ibid., p. 54.



**Figure 2.1.** The total number of priests ordained for the periods held within the database for the Salisbury diocese.

The numbers in the chart vary considerably, and the split of approximately 70% secular to 30% regular clergy can clearly be seen. More instructive, however, is to view the numbers in terms of the average of priests ordained per year.



**Figure 2.2.**

From the above chart we can see a somewhat different pattern. In terms of the average number of priests ordained per year, the peak has occurred in the period 1418-20. By contrast the period 1450-52 is close to the figure for 1408-17. Such a pattern is difficult to interpret without obtaining further samples to fill the gaps. One tempting interpretation is to propose that there was a major leap in ordinations in 1418-20 because of the effective ending of the papal schism in November 1417.<sup>114</sup> Thereafter the pattern subsides to a more consistent average. However without a more complete set of numbers, yet alone a deeper investigation of the post-schismatic 'peak', any interpretation must remain very provisional. One striking pattern is the decline in the rate of priestly ordinations after the 1450-52 figure. This may seem to contradict the statement by Christopher Harper-Bill that 'In the second half of the century ... there was a marked increase in candidates for ordination, and this was sustained almost until the eve of the Reformation.'<sup>115</sup> What the above chart does suggest is that Salisbury may not show the same pattern as seen in York and London, and may be controlled by more local factors. One such local factor may be the proportion of priests coming for ordination from other dioceses.

**Table 2.7.** The number of priests ordained per year during the last two sample periods within the database.

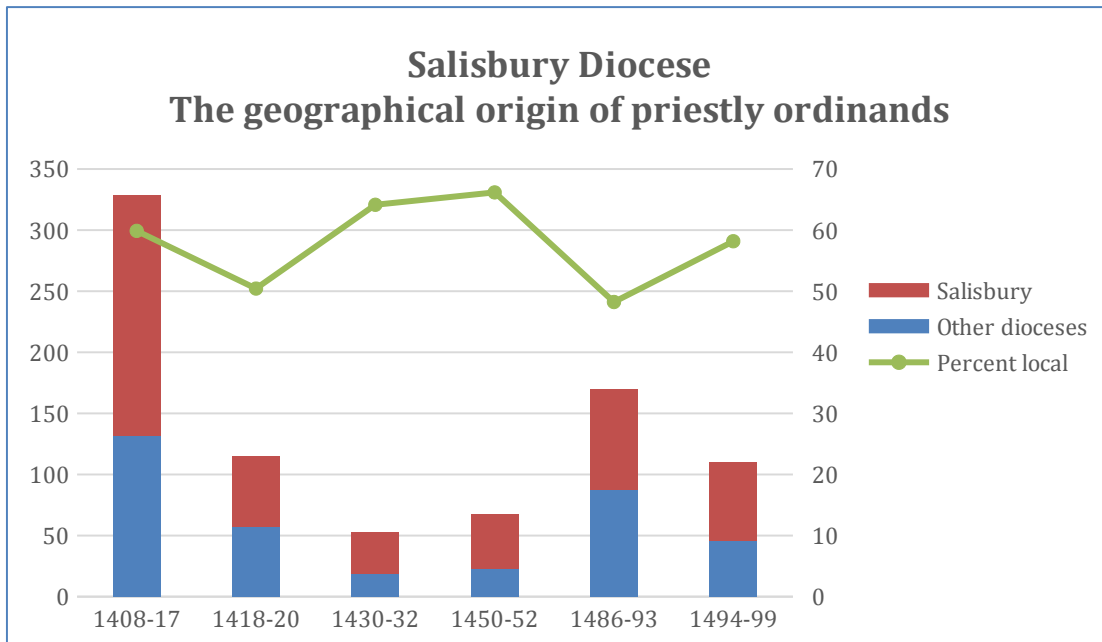
	Regulars		Seculars	
Period	Salisbury	Elsewhere	Salisbury	Elsewhere
1486-93	6.35	0.38	4.00	10.63
1494-99	5.33	0.67	5.33	7.00

The above table shows that the rate of ordination for secular priests from the Salisbury diocese itself actually increased between the two periods. This was masked by the reduction in secular priests from other dioceses. There was a small reduction in the rate of regular priests from Salisbury. Thus any of these Salisbury figures need to be studied closely to take account of the effect of

<sup>114</sup> See Davis, *Clergy in London*, p. 23 who identifies a similar 'upsurge' in recruitment in London; she points to the resolution of the schism and 'perhaps a reaction against Lollardy' as the reasons.

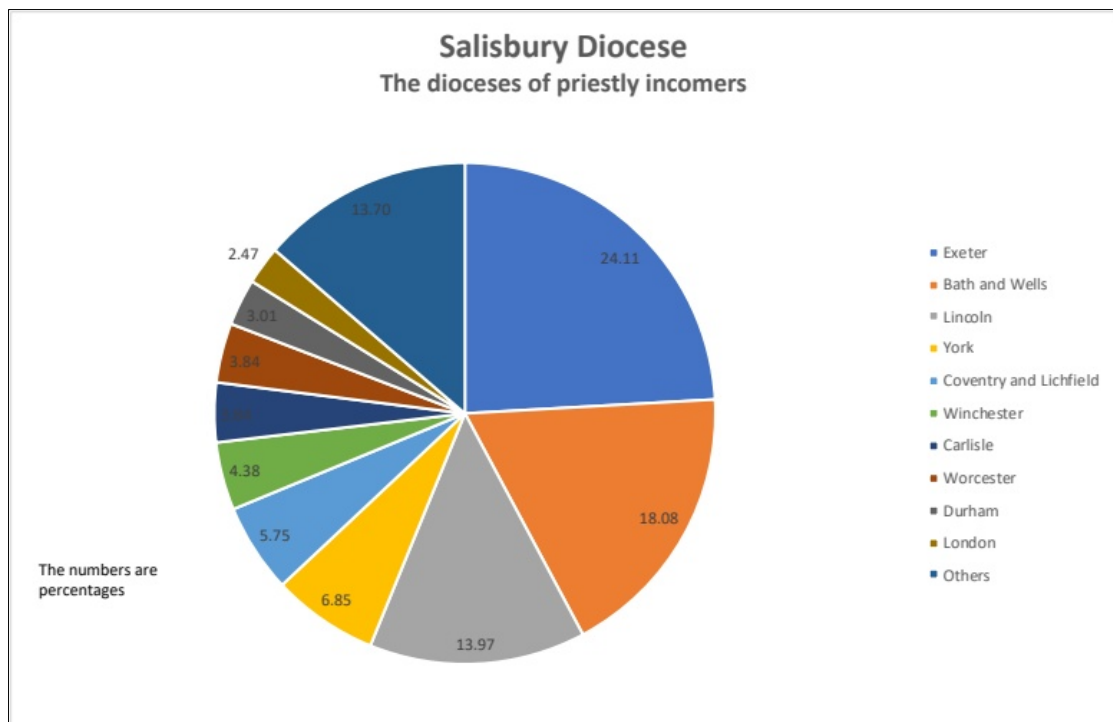
<sup>115</sup> Harper-Bill, *The Pre-Reformation Church in England 1400-1530*, p. 47.

'incomers'. The breakdown of these numbers for the whole database appears in the following chart.



**Figure 2.3.**

The chart above show both the absolute number of priestly ordinands who were local to the Salisbury diocese, and those coming from other dioceses (who thus required letters dimissory from their own diocesans). These figures should be read using the left-hand Y axis. The line chart item displays the percentage of ordinands who were local to the Salisbury diocese. This should be read using the right-hand Y axis. The percentage of local candidates shows two periods of decline, namely the period 1418-20 and the period 1486-93.

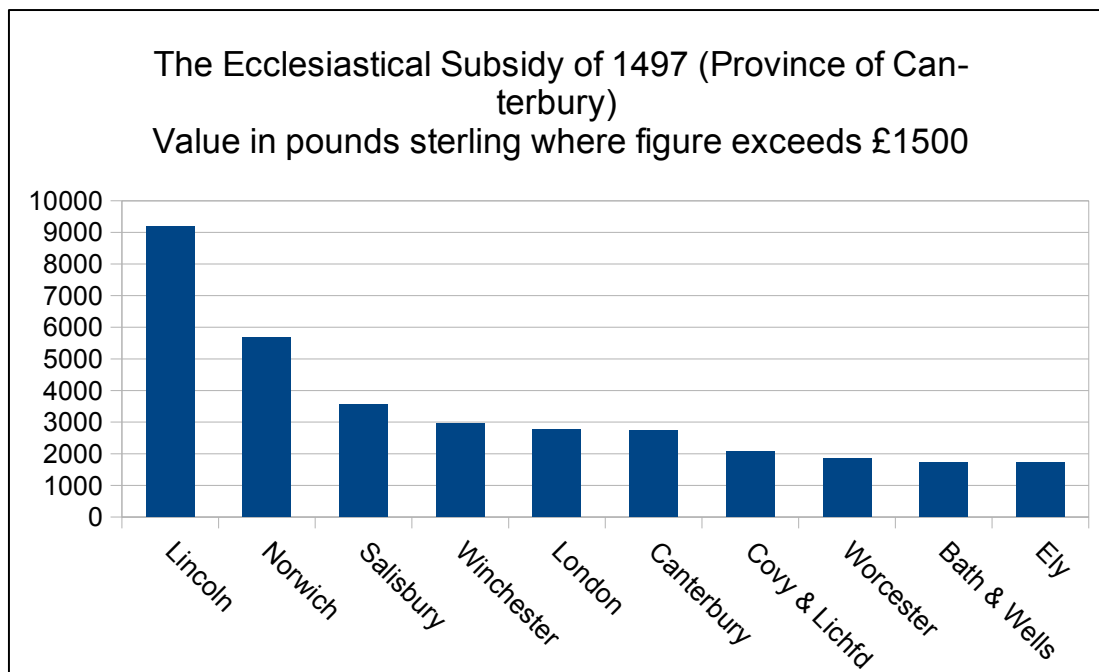


**Figure 2.4.**

The chart above shows in percentage terms from which dioceses the priestly incomers originate. Over half come from the three bordering dioceses of Exeter, Bath & Wells, and Lincoln. The Worcester diocese also borders upon Salisbury (see Map 2.1 at the end of this chapter). There is a small but curious number of ordinands presenting themselves from the Carlisle diocese. When these are looked at more closely it appears that all but one had title from a religious house close to Oxford. This strongly suggests they were studying at the University at that time and may explain why they sought ordination in such a southern diocese.<sup>116</sup> It is also worth noting that many of the Salisbury ordination ceremonies took place at the bishop's residences of Ramsbury or Sonning which are significantly closer to Oxford than the cathedral city. There does seem to be significant 'pull' factor at work here drawing ordinands in, especially from the neighbouring dioceses to the west. One possible explanation for this is the relative wealth of the Salisbury diocese – men would naturally seek to present themselves where Church livings were of higher value and number.

<sup>116</sup> Remaining in or near Oxford, with its proximity also to Reading and even London, may well have been one aim of such men. The network of contacts they could develop there, and the opportunities for advancement were certainly more favourable than in more distant dioceses.

One graphical way to see the value of Salisbury is in terms of the ecclesiastical subsidy obtained from each diocese – see the following chart:



**Figure 2.5.**<sup>117</sup>

The figure for Salisbury of £3560 is significantly above those for Worcester (£1855), Bath & Wells (£1728) and Exeter (£1421).

How would these various aspects of recruitment in the Salisbury diocese have affected the career of Morton? Given his very strong academic credentials, Morton was in a small group of men who presented for ordination in his home diocese. Of the 387 men who were ordained to the priesthood in the sample, thirty-three had the title of *magister* with a further two listed as holding bachelor's degrees. That combined number of thirty-five men represents 9% of the total (such a percentage is not far short of the percentage of graduates presented to livings in the Lincoln diocese between 1495 and 1520).<sup>118</sup> Of the sixteen Salisbury men where the degree subject is shown, ten are listed as MA,

<sup>117</sup> Christopher Harper-Bill, 'An Edition of the Register of John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury 1486-1500, with Critical Introduction' (unpublished doctoral thesis, King's College, London, 1977), p. 28 <<https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/files/2933131/DX192621.pdf>>. [accessed 30 April 2020]. The figures are taken out the Register of John Langton (Winchester) fo. 67.

<sup>118</sup> Margaret Bowker, *The Secular Clergy in the Diocese of Lincoln, 1495-1520*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, 13 (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P, 1968), p. 45.

three as BCL and two as BA. The final ordinand is the only academic doctor, Roger Church, who was ordained deacon and priest in Salisbury in 1493.<sup>119</sup> Church was, in the words of Harper-Bill, 'the most overworked of Morton's servants'.<sup>120</sup> After graduating from New College, Oxford with a BCL in 1485, Church was ordained to the sub-diaconate in 1491 in Canterbury (his home diocese). In that year he was collated to his first benefice by Morton and two years later was awarded his doctorate in canon law. Church quickly became Archbishop Morton's clerk and by February 1495 was acting as commissary general and vicar general in spirituals to Morton.<sup>121</sup> After Morton's death Church ended his career as vicar general to the absentee bishop of Bath and Wells, Cardinal Adrian Castellesi.

This analysis illustrates that Morton was one of a quite select group. The database in which Roger Church features contains all the priestly ordinations for a period of twenty-seven years in the Salisbury diocese. Morton's ordination in March 1459 when he was already a doctor of civil law was a rare event. Also of note from the Salisbury database is how the graduate ordinands show two peaks in numbers towards either end of the sample. The following table lists the number of graduate priests by sample period:<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> *BRUO*, i, pp. 420-1.

<sup>120</sup> Harper-Bill, 'An Edition of the Register of John Morton', p. 65.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid*, p. 79.

<sup>122</sup> Graduates are defined as those in the ordinations database having one or more of the following descriptions: a title of master or *magister* as shown in the ordination record, a degree qualification of some sort as shown in the ordination record, or as having an entry confirming their graduate status in *BRUO* or *BRUC*.

**Table 2.8.** Graduate ordinations to the priesthood within the Salisbury database.

Sample period	Number of graduates ordained priest	Average graduates per year
1408-17	24	2.7
1418-20	16	8
1430-32	5	2.5
1450-52	5	2.5
1486-93	28	4
1494-99	13	2.6

Insofar as such an intermittent set of samples can tell us anything, this pattern would seem to provide only partial support for the view that the education of the ordained clergy was improving as the century progressed.<sup>123</sup> There is a clear peak in the period 1418-20, and this may once again represent a post-Constance ‘bounce’. It could be that Oxford graduates in particular sought ordination in the geographical proximity of Salisbury rather than in distant Lincoln.<sup>124</sup> The small numbers involved make firm conclusions difficult to support. The strenuous efforts of Henry Chichele to recruit and reward a graduate clergy would appear to have achieved at least some measurable degree of success.<sup>125</sup>

In the twenty years after John Morton’s death (September 1500), there appears to have been a strengthening of trends already seen during Morton’s lifetime. Among the episcopate there was a marked inclination towards the law in terms of their educational background. Between 1485 and 1529 forty-six men received episcopal promotion. Of these, six were Italian and four (all regulars) show no evidence of having degrees. Of the remaining thirty-six, twenty-four had specialised in law. Of the native bishops that number represents sixty percent of

<sup>123</sup> Bowker, *The Secular Clergy in the Diocese of Lincoln*, p. 45.

<sup>124</sup> The locations of ordination ceremonies at Potterne, Ramsbury and Sonning, were physically much closer to Oxford. Even the more distant Salisbury was almost half the distance to travel compared to Lincoln.

<sup>125</sup> See Jeremy Catto’s *ODNB* article where he also discusses Chichele’s foundation of All Souls College to create his ‘unarmed clerical militia’: <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/5271>.



the total.<sup>126</sup> These men were drawn from an educated elite and had achieved the highest of church offices. Meanwhile among the lower clergy the rate of recruitment generally appears to have been maintained until at least 1520. Their standard of education may well have been rising.<sup>127</sup>

Given what appears to be a gradual but distinct trajectory in terms of church recruitment, how does this relate to the evolving nature of the English Church, especially with respect to the balance between Church and state? One can observe that the Church was becoming increasingly professionalised, but is it going too far to say that it was looking more like a department of state than a separate power-broker in Tudor politics?<sup>128</sup> When taking the progression (if one can be identified) from Bouchier, to Morton, to Warham and Wolsey, can a narrative be supported that sees the Church as becoming ever more deeply integrated into royal government? Peter Gwyn for example is clear just how far Wolsey was government administrator rather than churchman: ‘... it was the desire to make royal government fairer and more effective that was the main driving force behind Wolsey’s life work.’<sup>129</sup> In assessing Morton’s contribution once he achieved the rank of archbishop, Harper-Bill places Morton’s approach in a longer-term context:

‘The overall view must be of an episcopate characterised by aggressive assertion and extension of the traditional rights of the church of Canterbury - the amplification of legatine power to embrace exempt religious houses, the defence of the appellate jurisdiction of the court of Arches and the prerogative testamentary jurisdiction, the extension of financial and administrative rights in

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<sup>126</sup> J.A.F. Thomson, *The Early Tudor Church and Society, 1485-1529* (London: Longmans, 1993), pp. 46–47.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 186.

<sup>128</sup> Robert Swanson believes that some distinctions have to be drawn. For him ‘The relationship between clerics and the political system appears symbiotic, but that between ‘the church’ and ‘the state’ was perhaps less close’ - R. N. Swanson, *Church and Society in Late Medieval England* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), p. 121. Gwilym Dodd does detect ‘a greater degree of symbiosis between the Church and State’ - Gwilym Dodd, ‘The Clerical Chancellors of Late Medieval England’, in *The Prelate in England and Europe, 1300-1560*, ed. by Martin Heale (Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2014), pp. 17–49 (p. 47).

<sup>129</sup> Peter Gwyn, *The King’s Cardinal: The Rise and Fall of Thomas Wolsey* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1990), p. 52.

vacant sees. The obvious comparison is with the pontificate and policies of John Pecham two centuries before.<sup>130</sup>

Although it is useful to look back for such a comparison, it is also instructive to look forward to analyse just how far Morton's episcopate pre-figures or indeed paves the way for those that followed him. Those items that Harper-Bill identified, especially the extension of power from the centre, are clearly visible and amplified in Wolsey's activities as papal legate *a latere*. The power of such a position gave Wolsey broad scope to intervene in places as exempt religious houses – such powers were only available to Morton by reference to the curia in Rome.<sup>131</sup> Whether Wolsey was genuinely interested in reform (the position adopted by Gwyn) or was in pursuit of personal advantage and self-aggrandisement (closer to the position adopted by Pollard) is a debate that may long continue.<sup>132</sup> Certainly more recent authors have provided a much more nuanced picture of Wolsey than Pollard. Arnold for example sees Wolsey as reform-minded and 'concerned with the durability of the Church's administrative efficiency'.<sup>133</sup> Where there does seem to be general agreement is that Wolsey above all was the king's man, and that his power and motivations flowed strongly from that. There are definite parallels therefore between Wolsey and Morton in terms of their closeness to the king. However Wolsey's legatine status, won for him by the king, gave him a status and power that was perhaps the ultimate extension of the centralising instincts shown by Morton. What this analysis lacks is a deeper review and understanding of Thomas Bouchier's Canterbury administration. What studies there are concerning Bouchier tend to focus, rather understandably, on his political role during an intensely turbulent time. A new study therefore seems long overdue.

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<sup>130</sup> Harper-Bill, 'An Edition of the Register of John Morton', p. 11.

<sup>131</sup> Wolsey's legatine powers, constitution and court proceedings are discussed at length in Gwyn, *The King's Cardinal*, passim. Gwyn is keen to emphasize that Wolsey took pains in using those powers to respect the rights and positions of, for example, Archbishop Warham and the heads of exempt orders such as the Cistercians.

<sup>132</sup> Albert Frederick Pollard, *Wolsey*, Illustrated ed. (with additional notes and corrections) (London: Longmans, 1953). Pollard's stark summary of Wolsey's career was subject to criticism by some of its earliest reviewers, for example that by Conyers Read in *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (Jan., 1930), pp. 337-339 [Pollard's book was originally published in 1929].

<sup>133</sup> Jonathan Arnold, 'Colet, Wolsey and the Politics of Reform: St Paul's Cathedral in 1518', *English Historical Review*, 121.493 (2006), 979-1001 (p. 1000).

The fact that men who achieved the episcopate might come from the broadest social range is one that has been well-rehearsed. Swanson for example states that during the fifteenth century most non-noble bishops were apparently of gentry stock.<sup>134</sup> However there are celebrated examples of men who came from yet more humble origins. Thomas Bekynton, the future bishop of Bath and Wells, was the son of a weaver.<sup>135</sup> John Chaundler, bishop of Salisbury, was of illegitimate birth and his parents are unknown.<sup>136</sup> Most famously Thomas Wolsey's father had run a tavern.<sup>137</sup> Meanwhile, at the other end of the social spectrum, men of noble birth continued to achieve episcopal rank. Examples include Thomas Bourchier (Worcester, Ely and Canterbury), George Neville (Exeter and York) and Peter Courtenay (Exeter and Winchester).<sup>138</sup> However a more systematic analysis may be applied to examine what proportion of men came from each social grouping, and how that may have changed over the course of the long fifteenth century (1399 to 1520). Rosenthal attempted such an analysis, although his paper covered only the period up to 1485, and more recent scholarship has provided some additions and amendments to his work.<sup>139</sup> Appendix 1 contains an extended table, based on Rosenthal's approach, that covers the period up to 1520. In line with Rosenthal, this table focuses on men who occupied English sees. Those who occupied *only* Welsh dioceses are not included. Thus Reginald Pecock who was first installed at St Asaph but was then translated to Chichester is listed.<sup>140</sup> However William Lyndwood, celebrated author of the *Provinciale*, who remained at St David's until his death, is not.<sup>141</sup> Rosenthal adopted a tripartite classification for the social origins of these prelates, namely nobility (N), gentry (G) or minor/unknown (M). The numbers for those of noble birth can be relied on given their prominence in fifteenth-century society. The numbers for the other two categories are more problematic. There are more than a few examples of men who may be of gentry

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<sup>134</sup> R. N. Swanson, *Church and Society in Late Medieval England* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), p. 80.

<sup>135</sup> <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/1908>.

<sup>136</sup> <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/95181>.

<sup>137</sup> <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/29854>.

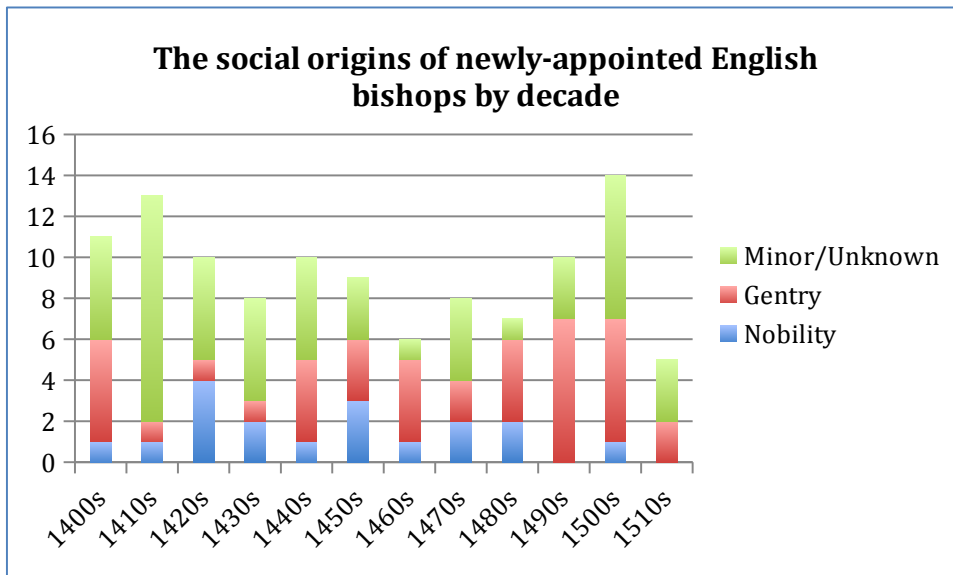
<sup>138</sup> Their respective biographies may be found at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/2993>, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/19934> and <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/6454>.

<sup>139</sup> Rosenthal, 'The training of an elite group'; see in particular his Table 1 on p. 50.

<sup>140</sup> <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/21749>.

<sup>141</sup> <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/17264>.

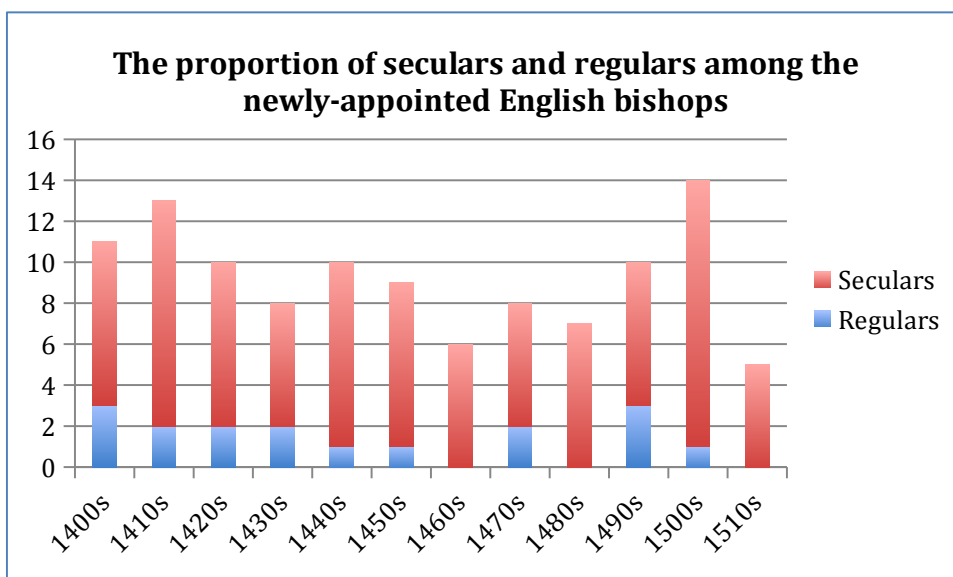
origins, but as that is not certain, they have to be categorised as M.<sup>142</sup> It seems likely therefore that the number of gentry prelates may be an underestimate. Those issues aside, the following chart gives the breakdown of social origins by decade for the whole period.



**Figure 2.6.**

The pattern that emerges from the above chart is that the number of noblemen declined towards the end of the period, while the number of those from gentry or minor backgrounds increased. The relatively high proportion of noblemen seen in the 1420s was not subsequently repeated. Also worth noting is the changing proportion of regular churchmen who achieved episcopal rank over the same period.

<sup>142</sup> On example is John Carpenter, bishop of Worcester (see <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/4729>.)



**Figure 2.7.**

In the above chart there is some consistency to the appointment of bishops from the religious orders visible in the decades up to the 1450s. Thereafter the pattern is more spasmodic. Of the seventeen regulars accounted for above, none were of noble rank, five were from gentry origins and the other twelve were of minor or unknown origin (of the ninety-four secular clerics, eighteen were of noble birth, thirty-five were from the gentry and forty-one were of minor or unknown birth). It is perhaps unsurprising that none of the noble bishops had chosen to join the religious orders and put aside their worldly wealth when first entering the clerical life – such a move would have required a very special devotion to the particular order, religious house or founder.

For those men of noble birth who sought a clerical career, the path to the episcopate could be straight and sometimes very short. Robert Neville's youthful consecration at Durham in 1427 (he was in his early twenties) was the result of lobbying by his uncle, Henry Beaufort, of Pope Martin V.<sup>143</sup> Richard Scrope's installation at Carlisle in 1464 owed much to his connections to the Warwick affinity.<sup>144</sup> James Stanley, who was elevated to Ely in 1506, had the powerful support of Lady Margaret Beaufort in addition to that of his father,

<sup>143</sup> See A. J. Pollard's *ODNB* entry for Neville at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/19962>.

<sup>144</sup> See H. Summerson's *ODNB* entry for Scrope at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/95129>.

Thomas, first earl of Derby.<sup>145</sup> Of these three examples, only Scrope emerges with praise for his episcopal role from his biographer. Stanley had gained a doctorate in canon law from Oxford, but he seems to have gained a reputation for easy living rather than episcopal diligence: ‘So drowned in pleasure, hee passed his time without doing any one thing worthy commemoration or remembrance.’<sup>146</sup> As for Neville, A. J. Pollard’s summarisation is stark: ‘Not the greatest ornament of the late medieval English church’.<sup>147</sup> Gascoigne also seized upon the youthful preferment granted to the Neville family more generally when criticising the rise of George Neville to the see of Exeter.<sup>148</sup> However there is a sharp contrast to be made between this minority group of bishops and, on the other hand, the great majority who rose from gentry or more humble origins to become a committed and professionalised class of prelates. It has already been made clear that these aspiring clerks were among the most highly educated men of their time, and once again Morton is a key exemplar.<sup>149</sup> Already a bachelor of canon and civil law, he was awarded a doctorate in civil law in 1452 when he was probably age 32. Four years previously he was already a fellow of Peckwater Inn and was practising as a proctor in the Chancellor’s court. Like other legal doctors, Morton’s practice progressed from the university itself out to other contexts such as the Court of Arches where he may have been in practice by 1453.<sup>150</sup> Morton’s progression seems therefore clearly to have been based on merit. He made the best possible use of the opportunities available to him to work within the most prestigious forums, and very rightly he was noticed by and obtained preferment from key patrons. Thomas Bourchier was translated to Canterbury in 1454 and so would have had the opportunity to witness Morton’s work at St Mary-le-Bow (the Court of Arches met somewhere within the church building).<sup>151</sup> This may

<sup>145</sup> See D. G. Newcombe’s *ODNB* entry for Stanley at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/26273>.

<sup>146</sup> Francis Godwin, *A Catalogue of the Bishops of England, since the First Planting of Christian Religion in This Island, Together with a Briefe History of Their Lives and Memorable Actions, so Neere as Can Be Gathered out of Antiquity. VVhereunto Is Prefixed a Discourse Concerning the First Conuersion Ofour Britaine Vnto Christian Religion. By Francis Godwin Now Bishop of Landaff* (London: Printed [by Eliot’s Court Press] for Thomas Adams, 1615), p. 279.

<sup>147</sup> See A. J. Pollard’s *ODNB* entry for Neville.

<sup>148</sup> Gascoigne, *Loci e Libro Veritatum*, p. 16.

<sup>149</sup> Much of what follows relating to Morton is taken from his Emden entry: *BRUO*, ii, pp. 1318-20.

<sup>150</sup> Such is the opinion of Christopher Harper-Bill, see <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/19363>. However no separate, primary evidence of his practice at the Arches has so far come to light.

<sup>151</sup> D J Keene and Vanessa Harding, ‘St. Mary le Bow 104/0’, in *Historical Gazetteer of London Before the Great Fire Cheapside; Parishes of All Hallows Honey Lane, St Martin Pomary, St Mary Le Bow,*

explain Morton's progress into royal service in 1456 when he became Chancellor to the infant Prince of Wales. Two years later Morton was finally ordained to the priesthood and, at the same time, his initial trickle of benefices became a steady flow.

Although Morton was to reach the pinnacle of achievement possible for a non-nobleman in both Church and state, the path that took him there was followed by other prelates of gentry origins. This progress did not come with the rapidity afforded to clerks born into the nobility, but was instead achieved through patience, skill, learning and manifest ability over many years.<sup>152</sup> Just as important was the need to be taken up by a key sponsor, especially within the context of moving into royal service. The motivations of such sponsors are therefore worthy of closer examination. What led them to favour rising men such as Morton and not simply to promote members of their family or their close affinity? Given the lack of direct evidence in many cases (such as with Morton) it is necessary to be somewhat speculative. The complexities of church government in the second half of the fifteenth century, with its many competing and overlapping jurisdictions, required men of great skill, knowledge, perseverance and energy to assist with both day-to-day management, as well as with more strategic concerns. A potential patron such as the archbishop of Canterbury would need men who were safe choices because of their demonstrable experience in the practice of law and the administration of church matters. However he would also be looking for those who could propose practical options for the reform and rationalisation of aged church institutions. In that context he would be seeking men with keen analytical brains, allied to diplomatic skills. They would be the kinds of clerks who could assist him with his many concerns. However just as important to Bourchier would be the condition of Church-state relations, as well as the more general functioning of royal government. In the highly unstable conditions of the 1450s, this must have been a primary consideration for him. Morton may therefore have appeared to be an

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*St Mary Colechurch and St Pancras Soper Lane* (London, 1987), pp. 199-212 <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/london-gazetteer-pre-fire/pp199-212> [accessed 30 April 2020].

<sup>152</sup> The 'noble' bishops were certainly no mere ciphers in terms of their educational attainment. With the possible exception of Robert Neville, all had degrees, and some such as Peter Courtenay, Lionel Woodville and Edmund Audley had achieved doctorates. Although their preferment may have been rapid, that does not mean they were undeserving candidates.

ideal man to fulfil this complex and demanding set of requirements. Bouchier himself has been subject at times to strong criticism from historians; to R. G. Davies he was a man who ‘...turned lack-lustre mediocrity into an art’.<sup>153</sup> However, whatever else can be said about Bouchier, he may well have been the person to recommend Morton’s inclusion into royal circles as the Chancellor of the Prince of Wales. If so then his judgment of character was very sound.

Two other prelates who must have been important sponsors and patrons for Morton were the bishops of Salisbury, namely William Aiscough (from 1438 to 1450) and Richard Beauchamp (from 1450 to 1481).<sup>154</sup> Aiscough was a regular member of the royal council until his violent death, and his successor at Salisbury was also close to Henry VI until Henry’s loss of the throne in 1461. They were both well placed to offer preferment to Morton directly, and to recommend Morton to both royal and ecclesiastical patrons. The latter would have included those religious houses whose patronage saw Morton instituted to some of his benefices. These included Abingdon Abbey (to the rectory of Shellingford in 1453) and Cerne Abbey (indirectly to the rectory of Maiden Newton in 1457).<sup>155</sup> In May 1458 Morton was collated as subdean at Lincoln where John Chedworth was then bishop and Robert Flemming the dean.<sup>156</sup> In the same year Morton took up a canon’s stall at Salisbury where Gilbert Kymer was dean (Kymer had been chancellor of the University of Oxford and was

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<sup>153</sup> Richard G. Davies, ‘The Church and the Wars of the Roses’, in *The Wars of the Roses*, ed. by A. J. Pollard, Problems in Focus (London: Macmillan, 1995), pp. 134–61 (p. 139). Davies views Morton very differently, describing him as a man of exceptional talent and principle (p. 140).

<sup>154</sup> *Handbook of British Chronology*, ed. by E. B. Fryde and others, Guides and Handbooks/Royal Historical Society, 2, 3rd ed (London: Royal Historical Society, 1986), p. 271. See Appendix 1 of this thesis for biographical references to Aiscough and Beauchamp.

<sup>155</sup> As previously discussed, Cerne was local to Morton’s birthplace, and it may be that he received his initial education there. Those factors, combined with Morton’s academic stature and growing legal career, would surely have recommended him to the abbey. The abbot of Cerne in the period 1454–58 was John Helyer who was succeeded by John Vanne (see David M. Smith, ed., *The Heads of Religious Houses: England and Wales, III. 1377–1540* (Cambridge: University Press, 2008), p. 28. The patronage of Maiden Newton was in lay hands, namely the Audley family, and it was John Tuchet, the future 6<sup>th</sup> baron Audley, who presented Morton to the living. Cerne Abbey held the manor of Maiden Newton, so it may have recommended Morton to Tuchet. Abingdon Abbey had strong links to nearby Oxford and many of the fifteenth century abbots had received degrees from there, including William Ashendon who was abbot in 1453 (see *Ibid.*, p. 12 and *BRUO*, i, pp. 56–7).

<sup>156</sup> See <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/fasti-ecclesiae/1300-1541/vol1/pp4-6>. The entry shows that Morton was collated but never entered. It may be that Morton was unable to satisfy the requirement that the subdean and other dignitaries should be resident (*Statutes of Lincoln Cathedral*, ed. by Henry Bradshaw and Christopher Wordsworth, 3 vols (Cambridge: University Press, 1892), i, p. 397).



succeeded in that post in March 1434 by Thomas Bourchier; Morton later went on to become chancellor himself).<sup>157</sup>

This chapter has illustrated how, over the course of fifteenth century, the graduate clerks in the English Church increased in number, influence and professionalism. The fixed number of top positions in the Church to which this increasing numbers of graduates could aspire presented them with a key challenge. However, there seems no doubt that all of those top positions were potentially available to them, whatever their social origins. A proportion would continue to be taken up by those of noble birth, but it was a relatively small slice, and the richest and most influential bishoprics were frequently filled by those of below noble rank. The effect of the numbers game was, if anything, to raise still higher the standard of clerks who took up positions as cathedral canons, archdeacons and the like. What also seems clear is that a high proportion of clerks entering key positions had a legal training. Such a qualification made them indispensable to both Church and state. Promotion of course was by no means assured. Men such as John Morton spent long years developing their qualifications in terms of university degrees, experiences in advocacy and in service to a growing network of patrons and contacts who were essential to assist them on the way up the career ladder. It was clear that promotion into royal service continued to be essential if a bishop's mitre were to be obtained. Events could always intervene. Men such as Luke Langcok and John Boteler who showed every promise of aspiring to the highest positions were cut short by their untimely deaths. Morton himself was engulfed in that political maelstrom caused by the fall of Henry VI's kingship in 1461, and he effectively lost ten years of his career. It was a mark of his great abilities that he was quickly taken into the service of Edward IV after 1471 and his upward movement continued without interruption thereafter. The system of church courts provided a very important forum for men such as Morton to prove themselves in front of influential patrons. It also gave them invaluable experience in understanding the tangled web of overlapping jurisdictions and authority structures within the late medieval Church. Given the pressures and

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<sup>157</sup> *Registrum Thome Bourchier, Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi: A.D. 1454-1486*, ed. by F. R. H. Du Boulay, Publications/Canterbury and York Society, 54 (Oxford: OUP, 1957), p. xii.

difficulties facing churchmen in administering both Church and state, it seems almost miraculous that the men who did rise to the top were able to maintain any form of effective governance. Clearly the process by which those men were trained and selected was, to a large degree, highly serviceable.

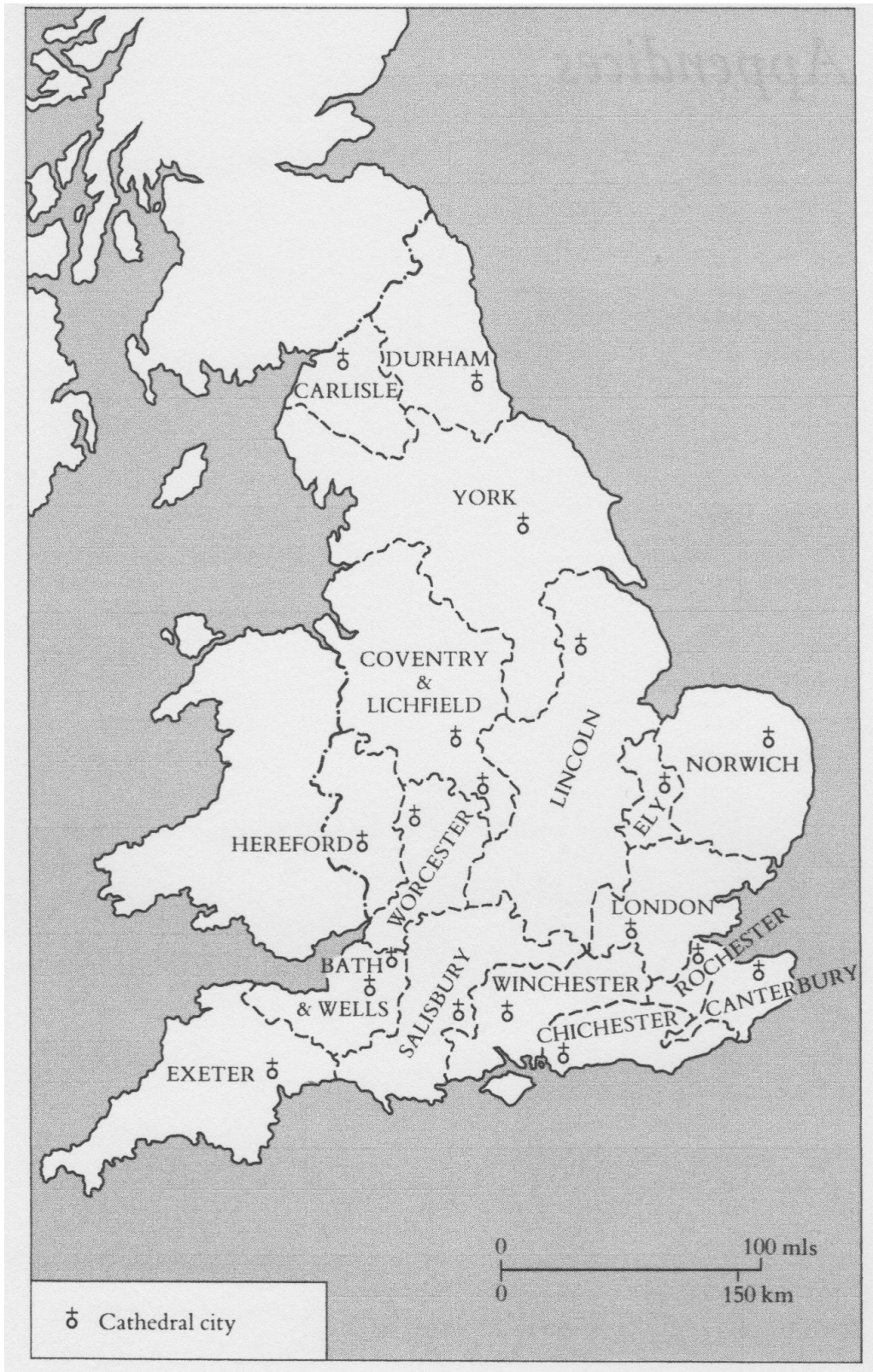
The graduate clerks who moved into the government of Church and state were therefore part of a system that reinforced the closeness of the two institutions. This closeness, aided by the professionalism of this cadre of highly capable men, brought the Church to a crucial point of balance. There are commentators who criticise these men for being too subservient to the crown. However such critics are perhaps guilty of allowing hindsight to obscure their analysis. That the Church and the state could and should move forward together must have seemed the right course to the churchmen of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Such an analysis might also be applied to the Church in France where there was no sudden rupture of the relationship with Rome. Certainly the careers of men such as Tristan de Salazar (archbishop of Sens from 1475 to 1518), and Guillaume d'Estouteville (archbishop of Rouen from 1453 to 1483) display striking parallels to their English counterparts.<sup>158</sup> The similarities and contrasts between the Churches of England and France will therefore continue to be analysed in subsequent chapters of this thesis.

In England as in France, for men such as John Morton such and his cohort of fellow law graduates, their further practice of the law has been identified as the next stage in their burgeoning careers. As doctors of law, they had already established themselves as expert voices within their academic institutions. It was now necessary for them to move into more senior roles in the church courts at diocesan and provincial level. Through the fifteenth century this group of men, expert practitioners especially in civil law as well as in canon law, came to represent the majority of clerks selected for the highest offices. The next chapter will therefore look in much greater detail at their time working within the

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<sup>158</sup> Vincent Tabbagh, *Diocèse de Sens*, *Fasti Ecclesiae Gallicanae*, t. 11 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009), pp. 188–200; *Diocèse de Rouen*, ed. by Vincent Tabbagh, *Fasti Ecclesiae Gallicanae: Répertoire Prosopographique Des Évêques, Dignitaires et Chanoines Des Diocèses de France de 1200 à 1500*, Tome 2 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998), pp. 130–36.

church courts, and subsequently in other courts such as those of Admiralty, Chivalry and Chancery.



**Map 2.1** - The dioceses of England in the late Middle Ages.<sup>159</sup>

<sup>159</sup> Thomson, *The Early Tudor Church and Society*, p. 366. Copyright acknowledged.

### **Chapter 3 – The church courts**

Among that cadre of prelates to which John Morton belonged, the church courts, and in particular the Court of Arches, represented a key staging post on the path to high office. As the fifteenth century progressed there were additional forums in which church lawyers increasingly practised, including non-ecclesiastical ones such as the Court of Requests. Just why this happened will be discussed later in this chapter, but there are clear indications that these were useful waypoints on the route to the highest ecclesiastical offices. However, such courts were not just forums where clerical lawyers exercised their craft; they were also the arena to which clerical men and women had frequent recourse in seeking to right wrongs and make their pleas. In bringing such causes, the men and women of the Church were giving voice to their status and standing, both within the Church and beyond. It gave them a public forum in which to develop and reinforce their identities, as well as to satisfy the expectations of their peers and subordinates. The observance and practice of law had both divine and earthly imperatives - powerful motivators for clerics within their communities. Among the courts where churchmen both practised and brought their pleas, that of Chancery was perhaps the most prominent. The number of cases passing through these courts in relation to church business seems to have grown, especially towards the end of the fifteenth century, and the increasingly litigious nature of the Church raises questions about the culture and motivations of these men and women. This chapter will seek to answer those questions; it will examine the presence and practice of churchmen in these varied courts to review their careers, activities and motivations, in particular as legal practitioners but also as plaintiffs and defendants.

The Court of Arches, the Courts of Requests and of Star Chamber, and the Court of Chancery will each form part of this discussion. The Court of Arches, and in particular the group of legal doctors who practised there, requires special scrutiny, and one section of this chapter will examine the advocates and their

culture. The particular case of Dr John Morton will form a part of that examination – he is an outstanding exemplar of the legal clerk, but his career trajectory may have been misunderstood. Various features of that career demonstrate how the idiosyncrasies of an individual life cannot simply be derived from a broad, general picture (even though the construction of such a picture is necessary). The Northern Province of the Church cannot be ignored, and the *curia Ebor* will also be scrutinized. The aim of the chapter will be to review the work of these courts, principally for what they tell us about their role in moving men up the ecclesiastical career ladder. A second key aim will be to understand the place of these courts in the governance of the Church, and the exercise of authority over the Church. Such courts shaped the hierarchy of the Church because they were instruments of that hierarchy.

Historians have long recognised the importance of legal practice for the careers of churchmen, especially those who would aspire to prelacy. Such practice grew markedly during the fifteenth century. The post of notary or proctor could furnish a clerk with reliable employment (there was a recognisable career structure, a *cursus honorum*, in diocesan administration),<sup>1</sup> but it was from among the ranks of the advocates that the future prelate would normally be chosen. While the proctors belonged to a ‘lesser order’, the ranks of the advocates provided the judges in the ecclesiastical courts and the masters in Chancery.<sup>2</sup> The number of students at Oxford and Cambridge studying civil law across the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries grew more than tenfold as the figure below illustrates.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Dorothy M. Owen, *The Medieval Canon Law: Teaching, Literature and Transmission*, Sandars Lectures in Bibliography (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 17-29.

<sup>2</sup> R. H. Helmholz, *The Oxford History of the Laws of England. Volume I, The Canon Law and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction from 597 to the 1640s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 222.

<sup>3</sup> Christopher T. Allmand, ‘The Civil Lawyers’, in *Profession, Vocation and Culture in Later Medieval England: Essays Dedicated to the Memory of A.R. Myers*, ed. by Cecil H. Clough (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1982), pp. 155–80 (p. 172).

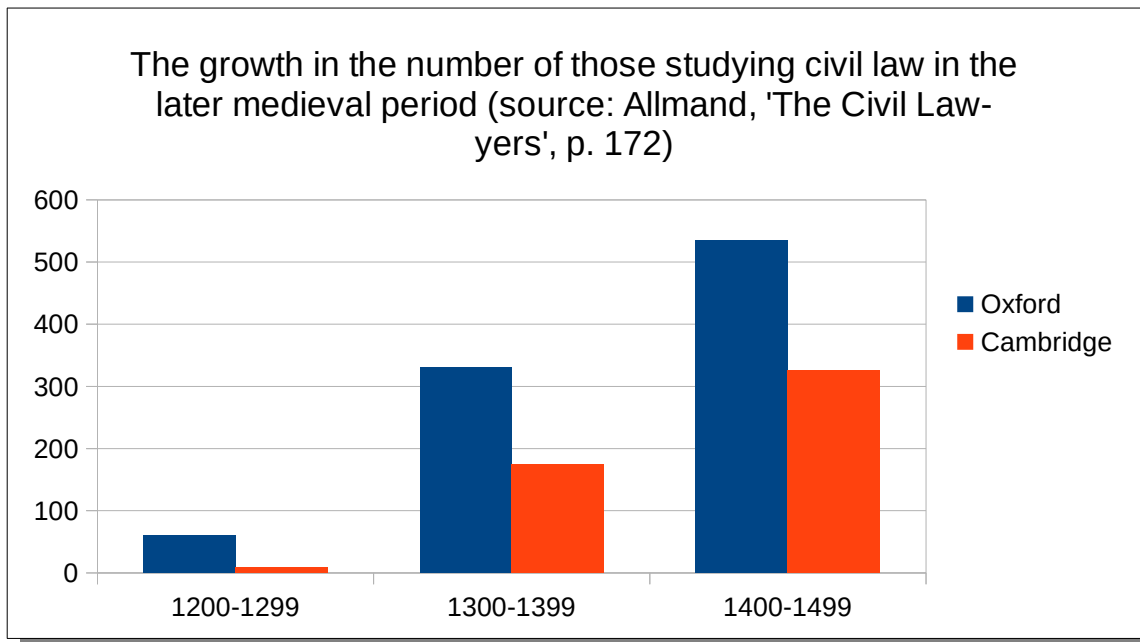


Figure 3.1.

The law, and especially civil or Roman law, was proving very attractive for an ambitious clerk with the competence to rise through legal service. His initial university training equipped him with a thorough knowledge of and practice in the classical rhetorical arts of the Latin language.<sup>4</sup> However, his subsequent exercise of advocacy would require skilful rhetoric in the vernacular, something for which early magisterial service as a preacher may have prepared him. That practice in the vernacular would be needed in his later career for the making of speeches, sermons and judgements. An experienced and capable advocate could find gainful employment, not just in the church courts, but beyond, acting as a feoffee, a guardian or as an executor. From there might come opportunities in royal service, as a member of the royal household, as a judge in a non-ecclesiastical court, as the holder of an office of state, as a diplomat.<sup>5</sup> Finally, but only for the chosen few, might come a bishopric. Historians have long recognised the role of the law in bringing clerks to the episcopacy. As well as

<sup>4</sup> John O. Ward, 'The Development of Medieval Rhetoric', in *The Oxford Handbook of Rhetorical Studies*, ed. Michael J. MacDonald (Oxford: University Press, 2017), p. 13.

<sup>5</sup> Allmand, 'The Civil Lawyers', p. 156.

those cited earlier, writers such as F. Donald Logan, R.L. Story, James Brundage and others, have examined the role of clerical lawyers. Their work forms a strong basis for the analysis of the careers of the cohort of men under consideration in this thesis.

The key primary source material used in this chapter includes the registers of the archbishops of Canterbury, the records of the courts of Chancery, Requests and Star Chamber, the records of the London Metropolitan Archive, and the York Cause Papers. The medieval records of the Court of Arches were unfortunately destroyed in the Great Fire of London, although there are chance survivals elsewhere that provide a basis of evidence and will be referred to below.<sup>6</sup> The workings of these courts can, however, only provide a partial picture of the legal careers of the rising prelate. It is necessary to bring such evidence together with the biographical details of the successful advocates to understand how a notable lawyer could achieve prelate.

One fruitful source of evidence that illustrates the network of contacts and patronage that existed (especially among churchmen with a legal training) is the set of proxy appointments to parliament, TNA series SC 10.<sup>7</sup> Entries may be found there for a number of future bishops who had been trained at the universities in civil, canon or both laws. Almost without exception, they were chosen as proctors by sitting bishops who had also collated them into ecclesiastical livings under their direct patronage, or into other positions where they had clearly significant leverage. Examples include John Stafford who acted as proctor for John Chandler, bishop of Salisbury who was also his patron for the archdeaconry of Salisbury.<sup>8</sup> William Alnwick, nominated as his proctor by

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<sup>6</sup> F. Donald Logan, *The Medieval Court of Arches*, The Canterbury and York Society, 95 (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005), p. xiv; M. Doreen Slatter, 'The Records of the Court of Arches', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 4.02 (1953), 139–53 (p. 140).

<sup>7</sup> These are calendared in Phil Bradford, and Alison McHardy, eds., *Proctors for Parliament: Clergy, Community and Politics, c. 1248-1539*, Canterbury and York Society, 108, 2 vols (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2018).

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 377.



Henry Bowet, archbishop of York, was already a canon at York Minster.<sup>9</sup> Thomas Beckington was chosen as proctor by William Heyworth, bishop of Coventry & Lichfield, who had previously seen Beckington made a canon of Gnosall in Staffordshire.<sup>10</sup> When Henry Chichele was nominated as proctor by Richard Medford, bishop of Salisbury, he had already enjoyed significant ecclesiastical patronage from the latter.<sup>11</sup> In these and other examples we can see lawyers patronising other lawyers – both John Stafford and John Chandler held degrees in civil law.

A more subtle pattern of patronage for those proctors who were qualified in canon or both laws can be detected from the same source. Men such as Thomas Brouns, Philip Morgan and Robert Hallum were chosen as proctors by abbots and priors. Brouns was nominated as proctor by various regular and secular appointers, but the list included John Deeping, abbot of Peterborough and Richard Upton, abbot of Crowland.<sup>12</sup> Philip Morgan was appointed by the prior of Christ Church, Canterbury.<sup>13</sup> Hallum was appointed by the abbot of Gloucester and the prior of St Augustine's Canterbury.<sup>14</sup> Such choices suggest that there was an affinity between these pairings based around the study and practice of canon law. Only occasionally was a future bishop qualified in just civil law chosen by a regular prelate to act as his proctor. Thomas Beckington was chosen by Nicholas Frome, abbot of Gloucester, to be his proctor in 1439 and 1442.<sup>15</sup> By that time, however, Beckington was already very well-established in ecclesiastical and royal service, and had been dean and official of the Arches.

One man who does not appear among the proctors for parliament is Dr John Morton. The stage in his career when he may well have been chosen coincides

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 376.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 391.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 338.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., pp. 362, 367 & 381.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 347.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., pp. 324, 325.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., pp. 390, 393.

frustratingly with a hiatus in the survival of the records. What Morton represents, rather like Thomas Becket, is membership of that small and select group of men whose career brought them to the very direct interface between state and Church power. His role in royal service was a key factor in his rise and will form a key part of Chapter Five of this thesis. However, there are some more immediate issues of detail relating to Morton's legal career that require elucidation, and these will be tackled first.

Recent historians and biographers all state that John Morton was dean of the Arches in or around 1474. He is also described as having been an advocate in the Court of Canterbury.<sup>16</sup> The earliest known biographical reference to Morton as an advocate there dates from 1572.<sup>17</sup> In his life of Morton published in 1609, John Budden stated that Morton obtained his first stipends practising law in the Court of Arches after his time at Oxford (no specific dates are given).<sup>18</sup> Dean Hook in his life of Morton talked of "His practice in the court of Arches ...".<sup>19</sup> Woodhouse rather anachronistically described Morton as "... an advocate in Doctors' Commons ...".<sup>20</sup> Again no dates are provided. Anthony Wood said that Morton "... about 1453, became principal of Peckwater's inn: at which time he being also an advocate in the court of arches ...".<sup>21</sup> Harper-Bill suggested that Morton probably began to practise in the Court of Arches from 1453 onwards

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<sup>16</sup> The term 'Court of Arches' is synonymous with 'Court of Canterbury' or *curia Cantuariensis*. The term *arcuata curia* can also be found.

<sup>17</sup> Matthew Parker, *De antiquitate Britannicae ecclesiae et privilegiis ecclesiae Cantuariensis* (London: William Bowyer, 1729), p. 444. This text is a printing of the contents of BL Add MS 28571 fo. 79 that dates from 1572.

<sup>18</sup> John Budden, *Reverendissimi Patris Ac Domini Iohannis Mortoni Cantuariensis Olim Archiepiscopi, Magni Angliæ Cancellarii, Trium Regum Consiliarij, Viri Prudentissimi, Optimique, Vita Obitusque: Quum Maiorum Imagines Intuemur, Vehementissimè Tum Animus Ad Virtutem Accenditur. Salust. in Bello Iugurth.* (London: Richardus Field, 1607), p. 7. Writing a century earlier about Morton, Thomas More did not mention the cardinal's early career in the church courts.

<sup>19</sup> Walter Farquhar Hook, *Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury*, ed. C. E. Woodruff, vol. 5 (London: Richard Bentley, 1867), p. 389.

<sup>20</sup> Reginald Illingworth Woodhouse, *The Life of John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1895), p. 29.

<sup>21</sup> Anthony à Wood, *Athenæ Oxonienses*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn, vol. 2 (London: Printed for F.C. and J. Rivington et al., 1815), p. 684.

when he ceased to appear regularly in the records of the university of Oxford.<sup>22</sup> Harper-Bill gave as evidence an entry in the patent rolls dated July 29<sup>th</sup>, 1455 where Morton among others was appointed a commissioner to hear an appeal from the Court of Admiralty, “a task traditionally assigned to practitioners in the court of Canterbury”.<sup>23</sup> Harper-Bill’s contention is not unreasonable. However, in that patent roll entry, Morton was one of a group of men that also included Master John Derby DCL, Luke Langcok DCnL, and two “gentlemen of London”. For these two gentlemen, Geoffrey Feldyng and Matthew Philip, there is no known record of them being associated with the Court of Arches.<sup>24</sup> As regards Dr. Derby, there is a biographical entry for him where he is described as obtaining a DCL. by 1439.<sup>25</sup> Emden says he was a royal commissioner for appeal cases, but there is no mention of any role in the Court of Arches. Logan links Derby to Queen’s College MS 54 and describes him as a “notary public at the Court of Arches”.<sup>26</sup> But the authority that Logan provides in support of that statement (his own article in another study) talks not of John Derby but of a different Cambridge master, Thomas Barowe.<sup>27</sup> If we assume that Derby did indeed practise in the Court of Arches then it is possible that he was regarded as a person with experience of that court sufficient to provide the commission of 1455 with the appropriate seniority and expertise.<sup>28</sup> Morton and the others may have been nominated for other reasons. Nevertheless, in summary, it does not seem unreasonable to assume that Morton did act as an advocate in the Court of Arches, although no direct primary evidence of his presence there has yet been uncovered.

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<sup>22</sup> *The Register of John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1486-1500*, ed. by Christopher Harper-Bill, Canterbury and York Society, 75, 78, 89, 3 vols (York: Canterbury and York Society, 1987), vol. i, p. vii.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xviii.

<sup>24</sup> They do not appear in Logan, *The Medieval Court of Arches*, pt. 4.

<sup>25</sup> *BRUC*, p. 184.

<sup>26</sup> Logan, *The Medieval Court of Arches*, p. xxxi.

<sup>27</sup> F. Donald Logan, ‘The Cambridge Canon Law Faculty: Sermons and Addresses’, in *Medieval Ecclesiastical Studies in Honour of Dorothy M. Owen*, ed. M. J. Franklin and Christopher Harper-Bill, Studies in the History of Medieval Religion 7 (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1995), pp. 152–3.

<sup>28</sup> Emden’s entry for Derby (*BRUC*, p. 184), describes him as being the prothonotary of the Court of Chancery. The Court of Arches is not mentioned. There is no *ODNB* entry for him.

With respect to the post of dean of the Arches and Morton, it appears that a mistake has been made. Logan lists him as being dean in 1474, giving as his authority Emden's *BRUO* entry.<sup>29</sup> Emden's source is the manuscript register of the bishop of Worcester, John Carpenter, dating from August 1474.<sup>30</sup> However the wording of that entry seems to have been misinterpreted. It does not describe Morton as dean (*decanus*), but rather talks of him as being rector of the church of St. Dunstan-in-the-East in the deanery (*in decanatu*) of the Arches. The transcription of the key passage reads as follows:

Cum delecti nobis | in Chr(ist)o Mag(iste)r Johannes Morton' Legu(m) doctor  
Rector eccl(es)ie paroch(ialis) S(anc)ti Dunstani in | Oriente Ciuitatis  
London(ensis) n(ost)re et Eccl(es)ie Cantuar(iensis) in decanatu n(ost)ro de  
Arcub(us) | London(ensis) iurisdic(i)o(n)is immediate. et d(omi)n(u)s  
Will(el)m(u)s Attynghe<sup>a</sup>m magister hospitalis | S(anc)ti Bartholomei in Villa  
Bristoll(iensis) ...

There are several further references to Morton within this register entry, but they simply repeat his name and do not provide any further information concerning his involvement with the Court of Arches.<sup>31</sup> By 1474 Morton had already achieved the office of master of the rolls.<sup>32</sup> It would seem odd, therefore, for him to occupy the lesser role of dean of the Arches. It is possible that Morton could have delegated his responsibilities as dean to a deputy, something that may have happened with other deans. An example is John Kemp who was appointed dean in or around 1414 but was replaced in that post by Walter Chaddesley in 1418.<sup>33</sup> Kemp's provision to the see of Rochester took place the following year.<sup>34</sup> There is no doubt that a later dean of the Arches, Master David

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<sup>29</sup> *BRUO*, ii, p. 1319.

<sup>30</sup> Reg. Carpenter, 1476-1444, vol. ii, fol. 53r, Diocesan Records, Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service, The Hive, Worcester.

<sup>31</sup> The same entries were also copied into Register John Booth, fols 27v-29r, Devon Heritage Centre, Chanter 12, vol. 2.

<sup>32</sup> *CPR 1467-1477*, entry dated 16 March 1472, p. 334.

<sup>33</sup> Reg. John Chaundler, Sarum, ii, fos 31v to 33v (Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre, D 1/2/8).

<sup>34</sup> E. B. Fryde et al., eds, *Handbook of British Chronology*, 3rd ed, Guides and handbooks/Royal Historical Society 2 (London: Royal Historical Society, 1986), pp. 267, 239, 259, 282; Irene

William, who occupied that post from at least 1479 and was still there in 1486, was subsequently advanced to the post of master of the rolls.<sup>35</sup> Likewise William Warham, who had been active as an advocate in the Court of Arches in 1491, later became master of the rolls in February 1494.<sup>36</sup> For both of these men there is no indication that they were active in the Court of Arches after their promotions. Harper-Bill also points out that the volume of work in the Chancery was increasing greatly during the 1470s, so it seems likely that Morton would have needed to focus his energies on his new role.<sup>37</sup>

Further light on Morton's relationship to the deanery of the Arches is obtained by a study of the Canterbury register of Archbishop Bouchier. The August 1474 entry in John Carpenter's Worcester register shows Morton exchanging his rectorship at St Dunstan-in-the-East for two benefices held by William Attingham, namely the rectorship of the parish of South Molton in Devon and the mastership of the Hospital of St Bartholomew in Bristol. Morton had obtained his rectorship of St Dunstan on 11 October 1472.<sup>38</sup> This was in succession to John Boteler who had died shortly before.<sup>39</sup> The entry in Bouchier's register for Morton's institution reads as follows:

Institution of master John Morton, LL.D., in person of his proctor, master Thomas Kenegy, to rectory of St Dunstan-in-the-East, London, vacant by the death of John Botiller, in Archbishop's immediate jurisdiction and collation. Inductor, dean of the Arches.

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Josephine Churchill, *Canterbury Administration: The Administrative Machinery of the Archbishopric of Canterbury* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1933), vol. ii, p. 240; E. F. Jacob, *The Register of Henry Chichele, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1414-1443* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1938), vol. i, p. lxxxviii (where Jacob comments on the likely use of a deputy by Kemp).

<sup>35</sup> F. R. H. Du Boulay, ed., *Registrum Thome Bourghier, Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi: A.D. 1454-1486*, Publications/Canterbury and York Society 54 (Oxford: OUP, 1957), p. 339; *BRUO*, iii, p. 2050; John Christopher Sainty, *The Judges of England, 1272-1990: A List of Judges of the Superior Courts*, Supplementary Series / Selden Society vol.10 (London: Selden Society, 1993), p. 148.

<sup>36</sup> Sainty, *The Judges of England, 1272-1990*, p. 148.

<sup>37</sup> Harper-Bill, *The Register of John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1486-1500*, p. viii.

<sup>38</sup> Du Boulay, *Registrum Thome Bourghier, Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi*, p. 310.

<sup>39</sup> *BRUO*, i, p. 226. Emden states that Boteler died in Oxford on 2 October 1472 but provides no source for that information.

From this entry it appears that a third person, i.e. neither the defunct Boteler nor Morton himself, was dean of the Arches on that day – it would surely be very strange not to point out that Morton himself was the dean? Then on 13<sup>th</sup> August 1474 when the exchange between Morton and William Attingham took place, the register entry reads as follows:

Exchange between master John Morton, LL.D., rector of St. Dunstan-in-the-East, London, in Archbishop's immediate jurisdiction, and William Attyngheam, rector of Southmolton [Devon], Exeter diocese, and master of hospital of St Bartholomew, Bristol, Worcester diocese. Inductor of Attyngheam, dean of the Arches. (On certificate of John, bishop of Exeter).<sup>40</sup>

Again, from the way this entry is worded, the dean of Arches (who was the inductor of Attingham) must surely not have been Morton. This fact, combined with the wording of the entry in John Carpenter's register, strongly suggests that Morton was certainly not the dean of Arches at this time. This exchange of benefices did not reduce Morton's income but rather increased it. South Moulton alone was valued in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* at over £67.<sup>41</sup> The income from Saint Bartholomew's is not known although other hospitals in Bristol did not have a high net value in 1535 – St Catherine's was listed at less than £22 and St Lawrence at less than £13.<sup>42</sup> The amount that went to the master cannot therefore have been high. However, St Bartholomew's would have added to the overall value of the exchange that Morton made, and may also have reflected the desire for the hospital's patron, Richard West, 7<sup>th</sup> Baron de la Warr, to cement or reward a relationship with Morton.<sup>43</sup>

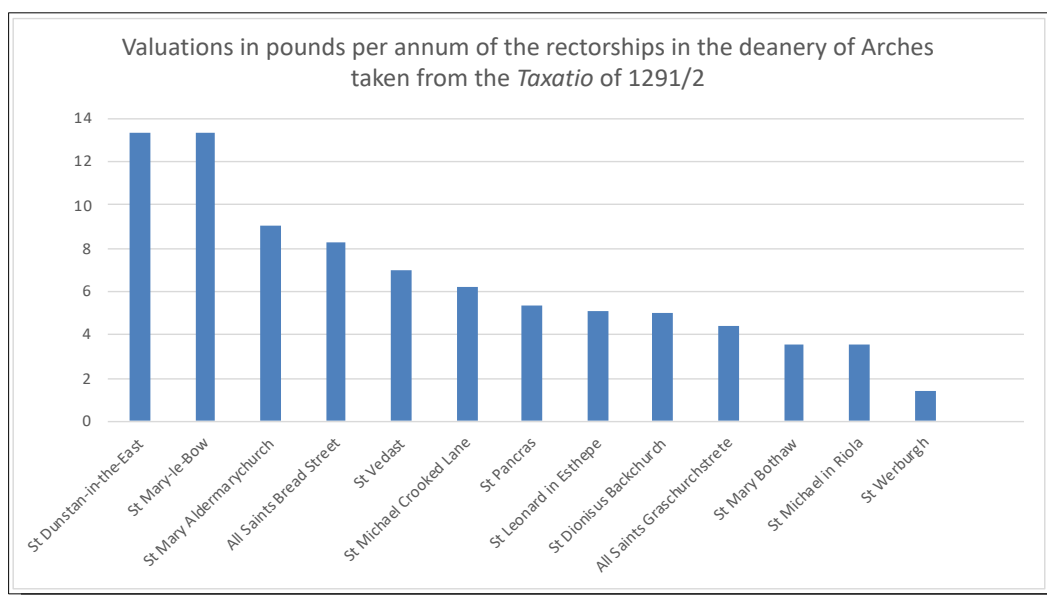
<sup>40</sup> See Du Boulay, *Registrum Thome Bourghier, Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi*, pp. 319–20. The entries for all these institutions are printed in English.

<sup>41</sup> *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, ii, p. 344.

<sup>42</sup> William Dugdale and others, *Monasticon Anglicanum: A History of the Abbies and Other Monasteries...and Cathedral and Collegiate Churches...in England and Wales*, New ed. by John Caley, Henry Ellis and Bulkeley Bandinel, 6 vols (London: Longman, Hurst, 1817), vol. 6, pt. 2, p. 774; *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, ii, p. 434.

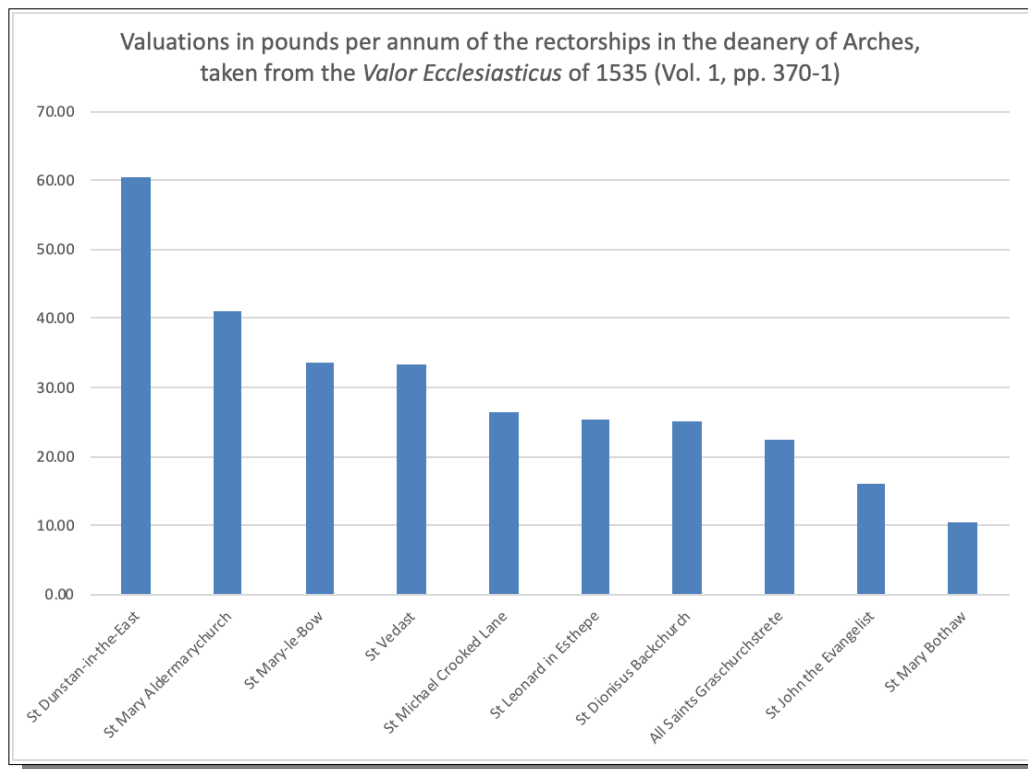
<sup>43</sup> "Hospitals: Bristol," in *A History of the County of Gloucester: Volume 2*, ed. William Page (London: Victoria County History, 1907), 118–119. *British History Online*, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/glos/vol2/pp118-119> [accessed 25 April, 2020].

Also pertinent to this discussion is the make-up of the deanery of the Arches. This group of churches with their associated benefices was a peculiar jurisdiction of the archbishop of Canterbury that lay within the diocese of London. The discussion that follows provides only very partial support for the idea that it was the preserve of the personnel of the Court of Arches. The deanery contained several valuable benefices and the valuations of these at two dates are shown in figures 3.2 to 3.3 below:



**Figure 3.2.** The 1291-92 valuation.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>44</sup> This information is obtained from the online *Taxatio* database hosted by the University of Sheffield at <https://www.dhi.ac.uk/taxatio/> [accessed 25 April 2020].



**Figure 3.3.** The 1535 valuation.<sup>45</sup>

These figures clearly show that St Dunstan was one of the most valuable benefices in the deanery, and indeed by 1535 was 50% more valuable than the rectorship in second place (St Mary Aldermarchurch). It might seem logical that the more valuable benefices would be granted by the archbishop to the most important post-holders within the Court of Arches. The highest-ranking post was that of the official, followed by that of the dean and then of the examiners general (of which there were two).<sup>46</sup> However there are various entries in the registers of Archbishops Bouchier and Morton concerning the collation of rectors to St Dunstan, and these provide little support for this proposition. Table 3.1 below lists all of the documented appointments for the period 1456 to 1492. It is clear that the register of institutions is not complete. As regards one of the beneficiaries, David William, Logan shows him as being

<sup>45</sup> These Arches livings were comparatively wealthy among London churches. The entries in *Valor*, Vol I show only one living (St Magnus, p. 373) as more valuable at over £67 per annum. Many were worth significantly less.

<sup>46</sup> Logan, *The Medieval Court of Arches*, pp. 197, 200, 204.



dean of the Arches between February 1481 and at least until March 1486.<sup>47</sup> However the entry in Bouchier's register that shows William as dean in 1479 was missed by Logan.<sup>48</sup>

**Table 3.1.** The list of institutions to the rectorship of St. Dunstan-in-the-East as shown in the archiepiscopal registers of Thomas Bouchier and John Morton.

Date	Details	Source	Notes
10 May 1456	Exchange between master Robert Kirkeham, rector of Lanteglos, Exeter diocese, and John Knyght, rector of St Dunstan-in-the-East, deanery of Arches. Inductor of Kirkeham, William Spaldyng.	<i>Reg. Bourgchier</i> , p. 232 (fo. 64).	Neither name appears in Logan's list of personnel. Kirkeham was a clerk of Chancery (see <i>Calendar of Close Rolls 1454-61</i> , p. 71).
11 October 1472	Institution of master John Morton, LL.D., in person of his proctor, master Thomas Kenegy, to rectory of St Dunstan-in-the-East, London, vacant by the death of John Botiller, in Archbishop's immediate jurisdiction and collation. Inductor, dean	<i>Reg. Bourgchier</i> , p. 310 (fo. 106v).	There is no entry in Bouchier's register for the institution of Boteler. He was certainly dean of the Arches between 1469 and 1471 (see Logan, p. 203 and TNA

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 203.

<sup>48</sup> Du Boulay, *Registrum Thome Bourgchier, Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi*, p. 339 (fo. 122v). The entry, dated 26 October 1479, talks of "viro magistro David William curie vestre de Arcubus London' decano".

	of the Arches.		C270/35/34).
13 August 1474	Exchange between master John Morton, LL.D., rector of St. Dunstan-in-the-East, London, in Archbishop's immediate jurisdiction, and William Attyngheam, rector of Southmolton [Devon], Exeter diocese, and master of hospital of St Bartholomew, Bristol, Worcester diocese. Inductor of Attyngheam, dean of the Arches. (On certificate of John, bishop of Exeter).	<i>Reg. Bourgchier</i> , pp. 319-20 (fo. 111).	There is no known source that places Attingham in the Court of Arches.
23 May 1482	Institution of master David William, Decr. D., to rectory of St Dunstan-in-the-East, London, vacant by death of master William Attyngheam, in Archbishop's immediate jurisdiction and collation. Inductor, master Thomas Cooke, LL.D.	<i>Reg. Bourgchier</i> , p. 353 (fo. 130).	Logan, p. 203 lists Cook as dean in 1495. However, he also shows David William himself as being dean between 1481 and 1486. This may be why Cook is acting as inductor although he is not the

			dean.
17 May 1492	Institution of Adrian Castellensis, protonotary of the Apostolic See, nuncio and collector of the pope in England, to church of St Dunstan in the East in the archbishop's immediate jurisdiction and collation, vacant by death of Mr David Willyams. Inductor dean of Arches.	<i>Reg. Morton</i> , i, item 525 (fo. 151v)	

Perhaps the most interesting entry is that of May 1482 when David William is instituted. We know that he was dean at that time, but the inductor is given as another individual, namely Thomas Cooke. This implies that somebody other than the dean may act as inductor. Cooke appears to have gone on to become dean of the Arches himself by 1495, or at least somebody called “Docteur Cook” held that post on that date.<sup>49</sup> However there is an entry in John Morton’s register dated 20 October 1493 where a Mr. Thomas Cook is shown as deceased. The entry reads as follows:

Inst. of Mr. Humphrey Hawardyne, D.C.L., to church of St. Mary Aldermary in the City of London, in the abp.'s immediate jurisdiction and collation, vacant by d. of Mr. Thomas Cook. I. Mr. Hugh Pentwyn and Mr. Thomas Rowthall. Lambeth, 20 Oct. 1493.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Year Book, Hil. 10 Henr. VII, pl 2. f. 12<sup>a</sup>-12<sup>b</sup> (Seipp no. 1495.002). For an image see [http://www.bu.edu/phpbin/lawyearbooks/page.php?volume=11&first\\_page=248&last\\_page=248&id=21578](http://www.bu.edu/phpbin/lawyearbooks/page.php?volume=11&first_page=248&last_page=248&id=21578) [accessed 25 April 2020].

<sup>50</sup> *Reg. Morton*, i, item 584 (fo. 156 in the manuscript). This item is given in English in Harper-Bill’s printed edition.

It is conceivable that there were two Thomas Cooks active at this time, or possibly that the “Docteur Cook” of 1495 had a different first name. One potential candidate is Dr. Laurence Cokkys. He was a doctor of canon law and held the post of official principal in the diocese of Salisbury. He died by 1501.<sup>51</sup>

The list of institutions for St Dunstan-in-the-East as given shows seven men as being rector during the period 1456 to 1492. For only two of these is there clear evidence that they were dean of the Arches (Boteler and William). None of them feature in Logan’s list of the officials of the court (although that is surely incomplete).

Figure 3.3 shows St Mary-le-Bow as being the third most valuable benefice within the deanery in 1535. Table 3.2 lists all the institutions to the rectorship of that church during the period covered by Bouchier’s register, namely 1454 to 1486. Curiously however there are just four entries for St Mary-le-Bow, and in John Morton’s register (1486 to 1500) there are none. It may be that the right to present had been granted to the official or dean of the Arches during this time.

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<sup>51</sup> *BRUO*, i, pp. 457-8.

**Table 3.2.** The list of institutions to the rectorship of St. Mary-le-Bow as shown in the archiepiscopal register of Thomas Bourchier.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Notes</b>
12 November 1454	Exchange between master William Wittham, LL.D., rector of St. Mary-le-Bow and master Edmund Both, archdeacon of Stowe, in cathedral church of Lincoln. Inductor of Edmund Both, master William Spaldyng, licentiate in laws. (On certificate of John, bishop of Lincoln).	<i>Reg. Bourchier</i> , pp. 221-2 (fo. 59v).	Wytham is listed as dean of the Arches on p. 203 of Logan. Logan takes this information from Churchill who refers to John Stafford's register (fo. 30v). <sup>52</sup> Bothe does not appear in Logan's list of personnel.
17 April 1456	Institution of Hamund Haydok, S.T.B. to rectory of St Mary-le-Bow, vacant by death of master Edmund Both. Inductor master William Spaldyng, examiner in the Court of Arches.	<i>Reg. Bourchier</i> , p. 230 (fo. 63).	Neither Haydok nor Both appear in Logan's list of personnel.
20	Institution of William	<i>Reg.</i>	Moreland's name

<sup>52</sup> David Blair Foss, 'The Canterbury Archiepiscopates of John Stafford (1443-52) and John Kemp (1452-54) with Editions of Their Registers' (unpublished doctoral thesis, King's College, London, 1986), vol. 2, pt.1, p. 119, [https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/en/theses/the-canterbury-archiepiscopates-of-john-stafford-144352-and-john-kemp-145254-with-editions-of-their-registers\(9500e653-65be-479a-a88a-772f6c9dc859\).html](https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/en/theses/the-canterbury-archiepiscopates-of-john-stafford-144352-and-john-kemp-145254-with-editions-of-their-registers(9500e653-65be-479a-a88a-772f6c9dc859).html) [accessed 2 May 2020].

November 1457	Moreland, chaplain, to rectory of St Mary-le-Bow vacant by resignation of Hamund Haydok. Inductor master William Spaldyng, examiner in Court of Canterbury	<i>Bourgchier</i> , pp. 238-9 (fo. 68).	does not feature in Logan's list of personnel.
28 February 1471	Institution of Thomas Fisser, chaplain, to rectory of St Mary-le-Bow vacant by resignation of William Moreland. Inductor dean of Arches.	<i>Reg. Bourgchier</i> , p. 305 (fo. 103v).	Fisser's name does not feature in Logan's list of personnel.

Given the changes to the personnel shown above, it is clear that these entries within the register are consecutive. However, it is then very puzzling that there are no further entries in the registers of Bouchier or Morton for this rectorship. In addition, neither register provides any further information about the fate of Thomas Fisser. It seems likely that he lived beyond 1500 (John Young, later dean of York, is recorded as being collated as rector in March 1505).<sup>53</sup> One other detail that is perhaps even more puzzling is the set of references to William Spalding. He is described as being examiner in the Court of Arches, and indeed there is the record of his appointment to that post in Bouchier's register on 13 November 1454.<sup>54</sup> However only two days later, Spalding was appointed to the higher post of dean of the Arches.<sup>55</sup> Why would the register then go on to describe Spalding as examiner rather than dean? There are no further references in the register describing Spalding as dean. Indeed the final entries from late 1457 still describe him as "examiner in the court of

<sup>53</sup> *BRUO*, iii, pp. 2136-7.

<sup>54</sup> Du Boulay, *Registrum Thome Bourgchier, Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi*, pp. 2-3.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

Canterbury".<sup>56</sup> Did Spalding relinquish his post as dean, or are the entries in the register just some idiosyncrasy of the scribe who wrote them?

The source material relating to Morton and his contemporaries who practised at the Court of Arches produces puzzles as well as giving insights. There are clearly significant gaps in the record. In addition, the sources that have been studied have, in some cases, been misread or misinterpreted by historians. A careful and critical review of all the information is required to arrive at a proper understanding of Morton's place. Such misunderstandings as have arisen are not confined to the bishops' registers. Another concerns Morton's advancement to the post of keeper of the rolls. In his *BRUO* entry for Morton, Emden states that this took place in 1464.<sup>57</sup> However that is surely not possible. Morton had fled England in 1461 following the battle of Towton and the act of attainder imposed upon him. He was in exile in France at the court of Margaret of Anjou with other Lancastrians such as Sir John Fortescue and Dr. Ralph Mackerel.<sup>58</sup> Furthermore the entry in the parliament rolls says the following:

To oure trusty and right welbeloved counseillours maister John Moreton, clerck of oure rolles in our chauncerie, and to maister John Gunthorp, clerck of oure parliament, and to aither of thaim. [editorial note: This address is written on the dorse of a membrane of parchment stitched to m. 14.]<sup>59</sup>

Gunthorp did not advance to the post of clerk of parliament until 21<sup>st</sup> June 1471.<sup>60</sup> It seems likely that the first piece of parchment relating to Morton and Gunthorp was stitched in a position that led to the date of the entry being misinterpreted by Emden. Morton himself was advanced to the post of master of the rolls in March 1472, so the entry in the rolls must be dated between June

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., p. 239.

<sup>57</sup> Emden bases his statement on the entry in the parliament rolls (see <http://0-www.british-history.ac.uk/lib/exeter.ac.uk/no-series/parliament-rolls-medieval/april-1463>, [accessed 25 April 2020]).

<sup>58</sup> See Christopher Harper-Bill's *ODNB* article on Morton at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/19363>.

<sup>59</sup> 'Edward IV: April 1463', in *PROME, British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/parliament-rolls-medieval/april-1463>, [accessed 25 April 2020].

<sup>60</sup> See Cecil H. Clough's *ODNB* article on Gunthorpe at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/11752>.

1471 and the latter date. In that period Morton had returned from exile after Edward IV's victory at the battle of Tewkesbury, his attainder was shortly to be reversed and he had been brought back into royal favour.<sup>61</sup> The later edition of the parliament rolls makes it clear that an entry from November 1472 containing this entry about Morton had been stitched into the roll for the 1463 parliament. Emden's misunderstanding is therefore quite understandable, but this provides another example of the need to look critically at any entry in *BRUO*.

This survey is a valuable reminder that care is needed in placing key individuals within the timeline of the fifteenth-century Church. Inaccuracies relating to even such a major figure as John Morton have crept into the record and need to be scrutinized carefully. It does of course seem very likely that Morton was active in the Arches, probably as an advocate, but almost certainly not as dean. However, in the latter case, the tangled nature of his life during the 1460s, and his very rapid rise during the second reign of Edward IV, mean his career was not the simple and steady path enjoyed by men who did become dean of the Arches. More generally, the list of institutions and collations does not provide strong evidence for a man such as Morton receiving special favour from his archbishop. Morton was into his fifties and already master of the rolls when he became rector of St Dunstan-in-the-East. His earlier preferments had come from elsewhere. The theme of episcopal support will be considered in more detail in Chapter 4 where the bestowal of benefices will be analysed. What the above information suggests is that, with the deanery of the Arches at least, the archbishop did not have a fixed and straightforward policy when awarding benefices. He may well have been subject to pressure from many sources when vacancies arose.

The very poor survival of records for the Court of Arches has left gaps in our knowledge of individual church careers. However, from the other information available about the Arches and its personnel, it was clearly working at a level

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<sup>61</sup> For the reversal of Morton's attainder see item 27 in 'Edward IV: October 1472, First Roll', in *PROME*.



well above that of other courts, such as the *curia Ebor* of the Northern Province. The Court of Canterbury provided a career springboard for the ecclesiastical aspirations of ambitious graduate clerks with legal training. It was a forum in which some of the most tangled and intractable issues within the Church might be fought over. There was no guarantee, however, that a judgement would be achieved quickly, or to the satisfaction of the appellants. In October 1281, the Official of the Court of Arches himself was advising the abbey of St Albans to avoid the 'prodigious expenses incurred in pursuing an appeal in what was almost a never ending dispute'.<sup>62</sup> Their grievance was with their archbishop, but the abbey prudently decided to sue for settlement. When Abbot Wainfleet of Bardney took a case against his deposition from office to the Arches in the early 1300s he won his suit. However that was simply the beginning of an epic legal battle: his opponent, Bishop Dalderby of Lincoln, then made his appeal to the pope. The case rumbled on for years 'so that the result, in this instance at least, was not satisfaction or closure but exhaustion. In short, this case is a terrible warning against the perils of going to law.'<sup>63</sup> For the advocates of the Arches such cases could be remunerative. However there were also perils for them – their clients would hope for rapid and favourable judgement, not an endless set of arguments with suits, counter-suits and further appeals leading to stalemate. But an advocate who provided clear and effective advice in the best interests of his client would be lauded, rewarded and noticed. The advocates, and the higher officials of the Court of Arches such as the official and dean, were therefore central to the operation of the court. Who these men were in the second half of the fifteenth century, and whether they represented a distinct community, is the subject to be tackled next.

By the second half of the fifteenth century, the learned doctors who acted as advocates in the Court of Arches were clearly a special and distinct group of

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<sup>62</sup> Thomas Walsingham, *Deeds of the Abbots of St Albans = Gesta Abbatum Monasterii Sancti Albani*, ed. by James G. Clark, trans. by David Preest (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2019), pp. 530-1.

<sup>63</sup> Alison McHardy, 'The Great Bardney Abbey Scandal, 1303-18', in *Fourteenth Century England 7*, ed. by W. M. Ormrod (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2012), pp. 31-46 (p. 44).

men.<sup>64</sup> Their subsequent formation into the Doctors Commons has been well-rehearsed, and in the early sixteenth century they have been identified as a body that exemplified the growth in humanist sentiment among the foremost thinkers and ecclesiastics of the day.<sup>65</sup> There has been much discussion about when the Doctors Commons came into existence as a formal organisation, and the commonly quoted date is 1511.<sup>66</sup> By the year 1515 all Chancery masters were civilians and members of the Doctors Commons.<sup>67</sup> By 1522 (when the list of its members inscribed on TNA E135/8/34 was made) the group was experiencing its 'golden hour' and individuals of the greatest note such as Thomas More and Polydore Vergil were enrolled.<sup>68</sup> However it appears that the group had an existence that pre-dates 1511. Squibb points to the year 1469 when Thomas Kent, sometimes clerk of the Council, bequeathed twenty-eight named law books to form a library for the use of the personnel of the Court of Arches.<sup>69</sup> By 1495 there is a record of the University of Cambridge that records the expenses of a visit for breakfast with the doctors of the Arches at Paternoster Row:

In iantaculo apud pater noster row cum doctoribus de arcubus xxij<sup>d70</sup>

This entry clearly suggests that the doctors had some sense of community, although that may not have extended to communal living. For example in 1490, Nicholas Colles is shown as living 'near St Paul's', but there is no suggestion that he was living in any kind of communal house.<sup>71</sup> Earlier in the century we

<sup>64</sup> See Appendix 5 for a list of all the known advocates in the Court of Arches and their details.

<sup>65</sup> For an introduction and further detail on the Doctors Commons see: George Drewry Squibb, *Doctors' Commons: A History of the College of Advocates and Doctors of Law* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977); F. Donald Logan, 'Doctors' Commons in the Early Sixteenth Century: A Society of Many Talents', *Historical Research*, 61.145 (1988), 151–65; Mark Beilby, 'The Profits of Expertise: The Rise of the Civil Lawyers and Chancery Equity', in *Profit, Piety and the Professions in Later Medieval England*, ed. by Michael Hicks (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1990), pp. 72–90.

<sup>66</sup> Squibb, *Doctors' Commons*, p. 5.

<sup>67</sup> Beilby, 'The Profits of Expertise', p. 82.

<sup>68</sup> Logan, 'Doctors' Commons', p. 156.

<sup>69</sup> Squibb, *Doctors' Commons*, p. 3.

<sup>70</sup> Mary Bateson and Cambridge Antiquarian Society, eds, *Grace Book B: Containing the Proctors' Accounts and Other Records of the University of Cambridge for the years 1488-1511 (1511-1544)*, vol. 1, Luard Memorial Series 2-3 (Cambridge: University Press, 1903), p. 86.

<sup>71</sup> *BRUO*, i, p. 465.

know that John Stafford was living in Elden Lane in 1418, while Richard Cordon had a house in Silver Street.<sup>72</sup>

These men would have had a practical need to obtain and share books relating to their professional task – Thomas Kent’s bequest would have been an excellent beginning. We know that advocates such as John Morton held books in their personal collections relating to both civil law and canon law, as well as on subjects ranging from history and rhetoric to the classics.<sup>73</sup> However it is not clear that large numbers of past advocates bequeathed their law books to the doctors of the Arches. William Warham for example later bequeathed his sizeable collection to New College, Oxford.<sup>74</sup> Morton, John Alcock and Warham were all doctors of civil law and, as Allmand points out, there is some evidence of how civil lawyers introduced humanistic values into England.<sup>75</sup> Also, just how much can be extracted in terms of their true cultural interests simply from the lists of books that such men had in their possession, or had access to, is difficult to decide. For example, does the fact that Morton had a copy of Seneca’s *Epistolae* mean that he had a close interest in or even subscribed to the Stoic philosophy of Lucius Annaeus Seneca? Morton’s copy of the *Epistolae* is a clean one with relatively few marginalia.<sup>76</sup> We do know that Morton included allusions to Roman authors and history in his opening sermons to the parliamentary sessions from 1487 onwards. In opening the parliament of November 1487 he made reference to Cicero, while in October 1491 he alluded to Gaius Sallust in his address.<sup>77</sup> In January 1497 Morton took the opportunity to draw lessons from Hannibal’s invasion of Italy and the battle of Cannae. In this way Morton can certainly be identified as a classicist, but whether he can be described as a true Renaissance humanist is less clear – compared to William

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<sup>72</sup> *BRUO*, iii, pp. 1750-52; *BRUO*, i, pp. 486-7.

<sup>73</sup> *BRUO*, ii, p. 1320 for John Morton lists civil law texts by Bartolus de Saxoferrato and Justinian, and various manuscripts relating to canon law, as well as a copy of Bracton’s *de Legibus Anglie*; Morton also had books on history and rhetoric plus a copy of Seneca’s *Epistolae*.

<sup>74</sup> See J. J. Scarisbrick’s biography at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/28741>.

<sup>75</sup> Allmand, ‘The Civil Lawyers’, p. 163.

<sup>76</sup> Bodleian Library, Oxford, ‘Laud Lat. MS 70 (Seneca *Epistolae*)’.

<sup>77</sup> ‘Henry VII: October 1491’, in *PROME, British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/parliament-rolls-medieval/october-1491> [accessed 22 June 2020].

Gray, his predecessor at the see of Ely, Morton's literary interests appear limited.<sup>78</sup> Nor was Morton the author of any known text on law, whether civil or canon – he produced nothing comparable to William Lyndwood's *Provinciale*.<sup>79</sup> However, in his household or retinue as archbishop, Morton retained several men of the greatest literary note, including the youthful Thomas More and the celebrated playwright, Henry Medwall.<sup>80</sup> In his later writings, Thomas More does not make comment with respect to Morton's cultural character that is in any way adverse, although he effectively makes no mention of that aspect of Morton's life. As regards Medwall, his relationship with Morton is tantalizing and therefore bears further scrutiny.<sup>81</sup>

Medwall, a Cambridge law graduate, appears to have had a close affinity with Morton. This closeness dates from Morton's infamous arrest by Richard Duke of Gloucester in June 1483, and extends beyond Morton's death in September 1500. The 1483 incident relates to the sudden withdrawal of Medwall from Kings College, Cambridge in June 1483. Although one record suggests he left on 2<sup>nd</sup> June that year, the college dining record suggests Medwall left on the very day (13<sup>th</sup> June) of Morton's arrest.<sup>82</sup> This coincidence of dates is striking, especially in view of Medwall's future relationship with Morton.<sup>83</sup> Medwall's proximity to the future archbishop continued some years later. Morton's enthronement as archbishop took place on 27 January 1487.<sup>84</sup> The very next day Morton appointed Medwall's older brother, John, as apparitor in the

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<sup>78</sup> In his biography of Gray, R. M. Haines states that Gray's main claim to fame lies in his association to humanism in England: <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/11567>.

<sup>79</sup> See R.H. Helmholz's biography of Lyndwood at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/17264>.

<sup>80</sup> Thomas More seems to have lived in Morton's household at Lambeth between approximately 1490 and 1492 (see S.B. House's biography at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/19191>).

<sup>81</sup> There is a brief discussion of Medwall and Morton in Christopher Harper-Bill, 'The Familias, Administration, and Patronage of Archbishop John Morton', *Journal of Religious History* 10.3 (1979), 236-52 (p. 246). The article contains a very useful description of other cultural figures in Morton's household and retinue.

<sup>82</sup> Sally-Beth MacLean and Alan H. Nelson, 'New Light on Henry Medwall', *Leeds Studies in English*, New series, 28 (1997), 77–98 (83).

<sup>83</sup> See Alan H. Nelson, 'Life Records of Henry Medwall, M.A., Notary Public and Playwright; and John Medwall, Legal Administrator and Summoner', *Leeds Studies in English*, New Series, 11 (1980), 111-55 (111). Nelson says 'Thus it is reasonable to suppose that by 1483 Medwall had already established himself as Morton's protégé'.

<sup>84</sup> Hook, *Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury*, v, p. 447.

deanery of Arches.<sup>85</sup> In 1489 Henry Medwall acted as a notarial witness to a diplomatic document involving Morton, and on 5 July 1490 Medwall carried out a notarial exemplification ‘in a high chamber at Lambeth’ on a monition to the abbot of St Albans concerning defects in his monastery.<sup>86</sup> Medwall had recently been ordained as an acolyte and, although he was from the diocese of Winchester, the ceremony took place at Canterbury Cathedral on 10<sup>th</sup> April 1490 (some ten days before Easter) with Morton himself presiding.<sup>87</sup> Medwall was subsequently ordained deacon in Ely diocese in September 1490 to the title of Bermondsey Abbey, but there is no record of his ordination to the priesthood.<sup>88</sup> In Morton’s register we can also see how Medwall was instituted in August 1492 to the benefice of Balinghem near Calais, the patronage of which belonged to the king.<sup>89</sup> It is somewhat curious that in the register entry for Medwall, there is no mention of his academic qualification (bachelor in civil law) which he had achieved at Cambridge the previous year.<sup>90</sup> For other civilian bachelors, Morton’s register does record their status (see for example items 458, 479, 490, 575 and 612 in volume 1). Turning to Medwall as playwright, he probably wrote his works *Fulgens & Lucre*s and *Nature* in the middle to late 1490s (the former is of course celebrated as being the earliest full-length secular play in English).<sup>91</sup> Whereas *Nature* appears to be a morality play inspired by a traditional devotional approach to drama, *Fulgens* is more interesting being a love story, albeit with a moral core.<sup>92</sup> Morton’s household was clearly a place where literary innovation was not stifled. The final mentions

<sup>85</sup> Harper-Bill, *The Register of John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1486-1500*, vol. i, p. 4 (item 21); Logan, *The Medieval Court of Arches*, p. 209 misses that entry from Morton’s register.

<sup>86</sup> Harper-Bill, *The Register of John Morton*, vol. i, p. 13 (item 50).

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 129 (item 438a).

<sup>88</sup> Nelson, ‘Life Records of Henry Medwall’, p. 145.

<sup>89</sup> Harper-Bill, *The Register of John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1486-1500*, vol. i, p. 148 (item 542).

<sup>90</sup> See A.H. Nelson’s brief biography of Medwall at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/18504>. Also *BRUC*, p. 399.

<sup>91</sup> John Watkins, ‘The Allegorical Theatre: Moralities, Interludes, and Protestant Drama’, in *The Cambridge History of Medieval English Literature*, ed. David Wallace, The New Cambridge History of English Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 783.

<sup>92</sup> For a more recent study of *Fulgens*, see Clare Wright, ‘Henry Medwall, Fulgens and Lucre’s’, *Oxford Handbooks Online*, July 2012, <http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199566471.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199566471-e-11#> [accessed 25 April 2020].

of Medwall come after the death of Morton. The prior of Canterbury, Thomas Goldstone, took Medwall to the Court of Chancery, arguing that he had detained the spiritual records of the defunct archbishop, items that should have been released to Goldstone.<sup>93</sup> Why Medwall should have clung on to those items is curious, and one can only speculate as to his motives.<sup>94</sup>

The connection of these two clerics, Medwall, the literary lawyer, and Morton, the grand prelate, is intriguing. Although he is not seen as a figure of the humanist movement, Morton was clearly prepared to support and nurture an innovative writer such as Medwall. In return, Medwall appears to have shown devotion to his patron and master, but he then sinks into shadow after Morton's death. There are interesting parallels here with the earlier career of Adam of Usk, revealing the uncertainty faced by men whose careers were so closely dependent on the patronage of a particular archbishop. Medwall's life however points forward to the literary and cultural developments of the early sixteenth century. It therefore seems fitting that the young Thomas More should also have been a brief but notable member of Morton's household. What also connects Morton, Medwall and More is, of course, their study and practice of the law.<sup>95</sup> Attention must now turn to the activities of other courts in relation the careers of legal clerics who aspired to high ecclesiastical office.

A lack of specific records is frustrating when it comes to Morton's career during the 1450s and the Court of Arches. By contrast there are other areas of the Church and in particular the practice of the law where the problem seems quite the opposite. As R.L. Storey pointed out, there is an 'abundance of material' relating to life of the courts in the fifteenth century, and especially for cases that

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<sup>93</sup> See TNA case C1/238/2 where the items are described as being in 'the hands and possession of on Henry Medewall' who repeatedly refused to hand them over. A full transcription of the case was published in Arthur W. Reed, *Early Tudor drama: Medwall, the Rastells, Heywood, and the More Circle* (London, 1926), pp. 239-40.

<sup>94</sup> For a discussion of this incident, see Alan H. Nelson, ed., *The Plays of Henry Medwall, Tudor Interludes*, 2 (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1980), p. 13.

<sup>95</sup> Morton and Medwall were university-trained civil lawyers, whereas Thomas More studied at New Inn and Lincoln's Inn and practised common law.

relate to ecclesiastical issues.<sup>96</sup> Such records will now be examined in relation to several other courts that are relevant to the careers of ambitious clerks. The first to be tackled will be the *curia Ebor*. The purpose of the review is to determine whether such records are simply the prosaic, day-to-day summary of routine business, or whether they provide clear insights into the aspirations and careers of the men who sought episcopal status.

The *curia Ebor* was from the 1300s onwards the central court of the province of York. However in the fifteenth century the consistory court and the chancery court were then established.<sup>97</sup> Potentially a court such as the *curia Ebor* might seem to have offered a career path for legal clerks that was akin the Court of Arches. In contrast to its southern cousin, the records of the *curia Ebor* and of the other ecclesiastical courts of the Northern Province have survived, and these are available on-line courtesy of the Humanities Research Institute.<sup>98</sup> The search facility allows much useful information to be gleaned for the fifteenth century, although the records for that period appear to be almost exclusively for cases heard in the *curia Ebor* itself (there is only one record for the consistory court and none for the chancery). The information contained in each summary record is helpful for the study of the personnel who were active in the court. Many of the records show who the defence and prosecution proctors were. However, the picture that emerges is that of a court that has lesser prestige - it certainly does not appear to provide the career path that the Court of Arches gave to its practitioners.

The number of cases heard per decade in the *curia Ebor* as recorded in the online database are shown in Figure 3.4. The numbers must be treated with caution as the dates provided within each record are not precise – some

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<sup>96</sup> R. L. Storey, 'Ecclesiastical Causes in Chancery', in *The Study of Medieval Records: Essays in Honour of Kathleen Major*, ed. Donald Bullough and R. L. Storey (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), pp. 236-59 (p. 236).

<sup>97</sup> 'What are cause papers?', <http://www.york.ac.uk/borthwick/holdings/guides/research-guides/what-are-causepapers/>, [accessed 24 April 2020].

<sup>98</sup> The URL for the York cause papers is <https://www.dhi.ac.uk/causepapers/>, [accessed 24 April 2020].

encompass a range that can be quite wide. For example, case CP.F.213 is dated 1406-1411 in the database. Hence in the list of cases per decade it appears in both the periods 1400-1409 and 1410-1419. Thus the chart in Figure 3.4 should be viewed as giving an overall trend rather than an exact enumeration of cases at each point. What emerges is a generally downward trend through the fifteenth century, but with an increase in the final decade that continues and grows into the early sixteenth century. As can be seen from Figures 3.5 and 3.6, the great majority of cases were brought by lay individuals and concerned matrimonial disputes. Part of the overall downward trend in the second half fifteenth century may be explained by a general decline in multi-party matrimonial cases observed across other ecclesiastical courts across England.<sup>99</sup> 'Identifying the reason for this decline in numbers cannot be other than an exercise in reasonable speculation.'<sup>100</sup> Some historians detect a growing acceptance among the laity of the Church's rules about marriage; others suspect that cases were going to other courts.<sup>101</sup>

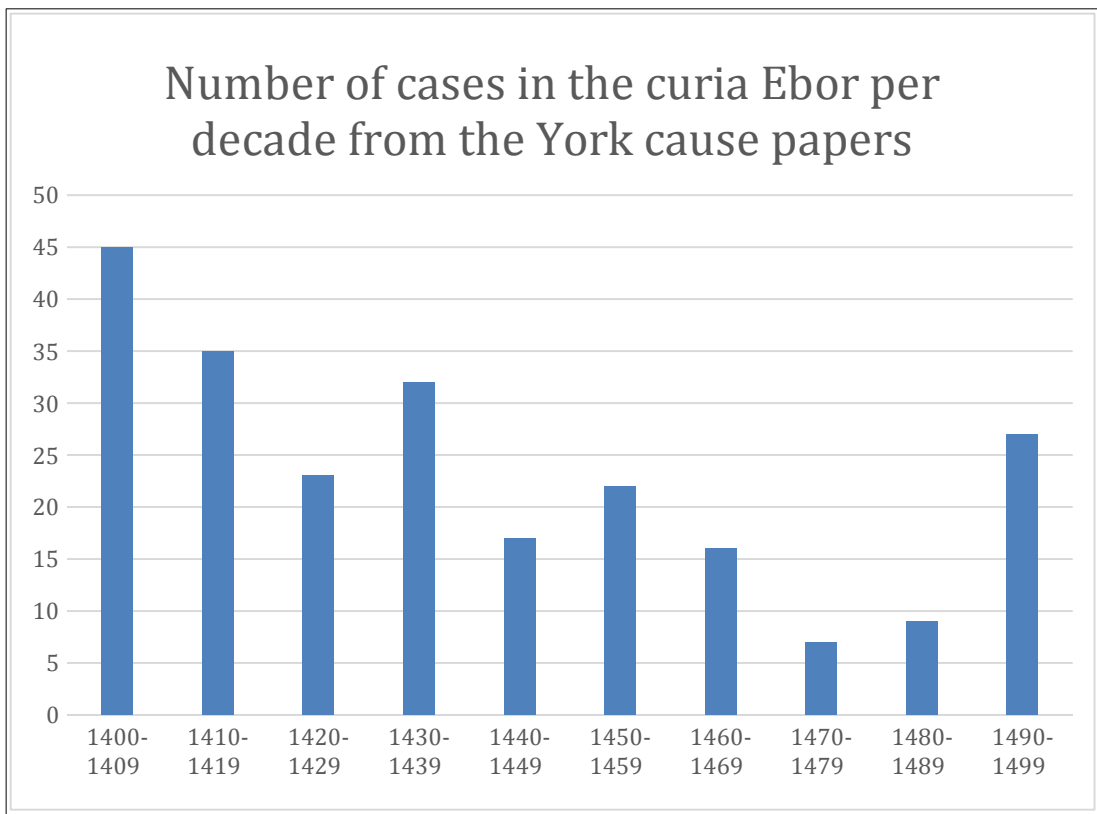
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<sup>99</sup> R. H. Helmholz, *Marriage Litigation in Medieval England*, Cambridge Studies in English Legal History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), p. 58.

<sup>100</sup> R. H. Helmholz, *The Oxford History of the Laws of England. Volume I, The Canon Law and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction from 597 to the 1640s* (Oxford: University Press, 2004), p. 584.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, n. 198.





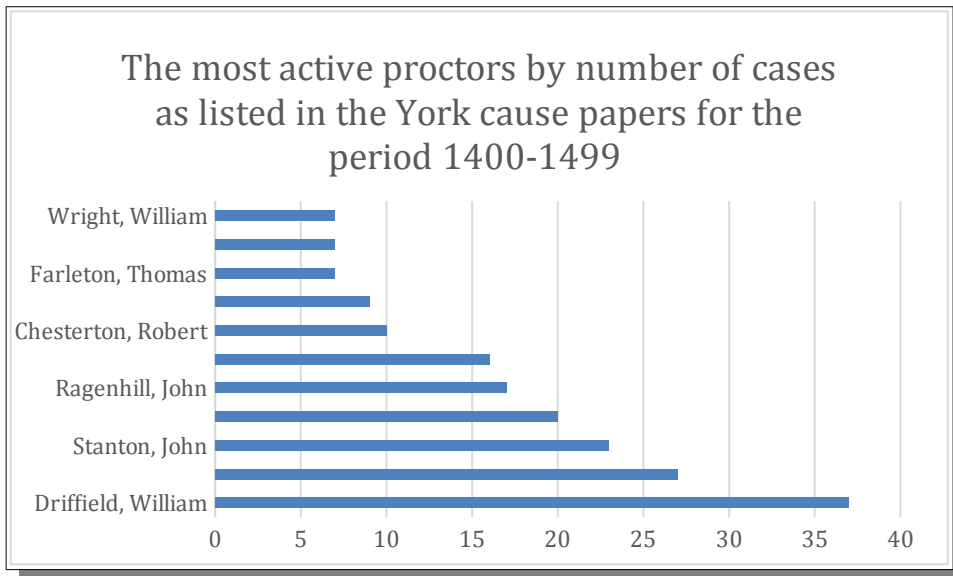
**Figure 3.4.** Cases per decade

Of the 213 cases listed for the period 1400-1499, 114 have the names of the acting proctors included in their summary records. Figure 3.5 shows the names of those who appear most frequently, and William Driffield heads the list. The very brief biographical entry for him suggests he was probably an Oxford graduate, and it also mentions his employment in the Court of York as recorded in the Durham College Accounts.<sup>102</sup> His graduate status is unusual – of the twenty-eight proctors named, only one other has a biographical entry concerning his university career.<sup>103</sup> Driffield was active over a lengthy period: his first recorded entry was in 1402, and the final record was dated 1449. The

<sup>102</sup> *BRUC*, i, p. 594.

<sup>103</sup> His name is John Selby and he is listed only once in the cause papers (case ref. CP.F.72 which dates from 1416). Selby is shown as being a bachelor of civil law at Cambridge and died in 1427 (see *BRUC*, p. 517). He also appears in the records of the Northern Convocation where he is described, together with a Thomas Uldale, as *procuratores magistros Johannem Selby, et Thomam Uldale curiae Ebor. advocatos* (see G.W. Kitchen (ed.), *The Records of the Northern Convocation*, Surtees Society Publications 113 (Durham: Surtees Society, 1907) p. 153.)

careers of Driffield and of other proctors who worked consistently in the court bear similarities to those of the proctors in such places as the bishop's consistory at Ely. Some of the Ely men made over one hundred appearances in the period of just a decade and were clearly 'professional proctors'.<sup>104</sup>



**Figure 3.5.** The most active proctors.

The details of the five proctors known to be most active in the fifteenth century in the *curia Ebor* are given in Table 3.3. below. The complete list of all the known proctors is provided in Appendix 4.

<sup>104</sup> James A. Brundage, 'The Cambridge Faculty of Canon Law and the Ecclesiastical Courts of Ely', in *Medieval Cambridge: Essays on the Pre-Reformation University*, ed. Patrick Zutshi, History of the University of Cambridge, 2 (Woodbridge: Boydell, [in association] with Cambridge University Library, 1993), pp. 35 & 40.

**Table 3.3.** The five proctors known to be most active in the fifteenth century in the *curia Ebor*.

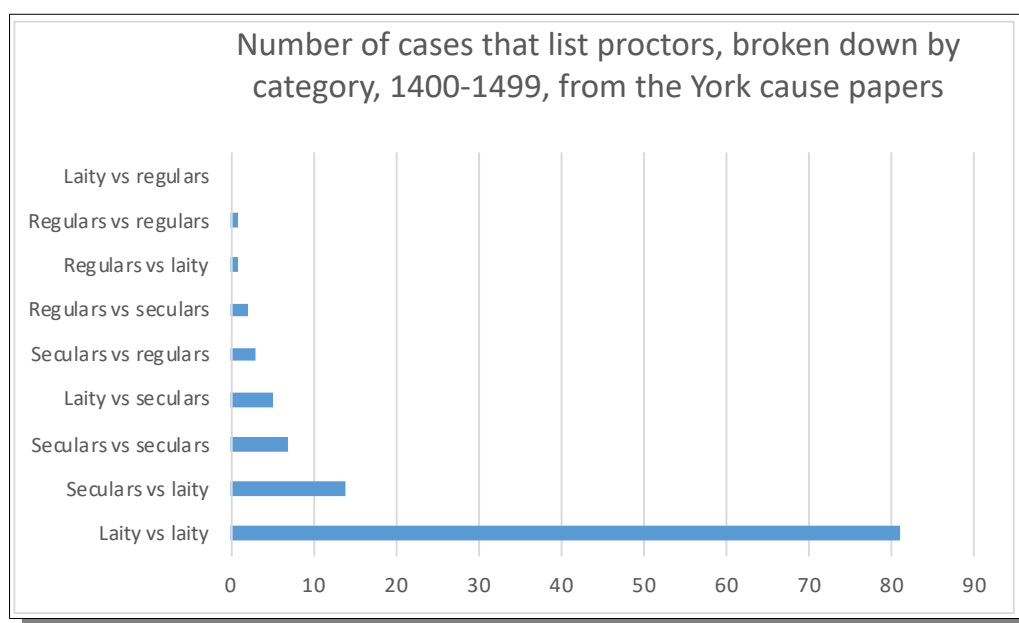
Surname, first name	First year shown	Last year shown	Emden entry	Other notes (number of cases as proctor, career details, other items)
Bispham, William	1421	1461		27, clerk. A witness in CP.F.89 (abduction of nun).
Driffield, William	1402	1449	<i>BRUO</i> , i, 594	37, clerk. Very brief <i>BRUO</i> entry suggests he was probably an Oxford graduate. It mentions his employment as a proctor in the Court of York in 1423 (see Durham College Accounts).
Easingwold, Robert	1401	1427		16, clerk, proctor general of Court of York (CP.F.162). See also CP.F.201 re possible marriage.
Ragenhill, John	1400	1419		17, clerk.
Stanton, John	1401	1419		23, clerk.

These tables provides an interesting insight into the varied careers of these clerks. Several men are listed as being notaries public, and some, such as John Leppington, held other posts (Leppington was also a clerk in the exchequer of the archbishop). Given the relatively light workload that the rate of casework appears to represent, this does not seem surprising. What also seems clear is that the role of proctor in this court was of lower status than that of an advocate, especially when compared to advocates in the Court of Arches. The summary records of the court provide little insight into the activities of the advocates at York. It may be that they appeared very briefly during the progress of a case and are not listed as personnel directly involved; a proctor by contrast was effectively acting on behalf of a client or defendant.<sup>105</sup> There are just a few chance entries where advocates appear either as witness or defendant and

<sup>105</sup> See James A. Brundage, 'The Medieval Advocate's Profession', *Law and History Review* 6.2 (1988), 439-64 (pp. 443-444) where he describes the proctor as being as an 'all-purpose agent' in contrast to the more highly esteemed and more highly paid advocate.

those men are listed at the end of Appendix 3.1. One of these is John Metcalf, a Cambridge civil lawyer, who appeared as witness in case ref. CP.F.283 (dated 1493-95).<sup>106</sup> That case concerned the issue of tithes where the plaintiff was the rector of Slaidburn in the West Riding of Yorkshire, and the defendant was the abbot and convent of Whalley, a Cistercian house near Blackburn in Lancashire. The other witnesses in the case were also connected with the court, namely Richard Layton who was a proctor of the court, and John Home, the sub-apparitor. In this case the defence proctor, William Wright, may not have been worth his fee as the plaintiff won his action.

The case of the rector of Slaidburn was unusual for the *curia Ebor* in that it pitted a secular clergyman against a regular one. As figure 3.6 illustrates, the largest category of cases by far was that of lay plaintiffs against other lay defendants.

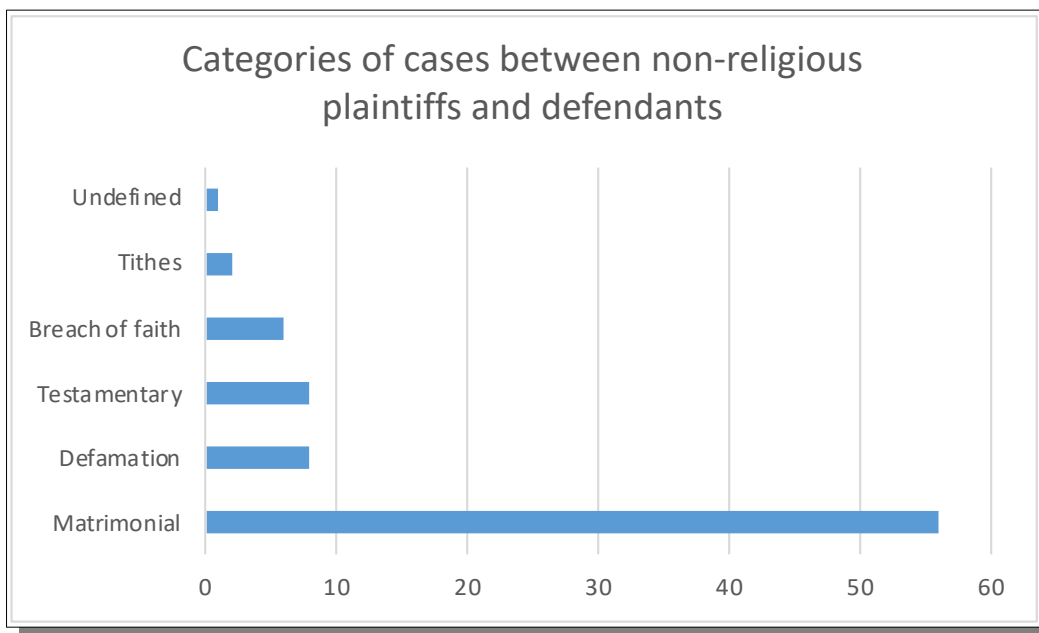


**Figure 3.6.** The categories of cases brought in the *curia Ebor*

Figure 3.7 illustrates what kind of cases were being brought by these lay

<sup>106</sup> There is a very brief entry for Metcalf in *BRUC*, p. 403.

litigants. More than two-thirds were for matrimonial disputes. Of these matrimonial cases, half were brought directly to the court and half were heard on appeal. Indeed matrimonial appeals also represented half of all the appeals cases heard in the court during this period.<sup>107</sup>



**Figure 3.7.** The details of cases for non-religious litigants

Of the over 200 cases of all types heard during the fifteenth century, approximately one third were heard on appeal. That proportion rises to just over a half for cases where proctors are listed among those present.

In summary therefore, the York cause papers indicate that the *curia Ebor* in this period did not represent a notable staging post for church lawyers to progress into the highest reaches of the Church or state. Very few of the legal clerks listed had degrees, and a number were clearly long-term practitioners of the court who do not feature in other forums. One proviso is that advocates appear only very fleetingly in the records. This suggests that their role was to provide

<sup>107</sup> See Charles Donahue Jr, 'Roman Canon Law in the Medieval English Church', *Michigan Law Review* 72.4 (1974), 647-716 (659, Table 1) where a predominance of matrimonial cases is also seen in the fourteenth century.

an occasional intervention, although it may have been an important appearance that set the whole tenor of a case to be pursued day-to-day by the proctors. The work that the York court did was not unimportant – it handled cases that mattered greatly to the lay litigants who sought its judgement. However, from the perspective of a legal career, its work was routine; no aspiring clerk would see it as the clear route to high office.

Towards the end of the century, several other courts seem to have had a growing importance in the formation of prelates. The Court of Requests was an important proving-ground where the volume of work was increasing rapidly.<sup>108</sup> The records of that court do, from time to time, list the judges presiding.<sup>109</sup> The names were collated by Leadam and they include the bishops of London, Bangor, Durham and Rochester.<sup>110</sup> Of these both Richard Hill (at London) and Thomas Savage (at Rochester and then London) had undertaken legal training, and both had been dean of the Chapel Royal.<sup>111</sup> Other legal doctors are listed, including the names Richard Nykke, the future bishop of Norwich, and Christopher Bainbridge, the future archbishop of York.<sup>112</sup> Clearly the physical proximity to the king and his council that these men enjoyed did them no harm when the time came to fill vacant episcopal sees. Although the Court of Requests was in theory a ‘Court of Poor Men’s Causes’, there are numerous examples of religious houses bringing cases to it. These include the abbots of Fountains, Bermondsey and Warden.<sup>113</sup> It seems that these churchmen were possibly seeking equity from a small group of their fellow churchmen who might make considered judgements in a less formal manner, rather than pursuing the potentially less responsive avenue of the established church courts.

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<sup>108</sup> For a discussion of the court and its origins see *Select Cases in the Court of Requests A.D. 1497-1569*, ed. by Isaac Saunders Leadam, The Publications of the Selden Society, 12 (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1898); A.F. Pollard, ‘The Growth of the Court of Requests’, *The English Historical Review*, 56.222 (1941), 300–303; Hannes Kleineke, ‘Richard III and the Origin of the Court of Requests’, *The Ricardian*, 17 (2007), 22–32.

<sup>109</sup> See TNA documents REQ/1/1, fos. 49r, 50r, 62v and 94v, and REQ1/2, fo. 11v for examples.

<sup>110</sup> Leadam, *Select Cases in the Court of Requests*, pp. cii–ciii.

<sup>111</sup> See Rosemary Hayes’ biography of Hill at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/47267>.

<sup>112</sup> For Nykke see TNA REQ1/1 fos. 49r and 50r. For Bainbridge see TNA REQ 1/2 fo. 11v where Thomas Jane, the future bishop of Norwich, is also listed.

<sup>113</sup> See respectively TNA REQ/1/1 fo. 25r and fo. 43v; TNA REQ/1/2 fo. 2v.

The Court of Star Chamber was another forum in which a prelate could establish himself as a trusted dispenser of good judgement. It was also one to which fifteenth-century churchmen had recourse to achieve justice. Increasingly it seems that they chose to avoid or perhaps even leap-frog the church courts, seeking to achieve justice by turning to prelates themselves as judges. There would inevitably have been a place for advocates to ply their trade. Church lawyers must surely have been a part of that, even though the records provide little if any direct evidence of their work. Once again, the ambitious legal clerk could have used the proceedings of the court to bring himself to the attention of the high prelates who presided there.

Star Chamber is an entity that has aroused controversy and misunderstanding, even before it was abolished in 1641.<sup>114</sup> There does now seem general agreement that the act of 1487 known as *Pro Camera Stellata* did not represent the creation of the Court – the King’s Council meeting judicially in the eponymous chamber had a much longer history. However, the 1487 act formalised the role of Star Chamber, and it was a court that was characterised by the volume and gravity of its caseload. Its membership, drawn from the Privy Council, invariably included churchmen sitting in judgement. These churchmen had already achieved prelacy, and were now exercising the judicial skills they had developed in their earlier careers. Many cases brought to Star Chamber were instigated by churchmen. The range in respect of the hierarchy of these litigants was broad, extending from humble vicars up to much grander priors and abbots. One particularly noteworthy litigant later in the reign of Henry VII was Thomas Dowra who was by then the Grand Prior of the Knights Hospitaller

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<sup>114</sup> See among others: Isaac Saunders Leadam, ed., *Select Cases before the King’s Council in the Star Chamber: Commonly Called the Court of Star Chamber. A.D. 1477-1509*, The Publications of the Selden Society 16 (London: Quaritch, 1903), pp. lxx–lxx1; J. H. Baker, *An Introduction to English Legal History*, 5th edn (Oxford: University Press, 2019), pp. 127–128; Marvin M. Lomax, ‘The Court of Star Chamber - a Tudor Creation?’, *Proceedings of the Oklahoma Academy of Science*, 1965, <https://ojs.library.okstate.edu/osu/index.php/OAS/article/download/4376/4048> [accessed 19 May 2020]; A. J. Pollard, *Late Medieval England 1399-1509*, The Longman History of Medieval England (Harlow: Longman, 2000), p. 366; A.F. Pollard, ‘Council, Star Chamber, and Privy Council under the Tudors: II. The Star Chamber’, *English Historical Review* 37.148 (1922), 516–39.

in England.<sup>115</sup> His case concerned supposed damage to the commandery of Temple Balsall, a property he was attempting to retrieve from the hands of the Throckmorton family.<sup>116</sup> Among the more humble plaintiffs were the vicar of Wymark, William Wymark, who brought a case concerning threats, and Thomas Walterkyn, a hermit, who brought a case for forcible entry and damage.<sup>117</sup> Among the priors and abbots was a case brought by the abbot of St Augustine's, Canterbury against the prior of Bath concerning theft and corrupt behaviour.<sup>118</sup> Meanwhile the prior of Bath was himself in litigation with the vicar of Dunster concerning the withholding of fees.<sup>119</sup> Some of the cases brought make reference to the Court of Arches, for example the case containing a note from Richard Quartermayns to his 'cosyn' Thomas Stonor, dating from around 1471.<sup>120</sup> There seems little reason to doubt that some if not all of these cases could have been considered within the church courts. This impression is greatly reinforced by looking at the Court of Chancery and the ecclesiastical business that was heard by it.

As a forum for advancing their careers, as well as one for bringing their causes and defending their status within the Church, the Court of Chancery was of increasing prominence as the fifteenth century progressed. Although study of the records of the court was already active before the First World War, it was only taken up again in fruitful fashion in the late 1960s.<sup>121</sup> The work of R. L. Storey helped to uncover the rich nature of this source material, and what it can tell of the process of law and litigation among clerics during the fifteenth century. The Court of Chancery seems to have begun to exercise its equitable jurisdiction during the late fourteenth century, and, during the fifteenth century,

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<sup>115</sup> For a description of Docwra's life see Andrew A. Chibi's *ODNB* entry at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/7726>.

<sup>116</sup> See TNA STAC 1/2/109.

<sup>117</sup> See respectively TNA STAC 1/2/105 and TNA STAC 1/2/51.

<sup>118</sup> TNA STAC 2/34/396. A full transcription of this lengthy suit is given in Leadam, *Select Cases before the King's Council in the Star Chamber*, pp. 20–36.

<sup>119</sup> TNA STAC 1/2/122. The plea, dated only as 'temp Hen VII', is addressed 'To my lorde prevy seale': that would be either Bishop Peter Courtenay or Bishop Richard Fox.

<sup>120</sup> TNA SC1/46/67.

<sup>121</sup> Storey, 'Ecclesiastical Causes in Chancery', pp. 238–39.



many clerks (and increasing numbers of laymen) brought cases to it.<sup>122</sup> As with other courts, that of Chancery was staffed by clerics, but it seems that some litigants saw it as a way of circumventing the restrictions of the church hierarchy. Storey points to the case of three clerics contesting the possession of a church in the diocese of Lincoln who, rather than appealing to their bishop, 'chose Chancery instead, one suspects, for the very good reason that they knew that the bishop would show them no sympathy'.<sup>123</sup> Disputes over benefices make up a significant proportion of these Chancery proceedings, and in this they are similar to what we can see of appeals to the Court of Arches from the fourteenth century register of Bishop Roger Martival of Salisbury.<sup>124</sup> Of the sixty cases appealed from Salisbury to the Arches during Martival's fifteen years as bishop (1315-1330), forty-seven concerned benefices. Churchmen were clearly well-motivated by the issues and concerns of their livings and incomes, and church lawyers must have been well-practised on such matters.

John Morton was one such litigant in Chancery. He brought a case against the abbot of Langley (Norfolk), Nicholas Weveton or Wamerton, complaining that the defendant has been withholding certain dues from the churches of Bodenham, Lympenhowe and Thirkeby due to him as archdeacon of Norwich.<sup>125</sup> The date given in the summary description for this case (c. 1467-70) is somewhat problematic. Morton had briefly been archdeacon of Norwich during the early 1460s, but he had resigned before July 1462 when his fortunes went into headlong decline after the accession of Edward IV.<sup>126</sup> It was only after

<sup>122</sup> For a useful survey of the historiography and history of the court, see P. Tucker, 'The early history of the Court of Chancery: a comparative study'. *The English Historical Review* 115.463 (2000), 791-811 and Timothy S. Haskett, 'The Medieval English Court of Chancery', *Law and History Review*, 14.2 (1996), 245-313.

<sup>123</sup> Storey, 'Ecclesiastical Causes in Chancery', p. 241.

<sup>124</sup> F. Donald Logan, 'The Court of Arches and the Bishop of Salisbury', in *The Foundations of Medieval English Ecclesiastical History. Studies Presented to David Smith.*, ed. by Philippa Hoskin, Christopher Brooke, and Barrie Dobson, *Studies in the History of Medieval Religion*, 27 (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005), pp. 159-72.

<sup>125</sup> The case is TNA C1/1/125. The list of abbots of Langley may be found at <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/norf/vol2/pp418-421> [accessed 30 April 2020] and also in David M. Smith, ed. *The Heads of Religious Houses: England and Wales, III. 1377-1540* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 577-578.

<sup>126</sup> See 'Archdeacons: Norwich', in *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1300-1541: Volume 4, Monastic Cathedrals (Southern Province)*, ed. B Jones (London, 1963), pp. 26-28. *British History Online*

Morton's rehabilitation following the battle of Tewkesbury in July 1471 and his submission to Edward's rule that Morton regained the archdeaconry (the first known reference dates from 15 June 1472).<sup>127</sup> As discussed previously, Morton was appointed keeper or master of the rolls early in Edward's second reign. In the deposition to the court, Morton describes himself as follows:

yo(ur) s(er)v(a)nt and Orato(r) John Morton' Clerk keper of the rolles of the  
Chaunc(er)ie of our sov(er)aign lord the king and archdeacon of Norwich |

Thus the case must surely date from a time after Morton's appointment as master of the rolls in March 1472.<sup>128</sup>

Morton's desire to safeguard the jurisdiction and rights of his office seem characteristic both of his personal style but also of the attitude of many prelates of his generation. Later, when Morton was archbishop of Canterbury, the proctor of the English Cistercians, John Harrington, felt moved to write that 'I see in him nothing but the qualities of a good judge, that is, he wishes to extend his jurisdiction.' However, Harrington also issued the following warning: 'Take care that as he seeks to expand his jurisdiction, so you are diligent to preserve yours'.<sup>129</sup> Clearly there was a perception that rights that were neglected or not exercised could be imperilled by those seeking to take advantage of a lack of vigilance. The maintenance of rank and precedence was jealously guarded, and the rights and privileges that appertained thereto were watched over with a distinct wariness. Just as the two primates of England had previously clashed over their respective dignities within the realm, so too would the abrasive Thomas Polton, bishop of Hereford, quarrel with the representative of the king of Castile in 1422. It seems that a dispute over precedence at Florence actually

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<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/fasti-ecclesiae/1300-1541/vol4/pp26-28> [accessed 30 April 2020] which quotes Reg. Lyhart f. 285.

<sup>127</sup> <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-close-rolls/edw4/vol2/pp234-245> [accessed 30 April 2020].

<sup>128</sup> *CPR 1467-1477*, p. 334.

<sup>129</sup> *Letters from the English Abbots to the Chapter at Cîteaux, 1442-1521*, ed. Charles H. Talbot, Camden Society, 4th ser., 4 (London: Royal Historical Society, 1967), p. 21.

led to blows.<sup>130</sup> When William Courtenay as archbishop of Canterbury had undertaken a visitation of the diocese of Exeter, he was met with firm opposition from Bishop Brantingham who wished resolutely to safeguard his jurisdiction over matters within his own diocese.<sup>131</sup> Such disputes might lead to litigation, whether in local courts, or by appeal to the papal court.

There are numerous enrolled examples of clerics, whether secular or regular, taking up cases against those who would impinge on their temporal rights and possessions. For a newly installed clerk in a position of authority, such moves might almost have represented a rite of passage, proof that they were worthy of their rank and assertive of their new position. As well as satisfying the expectations of their peers, the recourse to litigation would also provide the rising cleric with experience of the inner workings of a legal system in which they might hope to play a leading role in due course. Secular clergy at all levels brought their cases to the Court of Chancery. John Claypole, parson of Wotton beside Northampton, sought to enforce an order of the Court of Arches against Sir Henry Bylcok, priest.<sup>132</sup> The latter had kept Claypole out of his church of Wotton. Master Lewis Coychurch, archdeacon of Lewes, brought a case against William Prestwyk, dean of the royal chapel of Hastings, over jurisdiction of that chapel. Bishops and archbishop also brought their cases. Several entries are listed for William Waynflete, bishop of Winchester, two of which involved the estate of Sir John Fastolf.<sup>133</sup> For one of those cases the other party in the suit was William Paston, embroiled in that celebrated tussle over Fastolf's inheritance which has been so widely discussed.<sup>134</sup> Archbishops Chichele and Bouchier also made their pleas.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> See Margaret Harvey's *ODNB* article on Polton at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/22482>.

<sup>131</sup> Joseph Henry Dahmus, *William Courtenay, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1381-1396* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1966), pp. 112-32.

<sup>132</sup> *List of Early Chancery Proceedings Preserved in the Public Record Office. Vol.1., Lists and Indexes*, 12 (London: HMSO, 1901), p. 124.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 208, 371.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 208.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 15, 317.

What a close study of some of the many cases raised by churchmen in this period shows is that the great bulk of the litigation concerned issues of income, authority and process within the Church. For a leader such as an abbot, victory in a struggle that secured or even expanded the authority of his abbey would redound to his fame in the annals of his house. Reputation aside, there is little if any sign of these men and women using the court for broader reasons, especially with respect to the relationship between Church and state. Cases were brought between clerics and laymen concerning various issues, but again these related in large part of the same categories such as tithes, rights over property etc. The fear felt by churchmen of encroachment on their rights and property by others is ever present, but it appears to work at the fringes of temporal rights; there is no indication of them seeing the Court of Chancery as a forum to re-examine the fundamental relationship between Church and state. It may therefore seem that orthodoxy and conservatism were the dominant characteristics of legal practice in the fifteenth-century Church. Yet, the evolving landscape where newer courts were being exploited shows an innovative approach. The aspiring church lawyer had space in which to explore new techniques and to make his name. The non-ecclesiastical courts provided the opportunity to enforce but also to circumvent the judgements of the church courts. A sharp-witted clerical advocate might exploit that flexibility to serve the needs of his patron. Nevertheless, an over-enthusiasm in testing boundaries was not advisable. Neither the king nor the pope would favour a man who strayed far from a status quo that had served both sides to their satisfaction.

## **Conclusion**

The higher church courts, and also non-ecclesiastical courts such as those of Chancery, Requests and Star Chamber, were sought-after centres for the careers of church lawyers. It was here they could practise their crafts of rhetorical expression and of successful advocacy, to demonstrate their knowledge of the law and to establish a growing network of contacts. In the

early stages of their careers their work in the courts would also assist them in their search for secure and remunerative employment. For the ambitious clerk they represented much more - they were a setting within which to seek patronage and advancement. Here they were able to build and strengthen a network of key contacts, and to enhance their reputation as skilful and effective advocates. These courts were also the places where clerics could bring their issues and grievances for redress. Many of these cases had temporal rights and possessions as their focus. At least one motive for such cases could have been the expectation that any man who aspired to prelacy was ready to assert the privileges of his position, not just to push away those who would impinge on his authority, but also to display to his peers that he was a worthy occupant of his position.<sup>136</sup> The complex and overlapping jurisdictions within the Church, as well as the demands of clergy for equity in the face of perceived injustice, meant that these courts were rarely idle.

But much of that work can only be described as routine. In courts like the *curia Ebor* such was the role of the proctors. Their work provided them with steady and gainful employment, but, as we saw with the career of William Driffield, it was not the path to prelacy. It was the advocates, in particular the doctors of law, who provided that pool from which many of the bishops of the later fifteenth century were selected by the king. Their lengthy education and their initial practice of the law at the universities was a solid basis for their progress, but it was by no means enough. They had to prove themselves in the other courts we have discussed, and they also had to seek patrons. The law provided them with rich opportunities to do so, not just in financial terms, but also by working for clients who would assess their skills and recommend them for preferment. The ideal candidate for prelacy would be a man with proven abilities who could also take on the responsibilities of administration and diplomacy. He would need to be orthodox in his beliefs, but above all he would need to be acceptable to the king. Fellow churchmen were an indispensable means for the further

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<sup>136</sup> We saw earlier how John Morton fought to secure his dues as archdeacon of Norwich.

progression required to come to the king's notice. They could provide an ambitious advocate with benefices that not only provided welcome income, but also enhanced his standing within the Church. An aspiring church lawyer would be esteemed for skilful and diligent advocacy in bringing the cases he worked on to a successful and timely conclusion. He could express his professionalism through an ability to argue both sides of a cause with equal vigour. His methods might be innovative and ingenious, but his reputation would suffer if he were not perceived as performing within the expected rules of conduct. In the turbulent circumstances of the fifteenth century, successive English kings looked to the Church for support and stability. They sought men with the flexibility to accommodate themselves to a change of regime, but who also presented the familiar face of orthodoxy and continuity. For those aspiring churchmen who met the needs of their king and their other clients, the rewards could be considerable.<sup>137</sup> Reputation for such a churchman was achieved not just by his advocacy, but also by a solid list of benefices and other preferments. The next chapter will therefore consider how patronage unfolded for those men who successfully achieved episcopal rank.

A final word. The courts and the lawyers did not function in isolation. The English Church was part of a powerful secular state, as well as being a member of the broader Roman Church. Just how much power and control the English king had over his Church has been the subject of debate. Catto's judgement is that 'In all but name, more than a century before the title could be used, Henry V had begun to act as the supreme governor of the Church of England'.<sup>138</sup> If that viewpoint is accepted, then there might be little churchmen could effectively do to challenge such overweening royal authority. Indeed, there seems little if any

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<sup>137</sup> Striking examples of successful lawyer-clerics included Henry Bowet, Simon Sydenham, Robert Stillington and John Veysey.

<sup>138</sup> J. I. Catto, 'Religious Change under Henry V', in *Henry V: The Practice of Kingship*, ed. Gerald Leslie Harriss (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 115. Although the papacy achieved a renewed authority after the Council of Constance, attempts by the pontiff to see repeal of the English statutes of Provisors and Praemunire failed. 'No Englishman supposed that this ... constituted a failure of obedience.' - Margaret Harvey, *England, Rome and the Papacy 1417-1464: The Study of a Relationship* (Manchester: University Press, 1993), p. 247.

evidence that churchmen attempted to tackle such a matter in the courts – the many cases investigated as part of this study do not provide any support for that. Given their important role in those institutions, the group of churchmen who might best perceive the Church-state power structure, i.e. the doctors of law, would need to consider how to balance the benefits of royal patronage with the desire for freedom of action within the broader western Church. Several of the king's proctors at Rome during the century had trained in law, including John Catterick and Thomas Polton during the reign of Henry V, and Peter Courtenay and James Goldwell during the reign of Edward IV. Their time in Rome would have given them the best possible insight into the balance of power with respect to the English Church and state on the one hand, and the papal court on the other. These men (many of whom later occupied episcopal sees) could resort to the legislature in England as one way in which to define and constrain royal power. There were in theory large numbers of them as bishops and abbots who were entitled to sit as lords in parliament.<sup>139</sup> They also had specific ecclesiastical jurisdiction within convocation. They had an expanding role in dispensing royal justice through their ever-increasing participation in such non-ecclesiastical courts as Chancery, Requests and Star Chamber. Even if it did not blunt their desire to do so, that participation must surely have restricted their opportunity to function vigorously within the context of the broader western church.<sup>140</sup> They probably perceived that the key to maintaining balance between Church and state was personal proximity to the king. As advisers they could be indispensable servants, but they could also influence, if not devise, policy and process. Above all they might hope to restrain their king from becoming controller rather than protector of the Church

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<sup>139</sup> How many of them actually attended is questionable given the large number of proctors they appointed. The proctors 'constituted a significant element of the membership of parliament in these years' (Bradford & McHardy, *Proctors for Parliament*, p. xi).

<sup>140</sup> A later exception to this was Christopher Bainbridge, another doctor of civil law, who joined the Roman court as papal ambassador for the newly crowned Henry VIII in 1509. See D.S. Chambers' *ODNB* article at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/1081>.

and of the faith.<sup>141</sup> It is within the context of such themes that Chapter Five on royal service will develop.

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<sup>141</sup> Since the crowning of Edward the Confessor, the king at his coronation ceremony had promised to uphold the liberties of the Church: George W. Bernard, *The Late Medieval English Church: Vitality and Vulnerability before the Break with Rome* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), pp. 20–21; those liberties were confirmed in the opening clause of Magna Carta: J. Holt, G. Garnett, and J. Hudson, *Magna Carta* (Cambridge: University Press, 2015), pp. 378–9; William Warham pointed out that those kings who attacked the 'liberties of Christes Church' had met unhappy ends: Steven J. Gunn, 'Edmund Dudley and the Church', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 2000.3 (2000), 509–26 (p. 516).



## Chapter 4 – Patronage and the aspiring prelate

An analysis and an understanding of patronage is essential if the careers of clerks and the changing landscape of the late-medieval Church are to be mapped out. With that statement comes a problem. Where historians have looked in detail at particular instances of patronage, such as how cathedral canons achieved their positions, then the means by which they acquired those posts 'lay through a network of patronage and kinship, much of which is now hidden'.<sup>1</sup> Where appointments and preferment happened as the result of purely informal discussion and direct personal recommendation, then records were either never created or most have been lost. Nevertheless there are records that do show the direct approach in action. When Margaret of Anjou heard of a forthcoming vacancy at Wimborne Minster, she wrote to the dean, Gilbert Kymer, urging 'that ye wil graunte us the nexte prebende that first shall voide there for to avaunce therewith oon of our said clerkes'.<sup>2</sup> For people of lesser rank, the method for influencing others could be complex and often involved moving step by step within a hierarchy of individuals. Outside the Church, when John Paston III wanted to sway the king, he saw his route as being via the lord chamberlain and so to the bishop of Ely who would have the ear of the king – a direct approach to the monarch would have been to no avail.<sup>3</sup> If the operation of such a patronage network was even more obscure within the Church then our chances of achieving any understanding might seem hopelessly misplaced. There are some other tantalising glimpses. The work of Barrie Dobson and Tim Cooper demonstrates how pressure was applied to monastic houses when remunerative positions became vacant.<sup>4</sup>

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1 David Lepine, *A Brotherhood of Canons Serving God. English Secular Cathedrals in the Later Middle Ages*, Studies in the History of Medieval Religion, 8 (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1995), pp. 18–19.

2 Margaret of Anjou, *The Letters of Margaret of Anjou*, ed. by Helen E. Maurer and B. M. Cron (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK ; Rochester, NY, USA: The Boydell Press, 2019), p. 18.

3 *Paston Letters and Papers of the Fifteenth Century*, ed. by Norman Davis, Early English Text Society Supplementary Series, 20 & 21, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), i, p. 617.

4 Tim Cooper, *The Last Generation of English Catholic Clergy*, Studies in the History of Medieval Religion, 15 (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1999), pp. 39–52; Barrie Dobson, *Durham Priory, 1400-*

However, there is one aspect of patronage and the rise of the prelates of the bishop bench that is both public and well-recorded, namely their appointment to large numbers of ecclesiastical benefices on their journey to high office. It seems odd that such a wealth of information has not been studied in any systematic fashion. Admittedly the act of appointing a clerk to a benefice represents the very end of a process of patronage.<sup>5</sup> Those personal qualities of the clerk that made him suitable for preferment, and the way he came to the notice of his benefactor, can be difficult things to determine. However the final act of appointment to a benefice was the necessary, formal and public stage of the patronage process. Almost without exception, the men who would become prelates had moved upwards via a large number of such benefices, often holding several concurrently. The focus of this chapter will therefore be on the nature and content of those final, formal acts of patronage. After a discussion of some of the key ideas on patronage, it will describe the creation of a relational database that systematically contains the details of the benefices for all the bishops of English dioceses appointed during the period 1400 to 1520. It will analyse that information to understand how far it can inform our understanding of the patronage process, and to see whether new insights can be derived. Finally some conclusions will be drawn, both to discuss the value of this systematic analysis, and to suggest what future avenues of research might be pursued.

‘Patronage was ubiquitous. Nothing worked without it, however obtained.’<sup>6</sup>

Robert Swanson expresses a viewpoint shared by most authors when considering the functioning of late medieval society in England and elsewhere. Terms such as ‘pervasive’ and ‘inescapable’, ‘an essential part of the system’, ‘a

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1450, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, 6 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), especially Chapter 5, ‘Monastic Patronage’.

5 See Lepine, *A Brotherhood of Canons for the light* David Lepine throws on the early careers of the canons of Exeter Cathedral.

6 Robert Swanson, *Church and Society in Late Medieval England* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), p. 67.

central role in late-medieval politics' etc. feature in the assessments of many eminent historians.<sup>7</sup> This narrative is applied across the whole of medieval society. K. B. McFarlane's concept of the affinity, 'a sea of varying relationships having its common focus in the service and loyalty to a lord', has been hugely influential in discussions about patrons and their retainers.<sup>8</sup> Although the core of the McFarlane bastard feudal affinity might be a small but clearly documented number of lords, knights and esquires, it has been described by G. L. Harriss as the means of organising the social, political and administrative life of the magnate's 'country'.<sup>9</sup> In such a narrative, the position of the patron, the lord, is powerful, pervasive and represents a key building block for the organisation and conduct of society. When focused on the Church in particular, patronage is perceived as inherent to the way that aspiring clerks achieved preferment. Networks of both patronage and kinship are discussed for example by David Lepine in his study of the canons of Exeter Cathedral.<sup>10</sup> A similar theme is pursued by studies of clerical careers in the dioceses of Lincoln and Winchester.<sup>11</sup> Within the context of the Church in particular, the word patronage has at its root the term 'patron', and this has a specific technical meaning, namely the holder or owner of an advowson. The patron of a church living had the right to choose and present the clergyman of a parish church, or to be involved in choosing the head of a religious house.<sup>12</sup> Of course the idea of patronage is seen as having a wider meaning than this, both within and beyond

7 Cooper, *The Last Generation of English Catholic Clergy*, p. 40; R.W. Dunning, 'Patronage and Promotion in the Late-Medieval Church', in *Patronage, the Crown and the Provinces in Later Medieval England*, ed. by R.A. Griffiths (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1981), pp. 167–80 (p. 167); Rosemary Horrox, 'Urban Patronage and Patrons in the Fifteenth Century', in *Ibid.*, pp. 145–61 (p. 143).

8 K. B. McFarlane, *England in the Fifteenth Century: Collected Essays*, History Series, 5 (London: Hambledon Press, 1981), pp. xi, xvii–xviii.

9 *Ibid.*, pp. xvii–xviii.

10 David Lepine, 'The Origins and Careers of the Canons of Exeter Cathedral', in *Religious Belief and Ecclesiastical Careers in Late Medieval England*, ed. by Christopher Harper-Bill, *Studies in the History of Medieval Religion*, 3 (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1991), pp. 87–120.

11 Nicholas Bennett, 'Pastors and Masters: The Beneficed Clergy of North-East Lincolnshire, 1290–1340.', in *The Foundations of Medieval English Ecclesiastical History. Studies Presented to David Smith.*, ed. by Philippa Hoskin, Christopher Brooke, and Barrie Dobson, *Studies in the History of Medieval Religion*, 27 (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005), pp. 40–62 (p. 53); Richard Brown, 'The Ecclesiastical Patronage of the Bishops of Winchester, 1282–1530', *Southern History*, 24 (2002), 27–44 (p. 42).

12 Nicholas Orme, *The Church in Devon 400–1560* (Exeter: Impress Books, 2013), pp. 197, 202.

the Church. The ancient meaning of the word patron as used in Roman history referred to a person of status or distinction who gave protection and aid to another person in return for deference and certain services.<sup>13</sup> To provide patronage was therefore to expect something in return, part of a reciprocal process where both the patron and their recipient could assume some benefit from the transaction. Within the context of the Church that idea of a benefit had real substance, namely the attainment of a benefice. The patron was providing the clerk with a post that supplied him with an income, and in return the beneficed clerk would be expected to assume the duties required of him by canon law. The new incumbent would serve his cure, and in so doing would also fulfil the spiritual requirements of his patron to show good lordship over his domain.

Inherent in this discussion of medieval patronage is a difficulty acknowledged by Swanson and others, namely that this ubiquitous process was not necessarily visible, and that those records that survive may not describe its presence.<sup>14</sup> Without a solid basis in evidence it is therefore possible that the focus of the debate may become distorted, or that unwarranted assumptions about the functioning of the Church and wider society may be derived. Nevertheless there are compelling examples to be found of the process of patronage in operation, and by this is meant the associated activities of persuasion, pleading and the application of pressure. Such 'indirect patronage' might come from above as well as from below.<sup>15</sup> When John Morton was bishop of Ely, he wrote to John Pickering, the governor of the Merchant Adventurers in the Low Countries, to 'pray' him to take on Morton's nominee to be their new clerk. The term 'I pray you' was used repeatedly by Morton in his letter. In return for the appointment, Morton says that he would wish to grant as great a favour to Pickering 'yif it

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13 'Patron, 4.', *OED Online* (Oxford University Press) <<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/138929?>> [accessed 10 June 2020].

14 Lepine, 'The Origins and Careers of the Canons of Exeter Cathedral', p. 19.

15 W. A. Pantin, *The English Church in the Fourteenth Century* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1963), p. 34.

shall lye in my litil power so to doo'.<sup>16</sup> The irony of Morton's words would surely not be lost on Pickering – as bishop of Ely and one of the king's most trusted councillors, Morton had great influence, as well as the direct possession of many benefits that he could bestow. Edward II, while still prince of Wales, sent many letters to patrons such as abbots and bishops asking them for benefices or pensions for his clerks.<sup>17</sup> The concept of reciprocal benefit therefore seems to extend beyond the immediate grant of some post or benefit to its fortunate recipient: it would also apply to the layers or stages of discussion, persuasion and pleading that might surround or lead up to the achievement of the main prize.

Although these examples are both useful and intriguing, they are part of a relatively small evidence base for such an all-embracing and ubiquitous process. By contrast, as mentioned at the start of this chapter, there is a significant and comprehensive set of information that is available for the study of patronage, and it applies to the complete set of those men who went on to become the occupants of England's episcopal bench during the fifteenth century. These are the series of benefices that were awarded to them before they achieved the rank of bishop. Although the awarding of a benefice represents the final stage in what might have been a lengthy and complex process of discussion, persuasion and influence, it was a necessary and formal stage. It acts as a point-of-entry for analysing how patronage worked as a force in career progression. It also has the great advantage of being public and recorded. It is therefore possible to study it systematically and in detail to assess how much it can tell us about the debate. There are many questions it could potentially begin to answer. For example, how did the path to prelacy vary between individuals, and how was that characterised in terms of the differences in patron types? What was the role of the religious houses in determining the

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16 John Vale, *The Politics of Fifteenth-Century England: John Vale's Book*, ed. by Margaret Lucille Kekewich and others (Stroud: Alan Sutton for the Richard III & Yorkist History Trust, 1995), pp. 106, 155.

17 Pantin, *The English Church in the Fourteenth Century*, p. 34.

rise of the secular prelacy? Can the future prelacy be clearly sub-divided into distinct groupings from this information, for example by class, geography and education? The next section will discuss the creation of a database to contain this wealth of information, it will highlight the strengths and shortcomings of that information, and it will describe the tools and techniques used. The purpose of the database is to assist in answering those research questions just posed, as well as providing for the possibility of new and previously unknown factors in the careers of future bishops to be revealed.

The relational database has been constructed that contains information on the benefices awarded to all of those men who became bishops of English dioceses during the period 1400 to 1520. Of these 111 men, eighteen were regular clergy and so did not receive any benefices. For the ninety-three secular clergy, the list of their benefices can be found in three key sources: Emden's biographical registers for Oxford and Cambridge, supplemented by their entries in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, and the relevant entries in the *Fasti Ecclesiae*.<sup>18</sup> Emden is now a relatively old source, but the information is still comprehensive. There are errors, mostly minor ones, and there are omissions that can be filled in by the later scholarship contained within the *ODNB* entries and elsewhere. Emden does not supply information for those bishops who were never recorded as scholars of the two universities, but those numbers are small.<sup>19</sup> The entries in Emden can also conflict with those shown in *Fasti*. It is therefore necessary to review and consider the information in all three main sources before committing the entries into a database. The sources for Emden's registers are many, and some are more comprehensive than others. Where he uses entries within bishops' registers, these tend to be the most precise and comprehensive. They normally provide dates for when our clerks entered and

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18 The Calendars of Patent Rolls are a further source, although many of the relevant entries are taken up in the three sources described.

19 There are three secular clergy in this list: William Booth, Thomas Langley and John Wakering. Booth was exceptional in that he studied common law at Gray's Inn, while Wakering was one of the last of the secular clergy to become a bishop as a non-graduate. There are also three regular clergy: William Heyworth, Richard Redman and Alexander Tottington.

left their benefices; the register entries also supply the names of the patrons and Emden is normally accurate in giving the relevant folio numbers. Where Emden uses other sources, the coverage of his data can be more sparse. For example a number of entries that come from the Calendars of Patent Rolls may only show the date when a clerk occurs as holding a benefice – there may be no information about when he might have entered or left it. Another difficulty with Emden is that his entries do not directly show who was the patron of each benefice. Recourse in such instances has to be made to the relevant register or other primary source. One additional source that can ease this process is the online *Taxatio* database provided by HRI Online.<sup>20</sup> The *Taxatio* shows who was the named patron for each benefice at the time of the compilation of the *Taxatio* in 1291-92. Where that patron was a religious house (but not an alien priory) then it could perhaps be assumed that the same house would be the patron in the fifteenth century. Although that assumption would normally be correct, there are instances where the religious house may have passed patronage to another individual for one or more turns. It is therefore necessary, where possible, to refer to the relevant entry in the bishop's register to confirm who acted as patron for a specific instance. Where the house concerned was an alien priory then the patronage would normally have gone elsewhere by the early fifteenth century.<sup>21</sup> A further issue with respect to patronage is that of the awarding of canonries or other offices in the secular cathedrals. The assumption made in the database is that the 'true' patron is the current bishop of the diocese as opposed to the dean or the cathedral chapter. If that assumption is considered wrong then the number of entries under the heading of 'bishop' can be seen as a significant over-estimate. By no means all institutions to benefices are recorded within the bishops' registers. It is sometimes necessary therefore to refer to a range of other sources. The entries in the relevant *Victoria County History* can be invaluable here, as can other studies relating to individual parishes, institutions or persons.

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20 <https://www.dhi.ac.uk/taxatio/forms>, [accessed 4 May 2020].

21 David Knowles and R. Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses, England and Wales*, 2nd edn (London: Longmans, 1971), p. 43.

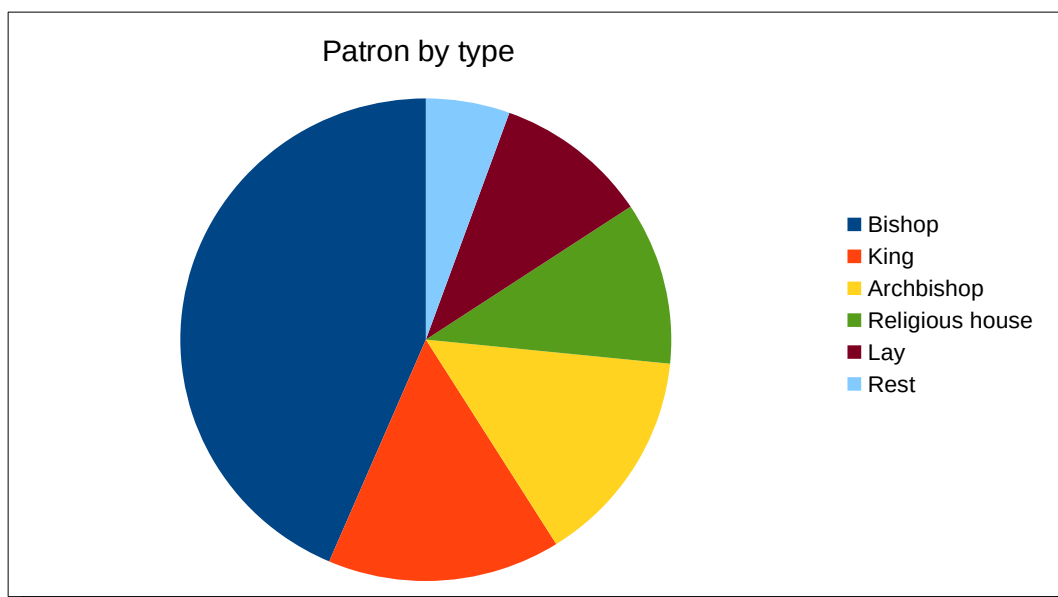
The database technology that was used for this study is freely available across a range of platforms. The software package LibreOffice contains a module called Base, and with this a fully relational database can be created.<sup>22</sup> Such a database allows for elements like the details of the clerks, their benefices and their careers as bishops to be held in separate tables but related to each other for reporting and analysis purposes. Appendix 6 shows the relationship of these tables and the database fields that were created. With each record it was usually possible to complete each field in the database but, as pointed above, some fields such as 'Date entered' or 'Date left' for a benefice could be problematic. There were other fields also where it could be difficult or impossible to populate them. For example the '*Taxatio* valuation' field in the Benefice table relied upon there being an entry with the required information available in the online *Taxatio* system. Sometimes benefices did not appear in that valuation, so no data could be entered. There was also a small number of cases where it was not possible to complete the 'Patron name' field in the Benefice table. However that only applies to eleven out of 1147 entries. With the dates of birth of the clerks, nearly all were estimated – while their dates of death are well documented, their birth dates are not. For each clerk an attempt was also made to record the highest ordained order that has been documented for them, together with the date. That proved more intermittent as the records in Emden and elsewhere are by no means complete. Thus we have dates of ordination to the priesthood for thirty-four men, and those for another of the higher orders for sixteen; for sixty-one men we have no information. Similarly the attempt to record the date of first royal service could only be recorded for ninety-nine of the 111 men in the Bishop table. Given the nature of that information, the date may only be an approximation and may only show when they are first described as being in royal service, not when they actually started.

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22 <https://www.libreoffice.org/discover/base/> [accessed 26 April 2020].

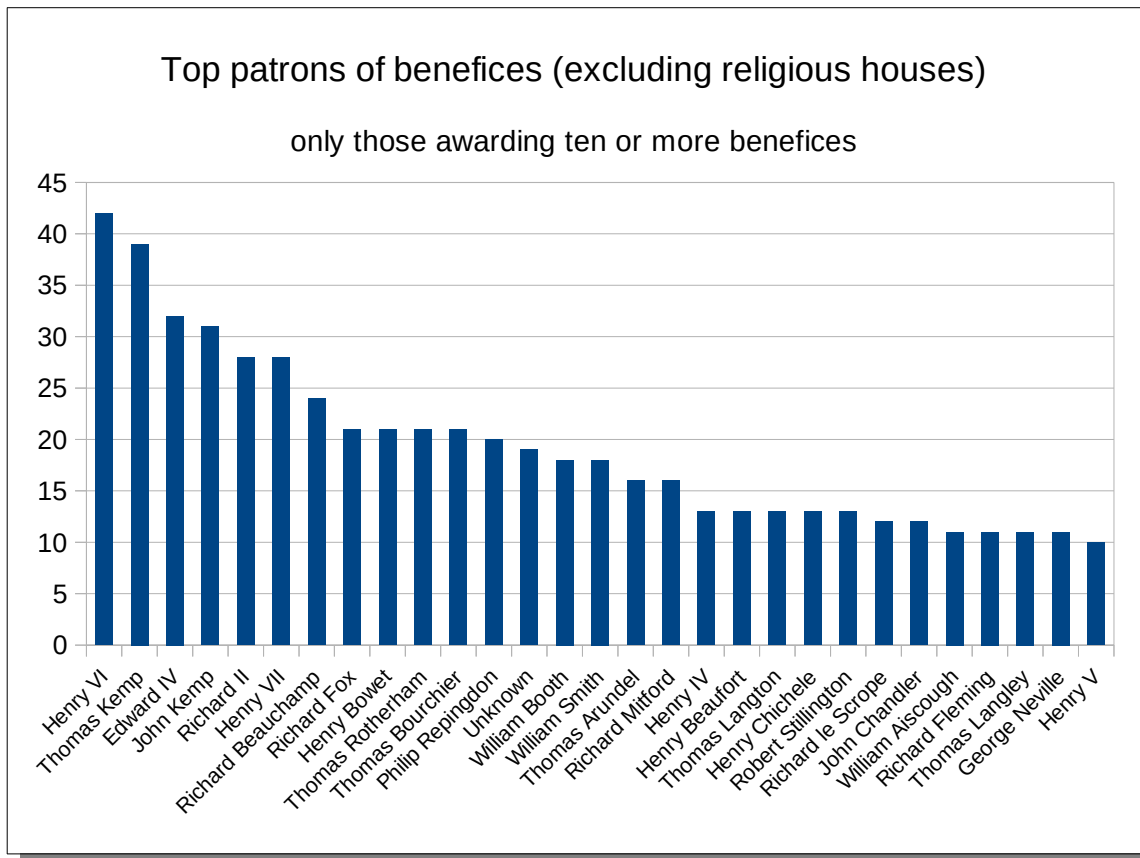


The analysis of the database begins with an overview of some of the key statistics. Firstly the range of patron types is summarised in figure 4.1. This illustrates how dominant the patronage of bishops, archbishops and the monarch was for the benefices that these aspiring clerks received. Together these three headings make up over 70% by number of those benefices. The contributions from religious houses and from lay individuals make up approximately 10% each. The 'rest' category encompasses other royal patrons such as the queen, academic colleges, the pope and other clerical benefactors. Given the importance of the main headings, the next obvious step is to look at the top individuals donors to understand which were the most generous.



**Figure 4.1.** The breakdown of patrons by type.

In Figure 4.2 the role of key individuals becomes clear. Monarchs feature strongly, with Henry VI topping the list, although given his long reign, that is not especially surprising. The two Kemps, Thomas and John, also figure strongly, and the role of such churchmen will be considered in more detail later.



**Figure 4.2.** The most important patrons of benefices (with the exclusion of religious houses)

Returning to the successive kings in this list, some further analysis is needed to bring out more detail. Table 4.1 provides figures to show the rate at which successive kings favoured these future bishops with benefices in the monarch's control. The rate of awards is not high and would of course depend on circumstances at the time. When an episcopal see was vacant, the king would almost invariably take it upon himself to step in and appoint his candidate to a vacant benefice. Examples include Henry VI in November 1436 who favoured Richard Beauchamp with his first known benefice at Barking in Suffolk.<sup>23</sup> Later Henry VII gave preferment to Nicholas West in May 1507 by appointing him

<sup>23</sup> CPR 1436-41, p. 28.

treasurer at Chichester Cathedral.<sup>24</sup> At the start of our period Richard II also used the circumstance of having the possession of lay patrons in his hands to favour Nicholas Bubwith twice (to the rectories of Llangyllo in Cardiganshire in 1379 and to Southill in Cornwall in 1387).<sup>25</sup>

**Table 4.1.** The rate of appointment to benefices by the king

Monarch	Number of benefices	Length of reign	Avg per year	Notes
Richard II	28	20	1.40	
Henry IV	13	12.5	1.04	
Henry V	10	9.5	1.05	
Henry VI	42	38.5	1.09	
Edward IV	32	22	1.45	Just four in his first reign, twenty-eight in his second.
Richard III	2	2	1.00	
Henry VII	28	23.5	1.19	
Henry VIII (part)	9	9	1.00	

One of the most intriguing figures in Table 4.1 relates to the two reigns of Edward IV. In his first reign he appointed our future bishops to just four benefices under his patronage. However in his second reign, the number leapt to twenty-eight. The details are given in Table 4.2.

<sup>24</sup> *CPR 1494-1509*, p. 538.

<sup>25</sup> *CPR 1377-81*, p. 351; *CPR 1385-89*, p. 269.

**Table 4.2** The benefices awarded by Edward across his two reigns.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date entered (YYYYMM)</b>	<b>Benefice name</b>	<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Benefice type</b>	<b>Notes</b>
John Russell	146104	St Stephen's Chapel, Westminster	London	Canon	Royal secular college
William Dudley	146111	Wolverhampton	Coventry & Lichfield	Dean	Royal free chapel
John Shirwood	146705	St Nicholas' Hospital, York	York	Master	
Peter Courtenay	147001	St Anthony's Hospital, London	London	Master	
William Dudley	147100	Chapel Royal	London	Dean	The month of entry is not known, hence shown as zeroes
John Alcock	147104	St Stephen's Chapel, Westminster	London	Dean	Royal secular college
Richard Mayhew	147107	Winchelsea, St Thomas	Chichester	Rector	
William Dudley	147107	Bridgnorth	Coventry & Lichfield	Dean	Royal free chapel
William Dudley	147107	St George's Chapel, Windsor	Salisbury	Canon	Royal secular college
Edmund Audley	147201	Lincoln	Lincoln	Canon	
Richard Mayhew	147202	Calais, St Pierre	Canterbury	Rector	
Peter Courtenay	147203	St Stephen's Chapel,	London	Dean	Royal secular college

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date entered (YYYYMM)</b>	<b>Benefice name</b>	<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Benefice type</b>	<b>Notes</b>
		Westminster			
William Dudley	147208	Newarke College and Hospital, Leicester	Lincoln	Canon	
William Dudley	147208	Newarke College and Hospital, Leicester	Lincoln	Dean	
William Dudley	147210	St George's Chapel, Windsor	Salisbury	Dean	Royal secular college
Oliver King	147311	St John's Hospital, Dorchester	Salisbury	Warden	
Edmund Audley	147402	St George's Chapel, Windsor	Salisbury	Canon	Royal secular college
Edmund Audley	147407	Llanaber	St David's	Rector	
John Russell	147605	Cobhambury	Rochester	Prebendary	
Peter Courtenay	147610	St George's Chapel, Windsor	Salisbury	Dean	Royal secular college
Lionel Woodville	147701	Wolverhampton	Coventry & Lichfield	Dean	Royal free chapel
Richard Hill	147711	St John's Hospital, Dorchester	Salisbury	Master	
Thomas Langton	147901	Pembridge	Hereford	Rector	

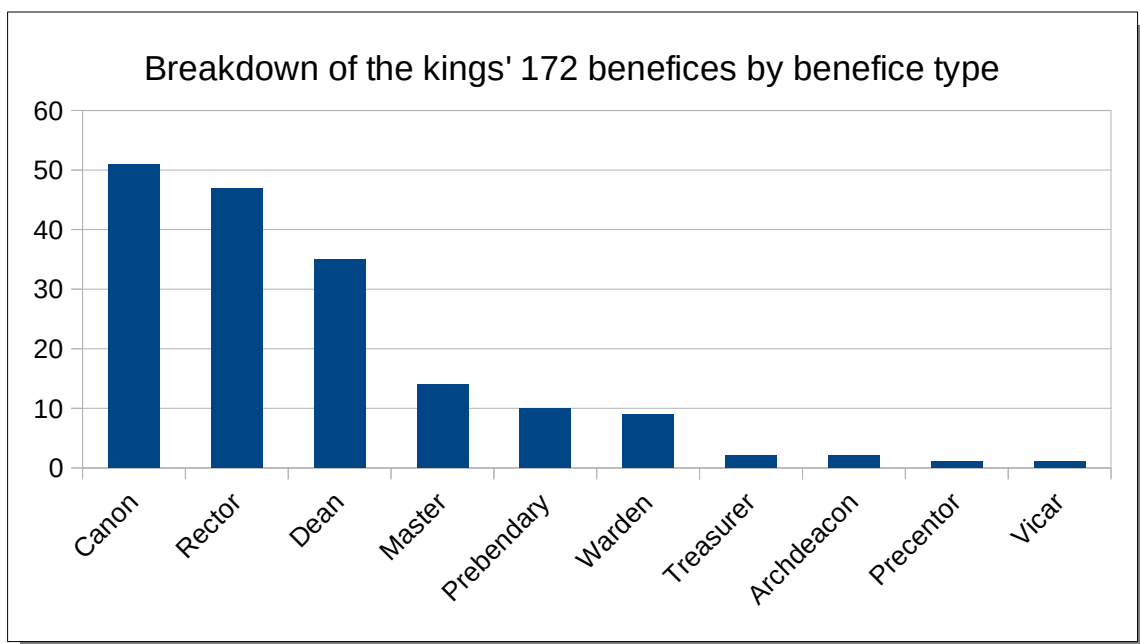
<b>Name</b>	<b>Date entered (YYYYMM)</b>	<b>Benefice name</b>	<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Benefice type</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Edmund Audley	147905	Tamworth	Coventry & Lichfield	Canon	
John Arundell Jnr	147907	Tamworth	Coventry & Lichfield	Canon	This (et seq.) is the younger John Arundell (bp Exeter, d. 1504)
John Arundell Jnr	147911	St George's Chapel, Windsor	Salisbury	Canon	Royal secular college
John Arundell Jnr	147911	St Martin-le-Grand, London	London	Canon	Royal free chapel
Oliver King	148002	Calais, St Pierre	London	Rector	
Oliver King	148005	All Hallows the Great, London	London	Rector	
Oliver King	148010	St George's Chapel, Windsor	Salisbury	Canon	Royal secular college
Robert Morton	148110	St George's Chapel, Windsor	Salisbury	Canon	Royal secular college
John Arundell Jnr	148202	Salisbury	Salisbury	Canon	

One of the greatest beneficiaries of Edward's patronage was William Dudley, appointed by him as dean of Wolverhampton in 1461.<sup>26</sup> When Edward returned from his exile during the readeption of Henry VI, Dudley met him at Doncaster

<sup>26</sup> CPR 1446-52, p. 54; CPR 1461-67, p. 60; CPR 1476-85, p. 17.

with 'eight score men'.<sup>27</sup> For such loyalty and support, Edward then showered rewards on him; the king finally saw Dudley appointed bishop of Durham in July 1476.<sup>28</sup> The change in Edward's granting of benefices can be seen as further support for the narrative of Edward being much more secure in his throne after the events of 1471.<sup>29</sup> He appears to have taken a stronger interest in using his patronage to nurture the next generation of his bishops. A broader study of Edward's ecclesiastical patronage across his two reigns could clarify how his attitude to the Church and its higher clergy evolved after Tewkesbury.

The information in Table 4.2 also illustrates the kind of positions to which kings were appointing their favoured clerks. These were the more remunerative posts such as cathedral prebends, deaneries and royal peculiars such as St Stephen's Chapel at Westminster. Figure 4.3 provides a graphical display for all the 172 benefices that made up royal appointments for our cadre of churchmen.



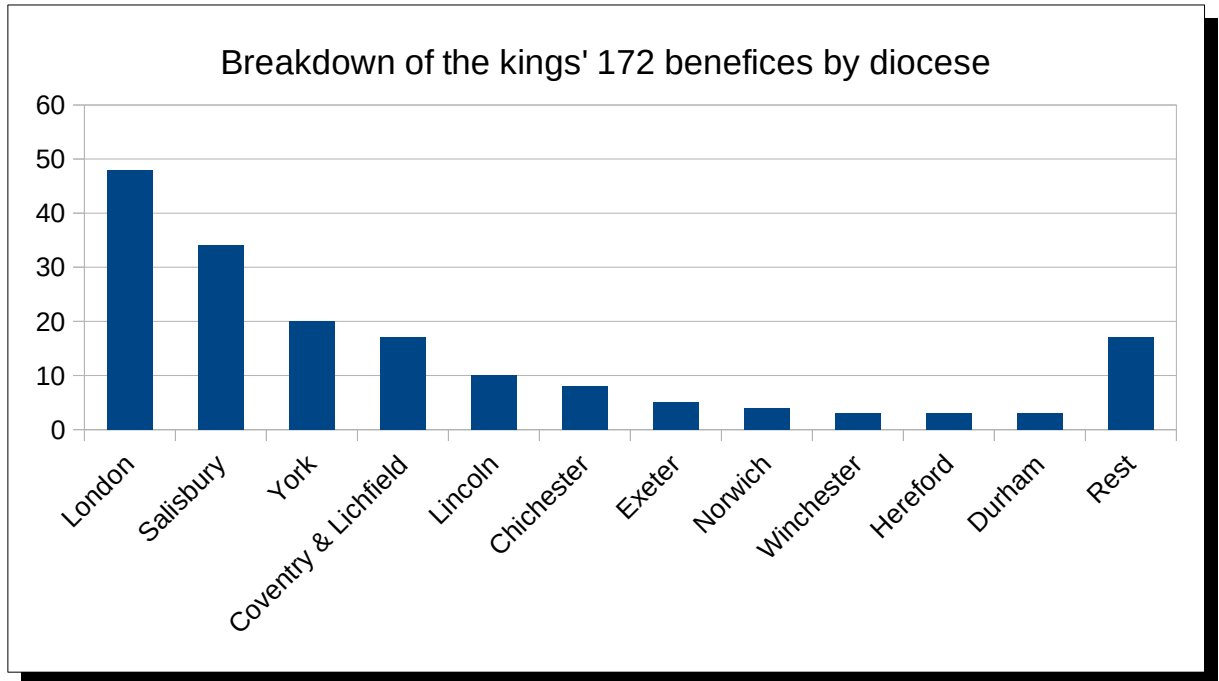
**Figure 4.3.** The types of benefices awarded by the kings to their future bishops

27 Cora L. Scofield, *The Life and Reign of Edward the Fourth, King of England and of France and Lord of Ireland*, 2 vols (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1923), i, p. 571.

28 A. J. Pollard's assessment of Dudley is not complimentary, seeing him as being foolishly promoted by Edward to a post beyond his capabilities (see <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/8163>).

29 Scofield, *The Life and Reign of Edward the Fourth*, ii, p. 2.

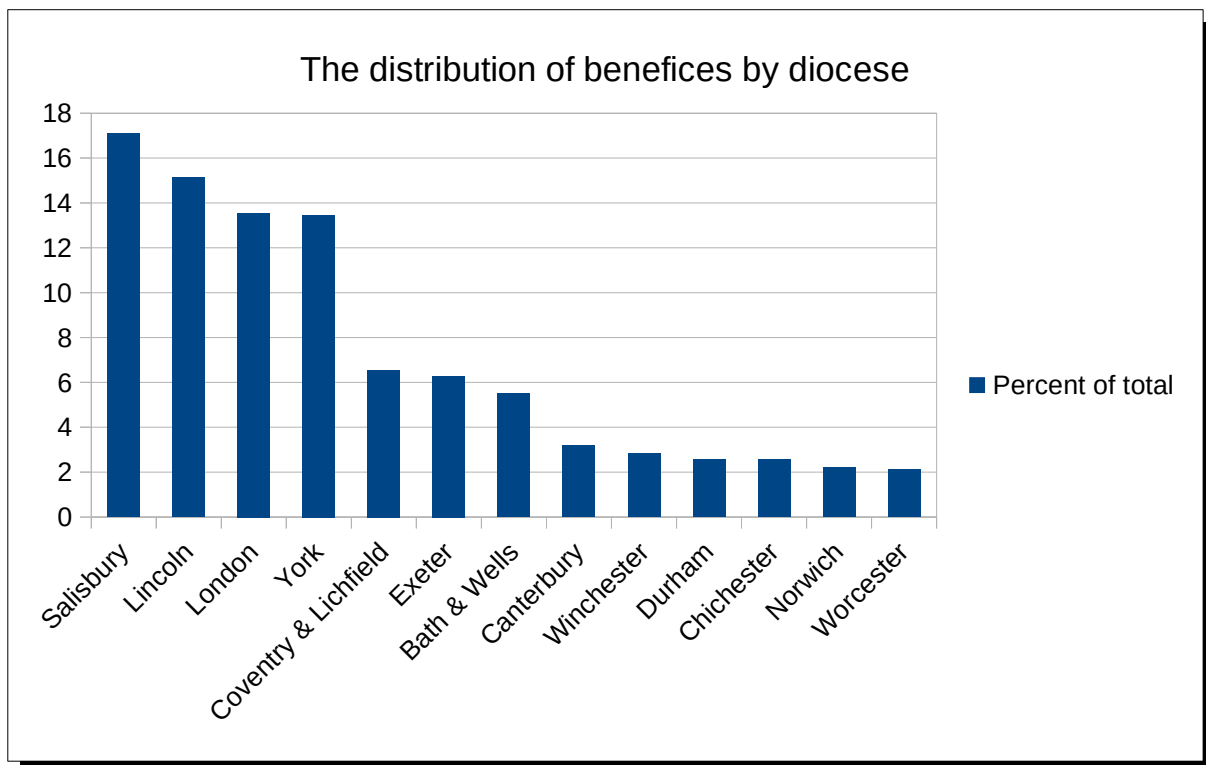
The location of these benefices, in terms of which dioceses feature most, is illustrated in Figure 4.4.



**Figure 4.4.** The distribution of the kings' benefices by diocese.

The south of England features strongly, with London and Salisbury heading the list. In part this reflects the concentration of benefices usually available to the king in such institutions as the royal chapels at Westminster and Windsor, the collegiate church of St Martin le Grand etc. However the distribution also reflects the distribution of all the benefices awarded to our cohort of clerks, whether from royal or any other patron. Figure 4.5 shows this very clearly.





**Figure 4.5.** The distribution of benefices across all patron types

In Figure 4.5 the dioceses of London and Salisbury again feature prominently. However, other dioceses such as Lincoln and York also make a strong showing. These latter two contained some very valuable benefices, and the future bishops were the not infrequent beneficiaries of those. In Lincoln the valuable prebend of Thame (valued at almost 170 marks per annum in the *Taxatio*) was enjoyed by Richard Courtenay (1401), Nicholas Bubwith (1403), John Wakering (1406), William Gray (1435), George Neville (1454), Peter Courtenay (1470) and Lionel Woodville (1478). The even more valuable Lincoln prebend of Sutton-cum-Buckingham, valued at 260 marks in the *Taxatio*, was enjoyed by Robert Gilbert (1420) and William Aiscough (1436). The diocese of York of course contained the celebrated ‘golden’ prebend of Masham, valued at 250 marks in the *Taxatio*, and its occupants included George Neville (1447), John Shirwood (1471) and John Blyth (1484). Most of the patronage in York (152 benefices in total) was dispensed by the Archbishop (108 of the total); the kings’

total of twenty was matched by that of other lay patrons (eleven) and the religious houses (ten).

Two factors that helped determine where our cadre of future bishops held their series of benefices were the constitution of the cathedral church (whether secular or monastic), and the number and wealth of the benefices within each diocese. The difference between the secular and monastic cathedrals is characterised in the following table.

**Table 4.3.** The English cathedrals and their characteristics with respect to benefices.

(The monastic cathedrals are those shown as having zero prebendaries).

<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Officials</b>	<b>Prebendaries</b>	<b>Archdeacons</b>
Bath & Wells	5	57	3
Canterbury	0	0	1
Carlisle	0	0	1
Chichester	5	31	2
Coventry & Lichfield	4	32	5
Durham	0	0	2
Ely	0	0	1
Exeter	5	24	4
Hereford	4	28	2
Lincoln	5	58	8
London	4	30	4
Norwich	0	0	4
Rochester	0	0	1
Salisbury	5	52	4
Winchester	0	0	2
Worcester	0	0	2
York	5	36	5
<b>Totals</b>	42	348	51

The monastic cathedrals supplied relatively little of value to secular clerks seeking profitable advancement. The wealthy dioceses of Ely and Winchester could furnish just three archdeaconries between them. By contrast Salisbury,

Lincoln and Bath & Wells held many potential benefices. The cathedral prebends were often of high value – in the Salisbury diocese for example the prebend of Bedwyn was valued at 75 marks, and that of Charminster and Bere at 150 marks (both figures from the valuation in the *Taxatio*). A concentration of high value benefices was therefore of importance. However, it is relevant to point out that the nominal values of the cathedral prebends at St Paul's in London were low. The prebend of Islington for example, was valued at eight marks in the *Taxatio*, and that of Weldland just three. This perhaps shows that the post of canon itself carried significant prestige, especially when it allowed the possessor to be part of the chapter in London's cathedral. The income that a canon might enjoy was not just limited to the prebend itself, however. It is clear that in Exeter the canons enjoyed some additional revenue from the celebration of obits etc. In the late 1370s, a number of the Exeter canons received an annual payment of 7*d* for the celebration of just one obit (that of William Kilkenny, canon of the cathedral who had died fifty years previously).<sup>30</sup> An accumulation of such payments would produce useful additional income.

As regards the total size of each diocese in terms of number of parishes, the following table supplies the details.

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<sup>30</sup> Exeter, Cathedral Archive, D&C 3768.

**Table 4.4.** The number of parishes by diocese for England in the fifteenth century (\* indicates a secular cathedral)<sup>31</sup>

<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Number of parishes</b>
Lincoln*	1738
Norwich	1165
York*	625
Exeter*	529
Salisbury*	493
London*	459
Coventry and Lichfield*	382
Winchester	338
Worcester	335
Hereford*	291
Chichester*	286
Bath and Wells*	262
Canterbury	221
Ely	135
Durham	117
Rochester	108
Carlisle	94
<b>Total</b>	<b>7578</b>

The key anomaly that Table 4.4 appears to throw up is that of the diocese of Norwich. Although it has a large number of parishes, it does not feature strongly in Figure 4.5. Of the sixteen rectoriess granted in that diocese, the average value from the *Taxatio* was over thirty-six marks. By comparison the value for the forty-six rectories granted in Salisbury was just over twenty marks, and in Lincoln the average value for the seventy-one rectories was just over thirty-one marks. The relatively low contribution of Norwich might therefore profit from some further research: why, in a diocese that had so many parishes, and where a number were of good value, were relatively few offered to men who seemed destined for high office? What role do differing patterns of patron have to play? For two other monastic cathedrals, Winchester and Worcester, the number of

31 Edward Lewes Cutts, *Parish Priests and Their People in the Middle Ages in England* (London: S.P.C.K, 1898), p. 385. Cutts based his list on the contents of the *Taxatio* of 1291. The results may not be entirely accurate, but they are sufficient for a general understanding of the relative numbers.

rectories granted within the database are thirteen and seventeen respectively. As they had a much smaller pool of parishes on which to draw, then Norwich appears even more anomalous. Table 4.5 summarises and highlights this feature.

**Table 4.5.** Award of rectories in the dioceses with monastic cathedrals

<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Number of parishes</b>	<b>Number of rectories awarded</b>
Norwich	1165	16
Winchester	338	13
Worcester	335	17
Canterbury	221	22
Ely	135	6
Durham	117	11
Rochester	108	5
Carlisle	94	2

Given that the much smaller diocese of Worcester granted more rectories in this period than Norwich, it is instructive to see what the nature of the awards was in both of those dioceses. The initial review of Tables 4.6 and 4.7 would suggest that there was little apparent difference between these two dioceses. The reason why Norwich would appear to be proportionately under-represented would therefore require a separate and more detailed study. There does not appear to be any strong relationship between the occupant of the see of Norwich and the rate at which these awards occurred. There were several bishops during whose tenure no grants took place such as Richard Courtenay, John Wakeryng and James Goldwell. During Walter Lyhert's long episcopacy only two of the awards in Table 4.6 occurred. The relative flurry of grants in the 1430s nearly all were the result of patronage by the very young Henry VI. A broader comparative study of the dioceses of Worcester and Norwich might throw some light on these apparent anomalies.

**Table 4.6.** The award of rectories in the Norwich diocese

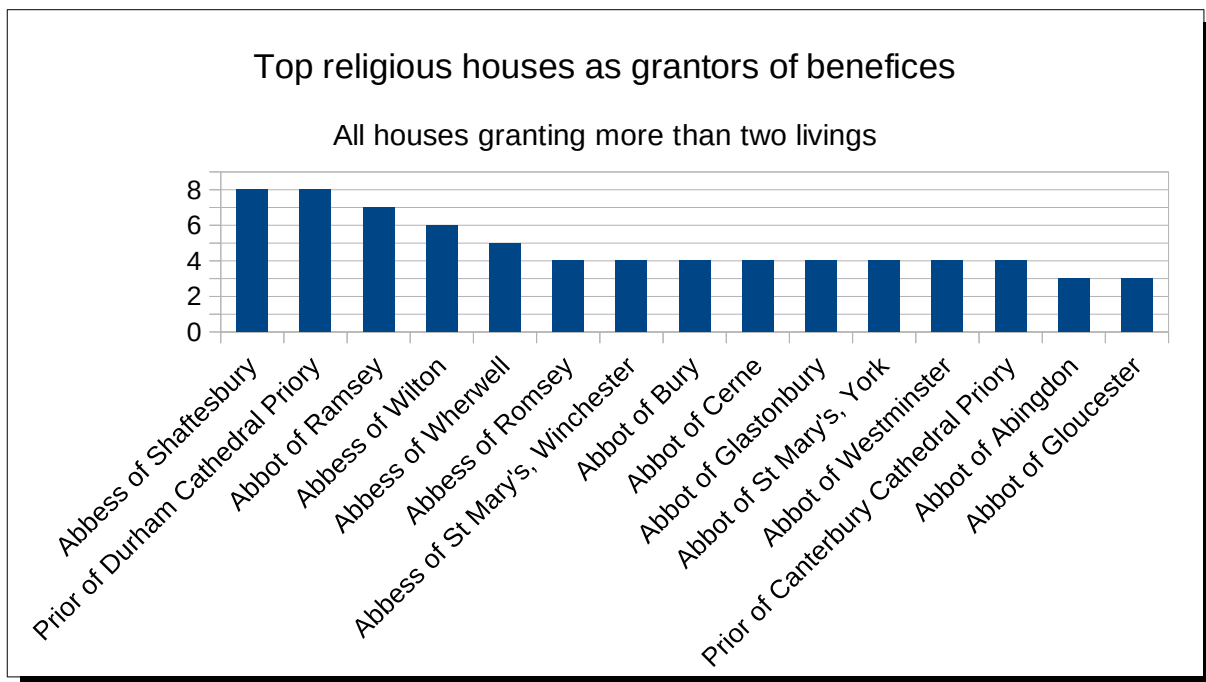
<b>Date entered (YYYYMM)</b>	<b>Patron</b>	<b>Rectory</b>	<b>Recipient</b>
138111	Abbot of Bury	Thorpe Abbots	John Rickinghall
139701	Richard earl of Arundel and Surrey	Brunstead	John Rickinghall
140001	Abbot of Bury	Fressingfield	John Rickinghall
140700	Abbot of St Benet of Hulme	Barton Turf	John Wakering
142609	King's Hall, Cambridge	Fakenham	Robert Fitzhugh
142905	Abbot of Bury	Risby	William Aiscough
143203	William Alnwick	Hevingham	William Aiscough
143506	Henry VI	Gisleham	Adam Moleyns
143611	Henry VI	Barking	Richard Beauchamp
143706	Henry VI	Southwood	Adam Moleyns
143706	Thomas Bouchier	East Dereham	William Aiscough
143910	Henry VI	Long Stratton	Adam Moleyns
146602	Sir Richard Darell	Wells-next-the-sea	William Dudley
146708	Thomas Bouchier	Hadleigh	Thomas Rotherham
147711	Abbot of St Benet of Hulme	Swanton Abbot	Oliver King
150606	Abbot of Bury	Redgrave	Thomas Wolsey

**Table 4.7.** The award of rectories in the Worcester diocese

<b>Date entered (YYYYMM)</b>	<b>Patron</b>	<b>Rectory</b>	<b>Recipient</b>
139100	Robert Tideman	Bishop's Cleeve	Henry Bowet
140108	John de Radington,	Quenington	John Chandler

	Prior St John of Jerusalem		
140204	Richard Clifford	Bishop's Cleeve	Nicholas Bubwith
Unknown	Prior of Deerhurst	Welford-on-Avon	Thomas Beckington
142211	Abbot of Gloucester	Kempsford	Richard Praty
142410	Abbot of Gloucester	St Michael's	Reginald Pecock
143306	Thomas Polton	Hartlebury	Adam Moleyns
143311	Henry VI	Kempsey	Adam Moleyns
144311	Abbot of Bristol	Beverstone	Robert Stillington
144600	Lisle family	Sapperton	John Kyngescote
144905	John Carpenter	Bredon	John Chedworth
145110	John Carpenter	Withington	John Kyngescote
146107	John Carpenter	Ripple	Thomas Rotherham
146110	Abbot of Gloucester	Duntisbourne Abbots	James Goldwell
Unknown	Unknown	Rodmerton	Robert Sherborne
Unknown	Unknown	Stratton	Thomas Ruthall
Unknown	Henry VII	Barnsley	Thomas Ruthall

So far the focus has been on individual patrons, but there were also important institutional ones, in particular the religious houses. Figure 4.1 showed how they made up just under 11% of the benefactors. Several houses feature prominently among these, and Figure 4.6 lists the top grantors by number.



**Figure 4.6.** The religious houses that supplied two or more benefices

Two interesting facts emerge immediately from the above figure. Firstly all the houses shown were Benedictine; secondly there were several female houses.<sup>32</sup>

**Table 4.8.** The eight benefices supplied by Shaftesbury Abbey

<b>Date entered</b>	<b>Beneficiary</b>	<b>Benefice name</b>	<b>Taxatio valuation (marks)</b>
June 1399	Thomas Polton	Broughton Gifford (rectory)	15
Nov. 1405	John Catterick	Fontmell in Shaftesbury Abbey	35
July 1409	John Wakering	Liddington in Shaftesbury Abbey	20
March 1421	Simon	Iwerne Minster in Shaftesbury	30
	Sydenham	Abbey	
May 1465	Edmund Audley	Iwerne Minster in Shaftesbury Abbey	30
March 1495	Geoffrey Blyth	Corfe Castle (rectory)	15
By 1504	Hugh Oldham	Gillingham in Shaftesbury Abbey	45
Nov. 1514	John Veysey	Liddington in Shaftesbury Abbey	20

<sup>32</sup> Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses, England and Wales*, pp. 52–58, 253–55.



In the above table, the benefices are all prebends unless otherwise described.

**Table 4.9.** The eight benefices supplied by Durham Cathedral Priory

<b>Date entered</b>	<b>Beneficiary</b>	<b>Benefice name</b>	<b>Taxatio valuation (marks)</b>
In 1394	Henry Bowet	Howden (prebend)	50
June 1398	John Catterick	Norham (vicarage)	20
Sept. 1412	John Rickinghall	Hemingbrough (rectory)	160
May 1429	Marmaduke Lumley	Hemingbrough (prebend)	n/a
Jan. 1467	John Shirwood	Howden (prebend)	50
May 1467	John Arundell Jnr	Howden (prebend)	50
Sept. 1471	Lionel Woodville	Hemingbrough (as provost)	n/a
Oct. 1493	Charles Booth	Normanton-on-Soar (rectory)	12

There are some contrasts between Tables 4.8 and 4.9, and these relate to both geography and education. More men receiving benefices from Shaftesbury had origins in the south of England and were educated at Oxford (three men were from northern England and only one was educated at Cambridge); for the Durham beneficiaries, five of them were from northern England, and the university breakdown was four each at Cambridge and Oxford. Thus Durham Cathedral Priory is certainly more oriented towards men of its northern locality, and that is also reflected in the fact that a higher proportion were educated at Cambridge rather than Oxford. These ‘allocations’ hint at the kinds of concealed patronage, or at least to the networks and influence, that may have led to the granting of these benefices. In the 1470s the prior of Durham declared that he and his brothers were not at liberty to dispose of benefices as they saw fit, and they have been described as being partial victims of ‘an elaborate and insidious spoils system’.<sup>33</sup> Thirty years previously the monks had stated their need to respond with care to ‘the demands and requests of the lords and magnates whom we cannot offend.’<sup>34</sup> Tim Cooper concludes that monastic patronage was

<sup>33</sup> R. B. Dobson, *Durham Priory, 1400-1450*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, 6 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), p. 172.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

not always freely bestowed, and that ‘the very extent of the advowsons owned by religious houses was likely to make them prey to the crown, local secular power and even the episcopate.’<sup>35</sup> Wherever such processes were at work, our database cannot provide any direct evidence. What these observations do suggest is the Benedictine houses in particular were at the very centre of a network of patronage, persuasion and possibly even coercion.

The dominant role of the Benedictines among all the religious houses as suppliers of formal patronage merits further discussion. From the lists in Tables 4.8 and 4.9 it can be seen how the benefices were mostly prebends rather than the rectories or vicarages that less high-flying clerks might have been granted. Such posts would not normally include the cure of souls, and would therefore have avoided the need for deputies to be arranged for such tasks. At the collegiate church of Howden for example preparations were made for a vicar to ensure the cure of souls in 1319.<sup>36</sup> The collegiate church at Hemingbrough was a late foundation, dating from 1426, when it was staffed with a provost, three prebendaries, six vicars and six clerks. Four of the vicars carried out parish duties.<sup>37</sup> Similarly the prebends in Shaftesbury Abbey were within the conventual church and acted therefore as sinecures.<sup>38</sup> To their recipients these positions were therefore both remunerative and free from responsibilities, allowing them to be enjoyed *in absentia*. The Benedictine foundations such as those at Shaftesbury were of ancient foundation and had built up significant resources with which they could grant patronage in ways that could satisfy the needs and aspirations of both the benefactors and the beneficiaries. However they had also clearly become part of the fabric of the secular section of the Church, advancing men who they could perceive as destined for the highest office. Exactly how far this process could be seen as cause and effect is hard to determine. Did the fact that such old and wealthy houses granted formal

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35 Cooper, *The Last Generation of English Catholic Clergy*, p. 42.

36 Paul Jeffery, *The Collegiate Churches of England and Wales* (London: Robert Hale, 2004), p. 402.

37 *Ibid.*, pp. 400–402.

38 ‘House of Benedictine Nuns: The Abbey of Shaftesbury | British History Online’, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/dorset/vol2/pp73-79>, [accessed 9 May 2018].

patronage to such men increase their chance of reaching the episcopal bench, or were the Benedictines simply rather good at picking 'winners' in the race for high office?

Why did the numerically greater order of Augustinian canons (in terms of number of houses) not feature more in the list of top grantors of such patronage? Were they not part of the network of contacts that supported the men who would one day be England's bishops? That would seem odd, given the nature of the Augustinian order and its closeness to the secular clergy. At least part of the explanation may lie in the nature of their endowments. The Benedictine houses of Shaftesbury, Ramsey, Wilton and Wherwell were all of pre-Conquest foundation. Shaftesbury, Wilton and Wherwell were able to grant prebends free of the cure of souls to their chosen clerks. Of the other benefices they awarded to future bishops, all but one were rectories, many of high value. Similarly the benefices awarded by Ramsey were all valuable rectories. In such circumstances the rector could easily afford to pay a vicar to act as the resident clergyman while he retained a healthy income. By contrast, the Augustinian houses were of later foundation and many of their spiritual possessions were appropriated. This often meant that their value as a living was relatively low to the man appointed as vicar. Even with the richest of the Augustinian houses, their presence in the database is light. For example the wealthy house at Plympton awarded just one benefice as listed in the database, to John Veysey in 1504. Plympton held the advowson of Stoke-in-Teignhead but it was not appropriated, so Veysey did become the rector. The annual value at eleven marks in the *Taxatio* was not high, but given that Veysey already had valuable benefices from the diocese of Exeter, including the remunerative archdeaconry of Barnstaple, the income from Stoke-in-Teignhead would be only a modest addition. Of the fourteen Augustinian houses that were valued at over £500 net income in 1535,<sup>39</sup> only three houses (all in or near London) awarded two benefices: London St Bartholomew, Merton and Southwark. Eight houses,

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39 As taken from Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses, England and Wales*, pp. 137–45.

including the wealthy ones of Leicester and Waltham, awarded no benefices at all. If a house such as Plympton is typical of the Augustinian convents, then its focus on supporting men local to its diocese may also help to explain why their religious order is less prominent in the support for future bishops.<sup>40</sup> There is little evidence from Plympton that it was placing its own professed men into such benefices.<sup>41</sup> Instead, in common with other Augustinian houses, the prior made use of his priest canons to take services in those nearby churches and chapels appropriated to the priory. The lack of resident clergy and the problems that resulted were raised by the parishioners of Wembury in their complaint of 1535.<sup>42</sup> A financial saving of several pounds per year was clearly sufficient incentive for the prior to ward off such complaints.

One factor that may help explain the involvement of the Benedictine houses in the supply of benefices to future bishops concerns the foundation of colleges at the University of Oxford. Both the Augustinians and the Cistercians founded colleges for their respective orders at Oxford in the fifteenth century: St Mary's College was founded by the Augustinians in 1428 while St Bernard's College was founded in 1435. However, the Benedictines were already well-established by this time, with their collegiate foundations of Gloucester (1283), Durham (1291) and Canterbury (1362). Because of their lengthy presence, the Benedictines would have been part of that crucial university network on which aspiring graduate clerks might rely. A tradition of contacts and patronage by the Benedictines would surely have evolved well before the other regular orders.

For the religious houses as a whole, the database shows that 121 benefices were awarded to the men in our cohort, ninety-two by male houses and twenty-nine by female ones. A total of fifty-three houses were involved, and these are

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40 Allison D. Fizzard, *Plympton Priory: A House of Augustinian Canons in South-Western England in the Late Middle Ages*, Brill's Series in Church History, 30 (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2008), pp. 181–206.

41 'From 1257 to 1394, there is only the one case of a canon of Plympton obtaining a benefice'. *Ibid.*, p. 218.

42 TNA, SP 1/100 f.89 (my thanks to Prof. James Clark for this reference); a summary is available at *L&P*, ix, p. 391 as referred to in Fizzard, *Plympton Priory*, p. 175 n. 104.

summarised in the following table. Just seven were female houses, of which all were Benedictine except for the Cistercian house at Hampole (which awarded just one benefice, the rectory of Greetwell to Robert Gilbert in November 1413). As can be seen in Figure 4.6, five of the female Benedictine houses awarded multiple benefices; the only exception was the Abbey at Chatteris which awarded just one benefice in April 1495 to William Warham. The richer female houses in the list (such as Shaftesbury and Wilton, with net values of £1166 and £601 respectively in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*) awarded more benefices than the less well-endowed such as Chatteris and Hampole (worth £97 and £63). Interestingly, two of the richer Benedictine nunneries at Barking and Amesbury (worth £862 and £525) do not feature at all.<sup>43</sup> Amesbury was perhaps unusual in that all the spiritualities for which it held the advowson were also appropriated.<sup>44</sup> The value of its churches to ambitious secular clerks was therefore low. Barking was also unusual with its status as a barony. However, it did hold the advowsons of six rectories at Bulphan, Ingatestone, Abbess Roding, Great Warley, Great Wigborough and Slapton (Bucks), none of which were appropriated, so it was in a position to act as patron to notable secular clerks.<sup>45</sup> All those livings except Warley were worth between fifteen and twenty marks per annum in the *Taxatio*. There may therefore be some value in exploring further how Barking chose to exercise its patronage in contrast to its sister houses.

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43 Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses, England and Wales*, pp. 253–255, 272.

44 Berenice M. Kerr, 'Religious Life for Women from the Twelfth to the Middle of the Fourteenth Century with Special Reference to the English Foundations of the Order of Fontevraud.' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 1995), pp. 244, 249. See also the relevant entries in the *Taxatio* online database.

45 *Houses of Benedictine nuns: Abbey of Barking*, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/essex/vol2/pp115-122> [accessed 26 May 2018].

**Table 4.10.** A summary of the supply of benefices by those religious houses within the database

<b>Order</b>	<b>No. of houses</b>	<b>No. of benefices awarded</b>
Benedictine	33	93
Augustinian	14	17
Cluniac	3	3
Premonstratensian	2	2
Carthusian	1	2
Cistercian	1	1
Gilbertine	1	1
Knights Hospitaller	1	2

One striking finding from the database concerns the appointment of our men to the office of archdeacon. It illustrates a clear change in the way that the office of archdeacon was being used by the Church between the first and second halves of the fifteenth century. Table 4.11 below shows how our cohort could be appointed to a series of archdeaconries on their way to the highest office.

**Table 4.11.** The top five prelates by number of archdeaconries obtained

<b>Name</b>	<b>Number of archdeaconries</b>
John Morton	7
Robert Stillington	3
Robert Sherborne	3
Nicholas Bubwith	3
Oliver King	3

Morton stands out as the arch-collector of archdeaconries, and what is yet more remarkable is that he held five of these concurrently during his *annus mirabilis* of 1477. Table 4.12 contains the details.

**Table 4.12.** The list of archdeaonries that John Morton held concurrently in 1477

Archdeaonry	Date entered (YYYYMM)	Episcopal patron	Value in 1535
Chester	147405	John Hals	£68
Winchester	147503	William Waynflete	£58
Huntingdon	147503	Thomas Rotherham	£55
Berkshire	147611	Richard Beauchamp	£143
Norfolk	147701	James Goldwell	£81

In addition to the above, Morton exchanged the archdeaonry of Huntingdon for the more valuable one of Leicester in the diocese of Lincoln in January 1478 (valued at £81 in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*). The total income from the five archdeaonries above at almost £405 would be worth approximately £178,000 in modern currency.<sup>46</sup> Exactly how much of that money would come directly and personally to Morton is unclear. It has to be assumed that he exercised his archidiaconal functions by deputy in some if not all cases. He would therefore have had to provide for a deputy or official in each diocese. A detailed search of the relevant bishops' registers, all of which exist, may provide some evidence as to the arrangements.<sup>47</sup> Where other rising prelates had received archdeaonries, there is some evidence of their use of deputies from entries in the Calendar of Papal Letters. The permission they received was for the visitation of their archdeaonry by deputy.<sup>48</sup> These men include the following:

46 Calculated using the National Archives currency converter at

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency-converter> [accessed 13 May 2018].

47 David M. Smith, *Guide to Bishops' Registers of England and Wales: A Survey from the Middle Ages to the Abolition of Episcopacy in 1646*, Guides and Handbooks/Royal Historical Society, 11 (London: Royal Historical Society, 1981).

48 R. L. Storey, *Diocesan Administration in Fifteenth-Century England*, Borthwick Paper, 16, 2nd edn (York: St Anthony's Press, 1972), p. 16. William Lyndwood described how archdeacons and their officials undertook visitations of churches: William Lyndwood, *Lyndwood's Provinciale: The Text of the Canons Therein Contained, Reprinted from the Translation Made in 1534 / Edited by J.V. Bullard and H. Chalmer Bell*. (London: Faith Press, 1929), p. 20. The Legatine Constitutions of Otto, 1237, required archdeacons to visit churches within their jurisdiction and to be present often in the chapters of the deaneries, although Stephen Langton's constitutions of 1222 acknowledged that they might have deputies or officials to work for them – see Irene Josephine Churchill, *Canterbury*

Thomas Polton for the archdeaconry of Taunton in 1408; John Catterick for the archdeaconry of Surrey in 1412; Robert Stillington for the archdeaconry of Colchester in 1451 and that of Taunton in 1452; Edmund Audley for the archdeaconry of East Riding in 1477.<sup>49</sup> It seems very odd therefore that Morton is not mentioned anywhere in this respect. There is one entry in the papal registers dated March 1474 that describes the union of his two archdeaconries (Norwich and Chester) for life.<sup>50</sup> However there is no provision for visitation by deputy.

It is possible of course that Morton may have intended to carry out visitations personally, and there is evidence that he found time in what must have been a very busy schedule to make significant journeys on Church business. For example in or after June 1478 it appears that Morton may have been in Exeter for the presentation of Peter Courtenay as bishop of Exeter. Morton was appointed with three others to act as proctor of the Chapter to present the election of Bishop Courtenay to the see of Exeter and to the King.<sup>51</sup> Until further information comes to light, it is therefore very unclear how Morton acted to service all his concurrent archdeaconries. The other question that arises is why he was made the target of such episcopal beneficence. It may be that Morton's exceptional character was deemed worthy of an episcopal see but that there were no suitable vacancies to which the king wanted to see him presented. That changed in October 1478 of course when he was elected and made bishop of Ely by papal provision.<sup>52</sup> Until then, there may have been a perception that Morton should have the level of income worthy of a bishop, even if he did not as yet have possession of a see. Presumably pressure for that to happen may have come from Edward IV, but there is no specific evidence to confirm that conjecture. As previously discussed, the appointment of Morton to an

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*Administration : The Administrative Machinery of the Archbishopric of Canterbury*, 2 vols (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1933), i, p. 45.

49 See respectively *BRUO*, iii, p. 1494 for Polton, *BRUO*, i, p. 371 for Catterick, *BRUO*, iii, p. 1778 for Robert Stillington (both archdeaconries) and *BRUO*, i, p. 75 for Audley.

50 *CPL*, xiii, p. 449.

51 Exeter, Cathedral Archives, D&C 2378.

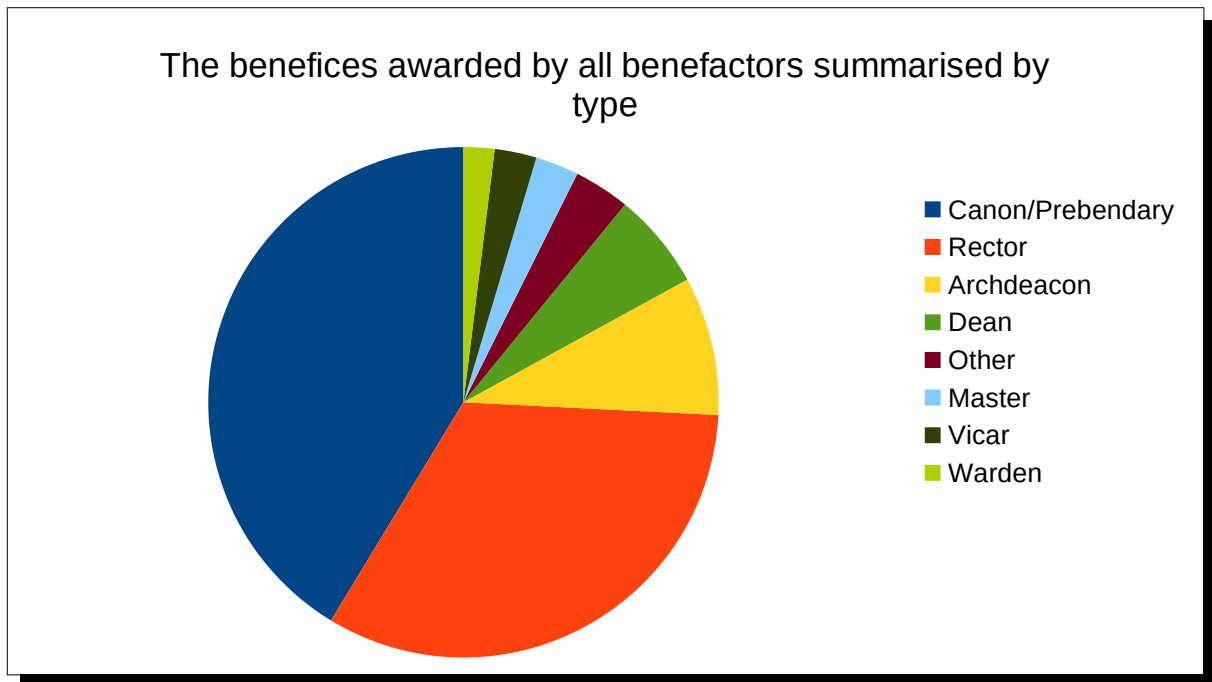
52 *CPL*, xiii, p. 657.



archdeaconry would not have been just a one-way process. The relevant bishop would hope and expect that Morton would act favourably to them in return. Morton would, at least in a formal sense, be a direct subordinate of the bishop and therefore available to carry out his directions. Once again however there is no direct evidence to show whether Morton was required to carry out any duties in his roles as archdeacon.

One interesting pattern among the men in Table 4.11 is the change from earlier in the century with men such as Nicholas Bubwith. Bubwith only held his three archdeaconries in succession, never concurrently. By the time of Robert Stillington in the 1460s this had changed, and at one point in 1465 he held all three of his concurrently. Similarly both Robert Sherborne and Oliver King held their three concurrently in the 1490s. The diocese of Bath & Wells has the distinction of providing the archdeaconry of Taunton to all three of Stillington, Sherborne and King. How far the difference in attitude to the holding of multiple archdeaconries might be explained by the new dynasties of the Yorkist and early Tudor kings, or by a Church less scrupulous about the execution of such duties, or by some other imperative to give these men greater wealth would surely merit further examination. Likewise for the men who held two archdeaconries during their rise, there does seem to be a change by mid-century. Henry Bowet, Thomas Brouns, Henry Chichele and Richard Clifford did not hold their archdeaconries concurrently. Even Adam Moleyns in the period 1439 to 1445 held his two only in succession. However by the 1450s men such as Nicholas Close and William Gray both held theirs concurrently.

The relative importance of the awarding of archdeaconries can be seen by looking at the chart in Figure 4.7. This shows for all benefactors (whether royal, episcopal, lay or other) what type of benefice was awarded to our cohort of men. The total number of archdeaconries at ninety-nine is a significant slice in the chart.



**Figure 4.7.** The types of benefices as awarded by all benefactors.

Of the archdeaconries, the most valuable was that of Richmond. In the *Taxatio* it was valued at approximately £200 (an annual value of almost £150,000 in modern currency). Several future bishops held possession of this jewel; these included (with dates in YYYYMM format):

Thomas Kemp (144211-144808), William Gray (145003-145406), Laurence Booth (145408-145708), John Arundell d.1477 (145710-145900), John Booth (145905-146503), John Shirwood (146507-148403), John Blyth (148509-149311) and James Stanley (150011-150607)

Table 4.13 lists the five next most valuable archdeaconries and their holders. None of these men also held Richmond, so there appears to have been some attempt to spread the rewards; note also that in the five archdeaconries in the table below, no name features more than once.

**Table 4.13.** The next most valuable archdeaconries after Richmond and their holders

<b>Archdeaconry</b>	<b>Value in £ per annum from the <i>Valor Ecclesiasticus</i></b>	<b>Name of holder and dates (YYYYMM format)</b>
Wiltshire	185	John Chedworth (144908-145202), Peter Courtenay (146410-147900)
Lincoln	180	Henry Bowet (138703-140108)
Canterbury	164	Richard Clifford (139703-140100), Robert Hallum (140004-140600), John Wakering (140807-141511)
Wells	145	Richard Nykke (149407-150012)
Norfolk	144	Thomas Langley (139910-140609), Philip Morgan (141804-141904), John Hals (144802-145909), John Morton (147701-147812)

The way archdeaconries were awarded, and the changing pattern and distribution, do seem to suggest there was an element of design and control over the allocation. There is no formal record of how that might have been done, and it may have been on a less structured basis. Whether there was a degree of control by the archbishops, or whether there was broader rule of thumb applied is not clear. The bishops themselves would have been able when they met for sessions of parliament or at convocation to discuss their promising clerks, but no particular record survives that could throw light on their deliberations. However, other studies do suggest that 'bishops cooperated to advance men, not only those who were in their own service, but also those

significant in the administration – judicial administration above all – of the English Church at provincial and even national level.<sup>53</sup>

Returning to Figure 4.7, there are a few more details to elucidate. The heading of ‘Canon/Prebendary’ represents the fact that clerks could become canon of a cathedral chapter but then exchange their first prebend for a second (and often more valuable) one. The fact that these are counted separately can be justified in the sense that they represent distinct acts of patronage. However what could be misleading is to read this number as representing the number of canonical positions awarded. The total number of awards to a canon’s stall was 349, with 117 subsequent awards of a new prebend. John Morton profited twice from this process. At London he moved from the prebend of Islington to the more valuable one of Chiswick. Similarly at Bath & Wells he progressed from Dinder to the much more valuable prebend of St Decuman.<sup>54</sup> Early in our period Thomas Brouns became a canon of Lincoln with the prebend of Welton West. He later exchanged it for the prebend of Langford Manor at four times the value according to the numbers in the *Taxatio*.<sup>55</sup> It was not always the case that such exchange of prebendaries was to one of higher value. For example late in our period Hugh Oldham moved after six years from the Coventry & Lichfield prebend of Colwich to the less valuable one of Freford.<sup>56</sup> His was not the only example, and this suggests an element of design and management in terms of bringing new clerks into prebends.

Those men who had achieved the rank of archdeacon might well hope for further promotion. So too might those who had attained the position of dean. The number of times the position of dean was awarded to our cohort was much smaller, with a total of sixty-nine awards. Not all deaneries were as grand as

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53 A. K. McHardy, ‘Patronage in Late Medieval Colleges’, in *The Late Medieval English College and Its Context*, ed. by Clive Burgess and Martin Heale (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2008), pp. 89–109 (p. 109).

54 *BRUC*, p. 412.

55 *BRUC*, i, pp. 281–2.

56 *BRUC*, ii, p. 1396.

that of the post of dean at Lincoln or St Paul's in London. They included smaller establishments such as the free chapels at Bridgnorth or Tickhill, as well as celebrated royal institutions such as St George's Chapel at Windsor. More than a dozen men in our cadre held more than one post of dean during their progress to the episcopate, and some held more. At the head of the list with five deaneries is William Dudley who enjoyed such largesse from Edward IV during his second reign. Table 4.14 shows how Dudley held these concurrently for several years.

**Table 4.14.** The deaneries held by William Dudley<sup>57</sup>

<b>Date entered (YYYYMM format)</b>	<b>Date left (YYYYMM format)</b>	<b>Details</b>
146111	147607	Wolverhampton
147100	147607	Chapel Royal
147107	147607	Bridgnorth
147208	147607	Newark College & Hospital
147210	147607	St George's Chapel, Windsor

William Dudley is exceptional among his peers in holding five deaneries, but the four that were held by Thomas Wolsey do show just how greatly he was favoured in the early years of Henry VIII's reign.

**Table 4.15.** The deaneries held by Thomas Wolsey.<sup>58</sup>

<b>Date entered (YYYYMM format)</b>	<b>Date left (YYYYMM format)</b>	<b>Details (patron in brackets)</b>
150900	151212	Hereford (Richard Mayhew)

57 *BRUO*, i, pp. 599-600.

58 *BRUO*, iii, pp. 2077-80.

150902	151402	Lincoln (William Smith)
151302	151402	York (Christopher Bainbridge)
151400	151402	St Stephen's Chapel, Westminster (Henry VIII)

Of the men who held three deaneries, several held them concurrently. By September 1515 John Veysey held all three of Exeter, the Chapel Royal and St George's Chapel, Windsor.<sup>59</sup> In contrast, Richard Courtenay held deaneries at South Malling, St Asaph and Wells in the period 1395 to 1413, but only in succession.<sup>60</sup> Later on Peter Courtenay held positions at St Stephen's Chapel, Westminster and St George's Chapel, Windsor concurrently, but he left the latter before taking up the deanery of Exeter.<sup>61</sup> The other man to have held three deaneries was Robert Gilbert. For a brief period in the early 1430s he had possession of the Chapel Royal, of York and of the Free Chapel of Tickhill.<sup>62</sup> Hence there does appear to be a tendency for the concurrent possession of deaneries to increase by the time of the Yorkist kings onwards, but the pattern is not as clear-cut as it is for the archdeaconries.

A man could always rise by the good fortune of belonging to a family whose members were already occupying very high positions within the Church. Through the course of the fifteenth century there was a series of key family relationships that can be identified from the database. Six family groups illustrate how important ties of family and kinship could be in providing significant amounts of patronage to the aspiring clerk. The Blyth brothers, John and Geoffrey, together with their uncle Thomas Rotherham, provide an outstanding example of this. The elder brother, John, was launched briskly into high office by Rotherham when the latter was bishop of Lincoln, appointing his nephew successively to the archdeaconries of Stow and then Huntingdon. The move was a good one for John as the annual values according to the *Valor*

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59 *BRUO*, iii, pp. 1947-8.

60 *BRUO*, i, pp. 500-502.

61 *BRUO*, i, pp. 499-500.

62 *BRUO*, ii, pp. 766-7.

*Ecclesiasticus* were £24 and £58 respectively.<sup>63</sup> Once Rotherham had been translated to York he then awarded John with two of the most valuable benefices in his gift, namely the golden prebend of Masham and the archdeaconry of Richmond. By the time John had been raised to the episcopate at Salisbury in 1493 his possession of only five benefices in total could not have been regarded as any hardship. John's brother Geoffrey was twenty years his junior, and Geoffrey had the great good fortune to have the bishop of Salisbury and the archbishop of York as family benefactors. His uncle supplied him successively with the position of canon (with prebends) at Beverley and then York and by the age of twenty-three he was already archdeacon of Cleveland within his uncle's gift. At Salisbury his elder brother granted him positions as canon/prebendary, as Treasurer and as the archdeacon of Salisbury. Geoffrey received a rectory from Henry VII and benefices from the Abbess of Shaftesbury, from Giovanni de Gigli, the bishop of Worcester, and from William Warham as bishop of London. As if all of this was not enough, Geoffrey was also elected as dean of York in March 1497.<sup>64</sup> Family connections had therefore given Geoffrey's career immense help. However one poignant note concerns Geoffrey's collation to the archdeaconry of Salisbury on Thursday 22 August 1499; his brother and benefactor, John, died the very next day.<sup>65</sup> Geoffrey went on to become bishop of Coventry & Lichfield in 1503 where he continued the theme of providing benefices and other positions for several of his relations.<sup>66</sup>

Having an uncle on the episcopal bench proved highly beneficial to Robert Morton, both in terms of ecclesiastical and temporal preferment. John Morton only favoured his nephew with one ecclesiastical benefice directly, that of the Free Chapel of St Pancras at Axmouth in Devon in August 1473.<sup>67</sup> The right of presentation was presumably granted to John, at least for the current turn, by the king; the entry in Booth's register reads: *ad presentationem venerabilis viri*

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63 *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, iv, p. 27.

64 For all of Geoffrey Blyth's benefices see *BRUC*, pp. 67-8.

65 *BRUC*, p. 68.

66 See Andrew Chibi's *ODNB* article at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/2726>.

67 Reg. Booth, fo. 26r, Exeter, Devon Heritage Centre.

*Magistri Johannis Morton Custodis Rotulorum Cancellariae domini Regis Veri patroni eiusdem.* There is no entry in the relevant calendar of patent rolls to show that Morton had been granted the right to nominate to St Pancras. There are two entries in Edmund Lacy's register as bishop of Exeter that show the king as patron of this chapel, dated 1429 and 1443.<sup>68</sup> The contemporary patent rolls do show Morton being granted the right of nomination elsewhere; he, together with John Russell, John Gunthorpe and Richard Martyn, were granted the right to nominate to the next vacant canonry and prebend in the king's free chapel of St Stephen's, Westminster.<sup>69</sup> The absence of any record for the chapel of St Pancras is therefore a minor mystery. Uncle John was also able, while still occupying the post himself, to secure for Robert the mastership of the rolls as his successor.<sup>70</sup> It seems clear that John Morton's influence could well have been at work with respect to some of the other benefices that his nephew received. When the elder Morton became bishop of Ely, several of his benefices went straight to his nephew, including his prebendary of Chiswick in London, the rectory at South Molton in the Exeter diocese, the archdeaconry of Winchester and the prebendary of Horton in Salisbury diocese. Having an influential uncle was of particular value to Robert in October 1486 when he was given the bishop's seat at Worcester. John Morton had just been appointed archbishop of Canterbury, and the king was clearly more than ready to accept the elder Morton's proposal as to who should follow John Alcock at Worcester (Alcock had been translated to the see of Ely that John Morton had just vacated).<sup>71</sup> John Morton's bull of translation to Canterbury was dated 6 October 1486, and Robert's provision to Worcester was dated 16 October. It also seems that another of Morton's nephews, Thomas, may have benefited from his influence. Thomas was rector of Maiden Newton in Dorset by 1480, a benefice that his

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68 F. C. Hingeston-Randolph, ed., *The Register of Edmund Lacy: Bishop of Exeter...1420-1455; with Some Account of the Episcopate of John Catrik...1419*, 2 vols, Episcopal Registers of the Diocese of Exeter 1420–1455 (London; Exeter, 1909), i, pp. 120 and 279 respectively). In Lacy's register the chapel is described as being in Rousdon.

69 *CPR, 1476-85*, p. 597.

70 *Ibid.*, p. 71.

71 *Handbook of British Chronology*, ed. by E. B. Fryde and others, Guides and Handbooks/Royal Historical Society, 2, 3rd edn (London: Royal Historical Society, 1986), p. 280.



uncle had occupied in the 1450s (the patronage was in the hands of the Audley family).<sup>72</sup> It seems clear from all of this that John Morton was as concerned as any of his peers with supporting and nurturing members of his family in their ecclesiastical careers.

Although Morton may have seemed a generous uncle, his actions are completely overshadowed by the benefactions of John Kemp while archbishop of York. To his nephew, Thomas (the future bishop of London) he awarded ten of the twelve benefices that Thomas received. The other two were from the king and from the archbishop of Canterbury. Thomas clearly did not need to make any effort to develop his patronage network when his uncle was able and willing to supply him with a series of valuable prebends and two archdeaconries, including the highly valuable one of Richmond.<sup>73</sup> Thomas Kemp is perhaps the outstanding example in the fifteenth century of such direct family patronage.

Another clerk who benefited from the patronage of John Kemp at York was William Gray, the future bishop of Ely. Before that, however, Gray had received three important benefices from his uncle, William Gray who was successively bishop of London and then Lincoln. The uncle had also ordained his nephew to the orders of acolyte, sub-deacon and deacon in 1434.<sup>74</sup> It seems very likely that William Gray would have continued to provide generous patronage to his nephew. However, the older Gray died suddenly in 1436. The younger William was, however, very well-connected, and his maternal uncle was Humphrey Stafford, duke of Buckingham (*d.* 1460). Thus the benefices he enjoyed from Richard Nevill as bishop of Salisbury, from John Kemp and from the king are perhaps not surprising.<sup>75</sup> The theme of the fortunate nephew continues with Christopher Bainbridge, the future cardinal archbishop of York, whose maternal uncle was Thomas Langton (*d.* 1501). Langton was successively bishop of St

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72 *BRUC*, p. 414.

73 *BRUO*, ii, pp. 1032-4.

74 See Roy Martin Haines' biography of Gray at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/11567>.

75 See *BRUO*, ii, pp. 809-14 and <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/11567>.

David's, Salisbury, Winchester and, for five days before his untimely death, archbishop-elect of Canterbury. While serving as bishop of Salisbury, Langton favoured his nephew with three benefices, and the same number when he was translated to Winchester. At Winchester he supplied Bainbridge with the valuable rectories of Meonstoke and Wroughton before appointing him as archdeacon of Surrey. Despite the death of Langton, Bainbridge's career continued to prosper with benefices from Richard Redman at Exeter and Thomas Savage at York.<sup>76</sup> Thomas Langton did not confine his family patronage solely to Bainbridge. Another nephew of his, Robert Langton (*d.* 1524), also received benefices from his uncle.<sup>77</sup>

The Booth family provide a potentially interesting contrast. Certainly there were close family links between the oldest, William Booth, his younger half-brother, Laurence, and his nephew, John. William was bishop of Coventry & Lichfield before his translation to York, and displayed largesse to both Laurence and John.<sup>78</sup> However Charles Booth (the future bishop of Hereford), who has been described as closely related to William et al. received no benefice from any of the Booths. Instead he owed much of his benefaction to William Smith when Smith was bishop successively at Coventry & Lichfield and then Lincoln. Given just how strong the family networks seem to have been, and the demonstrable level of patronage granted by bishops to their close relatives in the Church, the position of Charles Booth suggests he may not have been a close relative of William or Laurence. Another contrast seems to be the Arundell family where both bishops, somewhat inconveniently, were called John. John senior (1400-1477) was bishop of Chichester from January 1459; John junior (1433-1504) was bishop of Coventry & Lichfield from August 1496 before his translation to Exeter in April 1502. Both are described as being of the Arundells of Cornwall,

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76 See *BRUO*, i, pp. 91-3 and D. S. Chambers' biography at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/1081>.

77 See <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/16042>.

78 For William Booth see <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/2896>. Unusually he studied common law at Gray's Inn. For details of John see *BRUC*, pp. 77-8 and for Laurence see *BRUC*, pp. 78-9. For Charles see *BRUC*, p. 77 and also the biography by D. G. Newcombe at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/42092>. It is Newcombe who suggests that Charles was a close relative.

but the younger John received no preferment from the elder John. This absence of patronage suggests their kinship, or at least their relationship, was not close.<sup>79</sup>

The importance of ties of kinship and the granting of patronage has been clearly demonstrated. What also becomes clear is the role of family status. A very strong determinant of the level of patronage and its possession at a very early age was the fact of being from a noble family. The relatively small group of men from the nobility who sought high office in the Church could demonstrate spectacular progress, although their number became vanishingly small as the century advanced. Those few examples do show some remarkable characteristics. The following table provides some key information on their progress.

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<sup>79</sup> For John senior see *BRUO*, i, pp. 49-50 and <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/719>. For John junior see *BRUO*, i, pp. 50-51 and <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/720>.

**Table 4.16.** The noble bishops and their ages at key stages in their careers

<b>Name</b>	<b>Year of birth (all are estimated)</b>	<b>Age at first benefice</b>	<b>Age when elevated to the episcopacy</b>
Richard Scrope Snr	1350	18	36
William Wells	1380	Regular	56
Richard Courtenay	1381	16	32
Robert Fitzhugh	1383	15	48
William Gray	1388	26	37
Marmaduke Lumley	1390	25	39
Robert Neville	1404	9	23
Richard Beauchamp	1410	26	38
Thomas Bourchier	1411	16	24
William Gray	1414	17	41
Richard Scrope Jnr	1419	24	47
William Percy	1428	8	24
William Dudley	1430	27	46
Peter Courtenay	1432	16	46
George Neville	1432	10	24
Edmund Audley	1439	25	41
Lionel Woodville	1454	12	28
James Stanley	1465	14	41

The one immediate anomaly in this list is William Wells. He is the only member of the regular clergy, and he came to the episcopate at quite an advanced age. The proposal that Wells was of a noble line comes from Maureen Jurkowski's *ODNB* sketch.<sup>80</sup> Her reasoning is that he 'may have been born into a cadet branch of the baronial family of Wells of Lincolnshire, since a variation of its

<sup>80</sup> <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/95173>.

arms decorates the first page of his episcopal register'. It is impossible to prove this proposal one way or the other, but Wells does seem to be a peculiar case.

The other men in Table 4.16 show some clear and more consistent characteristics. The age at which some of them achieved their first benefice was startling. William Percy heads the list, having become a canon of York with the prebend of Riccall at the age of eight. Two years later he was a canon of Salisbury with the prebend of Bedminster and Radcliffe, and by the age of fourteen he also held a canonry at Lincoln with the prebend of Scamblesby.<sup>81</sup> The value of these three prebends in the *Taxatio* amounted to over £136, not a bad income stream for a boy in his early teens. The Nevilles, Robert and George, made a similarly early start to their careers in benefice accumulation. Robert's first benefice at the age of nine was a canonry at Auckland in the diocese of Durham; this included a portion of the prebend at Eldon. By the time he was fifteen, Neville also held canonries with prebends at York, Howden and Beverley.<sup>82</sup> The total value of those in the *Taxatio* was £213. George Neville achieved his first canonry at Salisbury with the prebend of Chardstock at the age of ten. It was then five years until his next prebend, but by way of compensation it was the golden prebend of Masham.<sup>83</sup> The value of Masham alone was over £167 in the *Taxatio*. Just what these generous benefactions to boys so young might mean needs some further discussion. All were from noble families and so would already have significant wealth. Deriving a strong income stream from the Church would therefore be a pleasing addition to their finances, but not one they necessarily required. The benefactors were all men of very high status: bishops, archbishops and the king himself. Their acts of endowment would be appreciated as much by the wider families as by the individual recipients and would further strengthen existing bonds. For the Church there would be an appreciation of the commitment by such noble families in placing one of their sons into the clergy. However these endowments

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81 *BRUC*, p. 450.

82 *BRUO*, ii, p. 1350.

83 *BRUO*, ii, pp. 1347-9.

might also be seen as reinforcing a sense of entitlement by aristocratic families to the resources of the Church. Just how far the granting of these benefices was initiated and requested by the king himself as opposed to the patronage of individual prelates is not clear. The relationship between the nobility and the Church is therefore somewhat ambiguous. We have seen in a previous chapter how the number of noble prelates, never a large number, declined over the course of the fifteenth century. Only Lionel Woodville and James Stanley were born after 1450, and by the early sixteenth century only Stanley and Edmund Audley survived as bishops of noble origin. The question here therefore is whether the noble prelate represented an older tradition, and whether he was replaced by design by a new breed of administrators and royal counsellors drawn from the educated gentry and acting as some embryonic civil service.

The contrast to the position in France appears stark. Table 4.17 shows the social origins of those French bishops where such origins can be identified.

**Table 4.17.** The identifiable social origins of French bishops in the early sixteenth century (after Edelstein)<sup>84</sup>

<b>Social category</b>	<b>Reign of Louis XII (1498-1515)</b>	<b>Reign of Francis I (1515-1547)</b>
Princes of the blood ( <i>princes du sang</i> )	4	7
Nobility of the sword ( <i>noblesse d'épée</i> )	61	72
Nobility of the robe ( <i>noblesse de robe</i> )	29	17
Men of the people ( <i>hommes du peuple</i> )	6	4

84 Marilyn Manera Edelstein, 'Les Origines Sociales de l'épiscopat Sous Louis XII et François Ier', *Revue d'histoire Moderne et Contemporaine*, 24.2 (1977), 239–47 (p. 244). Note that for the reign of Louis XII the total number of bishops was 135 of whom 36 were of unknown social origin and were therefore not included in the table. For the reign of Francis I the number of unknowns was 53 out of a grand total of 182.

The proportion of men coming from the lower rank of the nobility was in decline between the two reigns, while that of the nobles of the sword increased. This seems to be in direct contradiction to the pattern in England, where the proportion of noble bishops overall was very low. However, some care must be taken when comparing the two realms. The differences between the two societies means that it is difficult to make direct comparisons. Somebody from a higher gentry family in England might easily be compared to a noble of the robe in France, even though they could not be termed of noble origin as far as English delineation is concerned. Furthermore a member of the upper gentry in England who possessed a knighthood might be compared to at least some members of the nobility of the sword in France. Thus, only a fraction of those classed as nobles of the sword might be aligned unambiguously with an English noble, i.e. somebody from a titled family of baronets, earls etc. Despite these reservations, there does seem to be a sizeable difference between the episcopate in France and that in England by the first quarter of the sixteenth century. Part of the explanation may lie with needs of the French state and the wars it was fighting in Italy. Francis I appears in particular to have shown ecclesiastical patronage to those Italian families that were part of his military alliance.<sup>85</sup> That contrasts with the role of bishops in England where they have been characterised as civil servants, active in law, diplomacy and the administration of Church and state.<sup>86</sup>

The database also allows us to look at cruder but interesting statistics. Table 4.18 lists the top beneficiaries among our cohort in terms of sheer number of benefices received.

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85 Edelstein, 'Les Origines Sociales', 246.

86 Swanson, *Church and Society in Late Medieval England*, p. 80.

**Table 4.18.** The future prelates who received the highest number of benefices

<b>Name</b>	<b>Number of benefices</b>
Richard Clifford	31
Adam Moleyns	25
John Veysey	24
Nicholas Bubwith	23
William Dudley	23
Hugh Oldham	22
John Arundell (d. 1477)	22
Oliver King	22
John Arundell (d. 1504)	21
James Goldwell	21
John Morton	21

The table shows all those men who enjoyed more than twenty benefices. Richard Clifford is clearly the most favoured by some margin, and he owed much of this to Richard II who favoured him with twenty-one. Quantity was not everything, however, and Table 4.19 shows instead the accumulated value of benefices received by income level. For comparison purposes the annual income levels used are those given in the *Taxatio* of 1291-2. The table provides a simple raw total for each prelate, adding together the total nominal income from every one of their benefices. It does not give a measure of how much income they may have derived in any one year.



**Table 4.19.** The raw total income across all their benefices for the top ‘earners’ in the cohort

<b>Bishop</b>	<b>Summed values in pounds</b>
Lionel Woodville	753.00
Nicholas Bubwith	722.78
Richard Clifford	627.00
Thomas Wolsey	584.00
Thomas Kemp	553.33
Robert Gilbert	509.67
Hugh Oldham	476.33
Robert Stillington	454.33
Adam Moleyns	453.67
John Wakering	451.27
Henry Bowet	435.00
Richard Courtenay	421.33

For those men at the top of the table, the role of the king seems to have played a dominant role. Lionel Woodville of course had the great advantage of being part of the extended royal family of Edward IV’s queen. Nicholas Bubwith was central to the rule of Henry IV, while Clifford and Wolsey were lavishly endowed during the reigns of Richard II and Henry VIII respectively.

In supreme contrast to the number and value of benefices enjoyed by these men is the single benefice known to have been granted to John Fisher before his elevation to the see of Rochester. Fisher was made rector of the church of Lythe in Yorkshire in March 1499 where his patron was Sir Ralph Bigod.<sup>87</sup> The rectory, with a value of over £33 in the *Taxatio* assessment, would have supplied a modest though not uncomfortable living.

To this point, the focus of this chapter has been around the concept and practice of clerical patronage. However there is a related and potentially overlapping concept that requires consideration, namely that of ‘clerical affinity’.

<sup>87</sup> R. Warnicke M., ‘Sir Ralph Bigod: A Loyal Servant to King Richard III’, *The Ricardian*, 6:84 (1984), 299–303.

The nature of affinity has been widely studied and discussed by historians in relation to the lay society of late medieval England, but its application to clerics in terms of particular 'clerical affinities' is less clear-cut. Portrayed as a key facet of bastard feudalism, 'affinity' has been applied to groupings across English society. Richard II 'embarked on the formation of a royal affinity' in 1390, and later in his reign displayed a 'growing affinity with the north-west'.<sup>88</sup> Probably the foremost affinity as defined by historians has been that of the Lancastrian dynasty: 'Affinity represents an attempt by the traditional leaders of society – crown and nobility – to contain the increasingly diversified armigerous class within the old traditions of lordship.'<sup>89</sup> Many other affinities have been identified, such as those of Richard Beauchamp, earl of Warwick from 1401 to 1439, or the declining affinity of the earls of Devon.<sup>90</sup> The reality and strength of those affinities are portrayed as key motivators for the intense political struggles of the 1450s and beyond.

The same terminology has been taken up by historians of the late medieval Church. Writing in 1979 Dobson talked of '... the great and long-lived if somewhat amorphous clerical affinity from northern Lincolnshire and the East Riding of Yorkshire, which had done so much to staff the crown's administration between the reigns of Edward I and Edward III'.<sup>91</sup> By 1992 he reduced the scope of that affinity somewhat, describing it as 'that great East Riding clerical affinity associated with Archbishops Melton and Thoresby of York, an affinity which controlled much of the English state's bureaucratic machine during the

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88 Nigel Saul, *Richard II*, Yale English Monarchs (New Haven ; London: Yale University Press, 1997), pp. 265, 393.

89 G.L. Harriss, 'Introduction' in K.B. McFarlane, *England in the Fifteenth Century: Collected Essays* (London, 1981), p. xxvii as quoted in Simon Walker, *The Lancastrian Affinity 1361-1399*, p. 2.

90 Christine Carpenter, 'The Beauchamp Affinity: A Study of Bastard Feudalism at Work', *English Historical Review*, 95 (1980), 514-532; M. Cherry, 'The Courtenay Earls of Devon: The Formation and Disintegration of a Late Medieval Aristocratic Family', *Southern History*, 1 (1979), 71-97.

91 Barrie Dobson, 'The Residentiary Canons of York in the Fifteenth Century', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 30.2 (1979), 145-74 (p. 155). Barrie Dobson, 'The Residentiary Canons of York in the Fifteenth Century', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 30.2 (1979), 145-74 (p. 155).

reign of Edward III.<sup>92</sup> Writing in 2005, Dobson gave a further insight into the origin of his terminology:

‘It can also be argued, by yet another irony, that the major contribution of the northern Church to the welfare of the English realm as a whole was to recruit large numbers of the most able members of the northern clergy into the service of the English State. In a very early volume of Northern History, John Grassi (slightly anticipated by Hamilton Thompson) argued that the exceptionally rich arable villages running from Patrington and Hedon through Hull and Cottingham to Howden and Hemingbrough, in economic terms the ‘banana belt’ of the medieval North, were the spawning grounds of the most influential clerical affinity in medieval England.’<sup>93</sup>

The article by John Grassi to which Dobson refers was written in 1970, but it does not itself use the term ‘clerical affinity’, or indeed refer to the word ‘affinity’ at all.<sup>94</sup> Grassi’s term of choice is ‘group’, although on one occasion (p. 17) he uses the word ‘flood’. He also acknowledges his debt to the work of A. Hamilton Thompson in first identifying the existence of a large and long-lasting group of Yorkshire clerks in government service.<sup>95</sup>

A small number of other authors have also used the term. In her 1989 doctoral thesis, Patricia Cullum talked of ‘the great Thoresby-Ravenser -Waltham clerical affinity.’<sup>96</sup> She portrays that affinity coming to an end, saying ‘Waltham was replaced by the other William Ferriby who had connections with the Prince of

92 Barrie Dobson, ‘The Church of Durham and the Scottish Borders’, in *War and Border Societies in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Anthony Goodman and Anthony Tuck (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 124–54 (p. 130); Barrie Dobson, *Church and Society in the Medieval North of England* (London: Hambledon Press, 1996), p. 54.

93 Barrie Dobson, ‘The Northern Province in the Later Middle Ages’, *Northern History*, 42.1 (2005), 49–60 (p. 54).

94 J.L. Grassi, ‘Royal Clerks from the Archdiocese of York in the Fourteenth Century’, *Northern History*, 5.1 (1970), 12–33.

95 A. Hamilton Thompson, ‘The Medieval Chapter’, *York Minster Historical Tracts* (London, 1927) no. 13 (unpaginated); *Register of Thomas Corbridge, II*, ed. W. Brown and A. Hamilton Thompson, Surtees Society, 141 (Durham & London: 1928), p. xxvii.

Wales, although he also seems to have had fond memories of his former master Richard II. With these two came to an end the dominance of the great Yorkshire clerical affinity.<sup>97</sup> Writing in 1995, Simon Walker portrayed the end of the Yorkshire clerical affinity when he wrote: ‘As the great-nephew of Edward III’s chancellor, John Thoresby, and the last member of Thoresby’s great clerical affinity to hold important administrative office, Waltham was an appropriate architect for a policy of royalist renewal based upon a close knowledge and selective exploitation of existing precedents.’<sup>98</sup> Writing also in 1995, John Friedman, in discussing the name John Anlaby contained within a fifteenth century manuscript, stated ‘Anlabys of the town of Anlaby near Beverley formed a clerical affinity around Beverley and York at this period’.<sup>99</sup> Friedman seems to be the only reference that does not focus on the fourteenth century archbishops of York.

One much more recent user of the term is Elizabeth Gemmill. Writing in 2013, she identified that ‘magnates had at their disposal an array of ecclesiastical interests that created opportunities for what might be loosely called their ‘clerical affinity’’.<sup>100</sup> The time period of her study was much earlier with a focus was on ecclesiastical patronage by the higher nobility of later thirteenth-century England.<sup>101</sup> She does not therefore look at churchmen, their exercise of patronage and any affinity that might result.

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96 Patricia Helena Cullum, ‘Hospitals and Charitable Provision in Medieval Yorkshire, 936-1547’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of York, 1989)  
<<http://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/4268/1/DX089185.pdf>> [accessed 18 May 2020] p. 148.

97 Ibid., p. 149.

98 Simon Walker, ‘Richard II’s Views on Kingship’, in *Rulers and Ruled in Late Medieval England: Essays Presented to Gerald Harriss*, ed. by Rowena E. Archer, and Simon Walker (London: Hambledon Press, 1995), pp. 49–64 (p. 56).

99 John Block Friedman, *Northern English Books, Owners, and Makers in the Late Middle Ages* (Syracuse, N.Y: Syracuse University Press, 1995), p. 286 n.48.

100 Elizabeth Gemmill, *The Nobility and Ecclesiastical Patronage in Thirteenth-Century England* (Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2013), p. 97. Elizabeth Gemmill, *The Nobility and Ecclesiastical Patronage in Thirteenth-Century England* (Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2013), p. 97.

101 Ibid., p. 1.

When looking at the aspiring cleric and his career path to high office within the Church, consideration must therefore be given to this concept of clerical affinity and how it may have applied to that cohort of men who rose to the rank of bishop. Figure 4.1 illustrated so clearly that those great lords of the Church, the bishops and archbishops, played a major part as *domini* in nurturing those men who might succeed them. The tenets of good lordship required that these lords should dispense their patronage wisely. However, the episcopate was not just a set of individuals – its members could and, it seems, did act collectively when deciding who should be appointed to key positions such as archdeacons and deaneries.<sup>102</sup> When rising stars were given the title of archdeacon, some might not have had any realistic chance of fulfilling the duties associated with their new position, and would have had to act through deputies. Good lordship would require that such arrangements were handled effectively so as not to detract from the efficient administration of the diocese. Any bishop might himself be called on to spend much of his time on royal business, and he knew the critical importance of ensuring that his diocese was well-run in his absence. Good lordship also demanded that the current members of the episcopal bench place men into the king's purview who were the most suitable for elevation when the time came. Those clerks who had been so favoured would, in return, owe service to their benefactors. The men directly in the king's service would need to work diligently and effectively, not just to serve their monarch, but to safeguard the reputation and honour of the ecclesiastical lords who had made their postings possible. The reciprocal ties that this process engendered were a source of stability for the Church.

A man coming into his first bishopric might have had little option but to continue using the diocesan administrators he inherited from his predecessor. Faced with the need to understand the complexities of his new position, and having to strike a balance between his new authority and the constraints of his particular diocese, he would need to act with some caution at first. By contrast, an existing

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<sup>102</sup> See the discussion centred around Table 4.13 in this chapter.

bishop who was translated to another diocese could, and often did, take his most trusted servants and administrators with him.<sup>103</sup> For a lay lord, his affinity comprised a great network of individuals, sometimes defined purely by geography, who would turn to him for defence and leadership. For a medieval bishop affinity was a more flexible and complex structure. He clearly enjoyed a temporal affinity that was roughly akin to that of a lay lord, but his clerical affinity was not so constrained by geography or feudal ties. He could search out men for their educational attainments, for their skills in tasks of administration, for their high standing among their peer group. That variety of choice could help to explain the differing character of the households of individual prelates, as well as clarifying the role that fashionable innovations played in their choices.

The follower of a bishop, abbot or other prelate was bound to him or her by the requirements of canon law. However, that same law could also act as protection against their lord. Refuge could be sought against arbitrary acts or judgements made by their lord. John Morton's legal advocates did not shrink from taking sides against him when allying themselves with the cause of the bishop of London.<sup>104</sup> The scope of an episcopal affinity could always be constrained by re-defining or amending the lord's jurisdiction. The biblical model of discipleship needs to be welded on to the model of lay affinity as it applies to prelacy. The concept of discipleship involves much more than the idea of a follower, somebody who enthuses about the qualities, actions or ideas of the one they wish to follow. For a true disciple, their lord offers wisdom, grace and the path to salvation. The reciprocal relationships that surrounded clerical lordship thereby encompassed both body and soul, whereas those of a lay affinity had the body as their focus.

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103 See Steven Gunn's *ODNB* article on Thomas Savage where he describes how Savage '... brought with him to York many of his Rochester and London administrators, and it is a mark of his sound judgement that these would survive him and run the diocese in succeeding decades' - <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/24727>.

104 Christopher Harper-Bill, 'Bishop Richard Hill and the Court of Canterbury, 1494-96', *Guildhall Studies in London History*, 3.1 (1977), 1-12 (p. 10).

A simplistic model of clerical affinity, looking back at earlier centuries, might suggest a basic, feudal structure with the bishop as lord and clerks giving service to that lord in return for benefits, primarily of benefices. However, each bishop had only so many benefices to hand out, with many others in the hands of religious houses, lay individuals or the monarch. Furthermore there were many more ordained clerks than benefices available. Many clerks had precarious lives, providing service to occasional patrons in the role of chaplain, as celebrant of obits, as deputy to other priests, e.g. as non-permanent vicars etc. Such men had no guarantee of service in return from their lord and thus were no longer 'bound' to him in a truly feudal sense. The non-stipendiary clerk had to seek service and patronage wherever he could; a lay retainer in lay society was not so free to act. At the other end of the income scale, those men who were graduates in specialisms such as law or medicine had lives that were very different to any feudal model. A much better comparison might be with the free citizens of a city. Their strongest ties were to the institutions that supplied them with their living, and to the search for new 'lords' to whom they could provide occasional service. Our cadre of clerks started a process of detachment from the ecclesiastical lord of their birthplace when they went to one of the universities. A clerk at Oxford was now resident in the diocese of Lincoln, but there is little to suggest he felt any particular affinity to the bishop in Lincoln. The affinity a legal clerk would adhere to was more guild-like, one towards his fellow legal practitioners. Those advocates practising at the Court of Arches were categorised as the archbishop's men, although, as we have seen, there are clear examples when even such clerks can take sides with another prelate against their own lord.

The picture therefore is a complex one. For a civil lawyer such as John Morton in the 1450s, a newly-qualified doctor of law, many ties, links and loyalties as a churchman can be proposed. As well as a residual loyalty to his diocesan bishop in Salisbury, he would have been geographically resident in the diocese of London and therefore owed at least some form of obedience to that bishop.

His work in association with the Court of Arches would certainly place him in service to the archbishop, who, in turn, might be expected to seek rewards for his clerical advocates in terms of benefices across his province. In professional terms, the advocates of the Arches were clearly a community that functioned as a special grouping. They may well have worked together in the manner of a guild, perhaps combining the qualities of both a commercial guild and a religious one. Added to this would be the networks of social acquaintance and professional recommendation that they would have built up. This would need to be 'serviced' by regular communication, by the relatively informal provision of benefits in kind, or by straightforward professional service, paid for as a retainer or as some form of one-off payments.

For a man such as Morton in his early career, the most well-defined clerical affinity would have been to his fellow legal advocates.<sup>105</sup> They shared a strong community of interest, they practised together, and they were a coherent cadre from which future bishops might come. The archbishop of Canterbury would have been his most important clerical lord in the 1450s, although there is no direct evidence of either John Kemp or Thomas Bourchier providing Morton to any benefice in their direct gift.<sup>106</sup> Bourchier may well have contributed to Morton's selection as chancellor to the infant prince of Wales, but that is speculation with no basis in primary evidence. During the 1450s, Gilbert Kymer was certainly a significant benefactor to Morton. As chancellor at Oxford in the period 1447-53 he would have witnessed Morton's legal practice at Oxford. Being dean of Salisbury in the period 1449-63 he was also able to award benefices of his own to Morton (e.g. the rectory of Bloxworth) or to influence Morton's selection for others, e.g. the Salisbury prebendary of Fordington and

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<sup>105</sup> This does not mean that Morton's ties to his home diocese of Salisbury were severed. Even though his ordination to the priesthood in March 1459 took place in the church at Chelsea in the diocese of London, Morton did not require letters dimissory: the ordaining bishop was Richard Beauchamp of Salisbury, presiding under licence from Thomas Kemp, bishop of London. See Reg. Beauchamp, Sarum, Vol 1, part 2, f 175v, Wiltshire and Swindon Heritage Centre.

<sup>106</sup> Thomas Winterborne provides a contrast. He obtained his DCL at Oxford in March 1452, the same month as Morton. However, Bourchier subsequently favoured Winterborne to several benefices in his gift. For further details see *BRUO*, iii, pp. 2060-61 and Christopher Harper-Bill's *ODNB* article at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/29773>.



Writhlington. There is a distinct impression of Kymer as a true patron of Morton, but that is not the same as making him Morton's 'lord'. If we accept that Morton was an advocate at the Arches in the period 1453 onwards then the archbishop of Canterbury must still be identified as his principal clerical lord.

Like all his fellow English clerks, Morton also owed fealty to the universal church and, as its head, to the pope in Rome. While that loyalty was an abiding one, it could not compare in day-to-day terms to the bonds that influenced these men within their national church. The affinity to Rome was one that was strictly governed by constraints imposed by the English king. The statutes relating to Praemunire and Provisors set clear limits on the *de jure* role of the pontiff within the English Church, and that in turn determined the mode of lordship that he represented to English churchmen (or to churchmen in other nations such as France).<sup>107</sup> In purely clerical terms, the affinity to Rome was unquestionable, but it was a backdrop against which local and stronger clerical affinities were developed. There was a small but steady stream of English clerics resident in Rome for periods sometimes lasting many years. Some of these, for example that 'turbulent' proctor John Lax, were appointees sent there to represent prelates or the English king.<sup>108</sup> Others were men who decided, possibly due to their own apostasy, to leave England and seek service there. However, for the great bulk of the English clergy, the focus of their ecclesiastical life was within England.

Morton's clerical affinity (we might even say affinities) was defined by his professional role as a church lawyer. For Dobson, the members of his great clerical affinity were defined by their geographical origins and by their professional work, and the archbishop of York was their lord. By the fifteenth

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107 Nevertheless, 'the Canon Law applied in English church courts was dependent on the legislation of the popes and the Roman 'codes'.' That was not questioned before the Reformation. For a discussion of the authority of the papacy in this respect, see Denys Hay, 'The Church of England in the Later Middle Ages', in *Renaissance Essays*, ed. by Denys Hay (London: Hambledon Press, 1988), pp. 233–48.

108 Barrie Dobson, *Church and Society in the Medieval North of England* (London: Hambledon Press, 1996), p. 119.

century that particular affinity or grouping had dissolved. Thereafter there is no special, geographical grouping of clerks that can be so clearly identified as occupying a particular niche. As discussed elsewhere, the administrative offices of the king were losing their strongly clerical basis as more and more laymen took over such roles.<sup>109</sup> For secular churchmen, the affinities that can be identified now had their focus in such specialisms as the law. At the diocesan level, the clerks working in the church courts were a stable and distinct group as has been identified already in Chapter 3. As practitioners of the law they had a professional affinity to their trade, but in terms of lordship their clear relationship was to their lord bishop. The advocates of the Court of Arches were an elite group whose affinity could be more fluid. Their guild-like allegiance to each other would mature into the institution of the Doctors Commons, but their view of lordship was more negotiable. They were ready to the part of a plaintiff in a cause, even where the other party might be their own archbishop. In one sense that shows an objective detachment in the pursuit of the process of justice, but it also signals that they perceived themselves as removed from any direct sense of service to an individual.<sup>110</sup> Just as the monarch could be perceived as having two bodies,<sup>111</sup> so too their own primate was subject to judgement by his own 'subjects'.

In summary, the concept of 'clerical affinity' is one that is difficult to pin down. While Dobson's example of the men of Howdenshire represents a striking instance, there are complexities and difficulties in applying it more generally, especially across the fifteenth century. For men such as Morton, their relationship to their peers and to the broader Church hierarchy provides no simple model. The clerks who practised in courts such as the Arches clearly had a professional affinity to each other. Other 'affinities' that could be identified

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109 Christine Carpenter, 'Henry VI and the Deskillling of the Royal Bureaucracy', in *English and Continental Perspectives*, ed. by Linda Clark, *Fifteenth Century*, 9 (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2010), pp. 1–37 (p. 15).

110 Or one might argue that pursuing the process of justice, even if acting in opposition to one's archbishop, was nevertheless true service to the administration of that prelate's own system of justice.

111 Michael Hicks, *English Political Culture in the Fifteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 45.

might include the taking of sides on matters of theology, or a passion for the study of the new humanism in language, literature and the other arts. However there is a real danger in taking a potentially amorphous term such as 'affinity' and using it too broadly and loosely. Whereas the well-practised phrase 'Lancastrian affinity' implies loyalty and service to a cause headed by a distinctive figure-head, the term clerical affinity surely needs better definition if it is to be helpful for historical analysis. The term 'patron' was discussed earlier in this chapter, and it implies a reciprocal relationship whereby the beneficiary would have the expectation of providing service appropriate to the 'gift' they have received. But Dobson's great northern affinity is not a simple fact of patronage – he describes a long-lasting community of clerks, defined by their geographical origin and function within the machinery of late medieval government administration, with successive archbishops of York as their focal point. One of the dictionary definitions of affinity implies ties by kinship, and it is here that a clearer view of clerical affinity may be found. The implication is of a personal relationship, whether to one's patron, or to a collegiate grouping of fellow clerks. Although such personal sentiments are not apparent in those somewhat impersonal and formulaic documents such as bishops' registers, they can occasionally shine through in surviving personal correspondence. In the introduction to this thesis, the discipleship pertaining to Thomas Bekynton, bishop of Bath & Wells, has already been discussed, as well as the following of the venerable Edmund Lacy, bishop of Exeter. Such relationships could be a real force in the career aspirations of the rising clerk, even though the evidence for specific cases may be sparse. An individual cleric was therefore at the intersection of a set of overlapping 'affinities'. These could be both horizontal as well as vertical, and the two did not have to be antagonistic to each other.<sup>112</sup> Some of those affinities were of his own choosing, whereas for others he may have had little choice. In the case of John Morton, the trajectory of his early career was defined by the strength of his lay affinity to the Lancastrian cause,

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<sup>112</sup> The same has been identified for gentry society: see Simon Walker, *Political Culture in Later Medieval England: Essays by Simon Walker*, ed. by M. J. Braddick (Manchester, UK: University Press, 2006), p. 6.

leading him into years of exile before his submission to Edward IV after Tewkesbury. What still remains less clear is just how far clerical 'affinities' differ from obligations, relationships, communities or hierarchies.

## **Conclusions**

This chapter has discussed the creation and analysis of a database of benefices obtained by those men who became bishops of English dioceses during the period 1400 to 1520. The aim was to compare the findings of that analysis with the existing narratives on the patronage of the top cadre of churchmen in the late medieval period. The granting of benefices was but one part of a much greater network of patronage, relationships and career paths. However, unlike so many other aspects of that network, the benefices, their recipients and the patrons are visible and are therefore amenable to a systematic study. The analysis has confirmed a significant number of the existing narratives and hypotheses on the career paths of our cohort. The benefits of royal service are clearly indicated, and the direct patronage of the king is matched by patronage from other key players as the rising clerks become known and valued.<sup>113</sup> The strength of ties of kinship is deeply etched into this visible surface of patronage, and several family groupings such as Kemps and the Booths provide clear proof of this. The importance of patronage from within the Church is apparent, and many key benefices were awarded by the bishops and archbishops. They had a natural desire to ensure that those men who succeeded them would be worthy of the status of prelate, and they were keen to reward those clerks who, in their view, represented the future of the Church. Although rectories comprised an important tranche of the list of benefices, more came in the form of canonries with prebends, deanships and archdeaconries. The direct cure of souls would therefore have not been a requirement for our cadre, assuming that adequate arrangements were made for deputies to fulfil those functions. The patronage by lay individuals represents

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<sup>113</sup> There could be exceptions. John Morton never received a benefice directly from the king. His appointment as master of the rolls may have seemed a sufficient sign of favour by Edward IV.

a relatively small proportion (under 11%) of the whole. Families such as the Courtenays with eleven benefactions and the Beauchamps with six made up a good number of those, but there were individual benefactions too. The general mix of lay patrons may repay some further scrutiny. The religious houses supplied a similar proportion, with the Benedictines overwhelmingly the main benefactors. Looking at our cohort as a whole, any suggestion that it represents a simple and uniform group must be resisted. Whereas Richard Clifford was the recipient of over thirty benefices, John Fisher only held one before his elevation to the episcopacy. The shrinking number of men from the nobility were a very distinct group, with some spectacular examples of early patronage and a seeming inevitability to their achievements.

While providing general support for existing narratives, the database has also thrown up some very interesting new issues, questions and puzzles. The geographical split needs further analysis, with the diocese of Norwich appearing to be curiously under-represented as a source of rectorial benefices. The two reigns of Edward IV show marked differences, and a further study into Edward's ecclesiastical patronage is clearly needed. With the religious houses, there are also questions, in particular the small group of female houses and why some of the wealthier ones such as Barking Abbey seem to have taken no direct part in patronising our cadre. Also, given their numerical dominance, why were the Augustinian canons so poorly represented among the religious houses?<sup>114</sup> Among the bishops, there are some cases where family relationships have been called into question, for example the case of Charles Booth. Differences have also emerged between the first and second half of the fifteenth century. At first none of our clerks held multiple archdeaconries concurrently, but after 1450 that changes, and by 1477 we can see John Morton holding five concurrently. Morton may have been exceptional, but the pattern is clear. The signs are that there was an element of planning and coordination taking place, with

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<sup>114</sup> In the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* there were thirteen Augustinian houses with a net value of over £500, but only five of those granted benefices to our cohort. Wealthy houses such as Leicester (£951 net value) and Waltham (£900 net value) made no such awards.

archdeaconries being given out in a systematic pattern. The picture among deaneries shows similarities, although the number is smaller and the overall pattern less well-defined.

This initial look at the benefactions awarded to the future bishops of our period has therefore proved of real value. It has been based upon an overview of the information contained within the database. There are, however, new and more systematic techniques that have been developed to analyse and visualise these kinds of information. Based upon the methodologies of network analysis and the use of widely available tools such as Gephi,<sup>115</sup> historians looking at the early modern period have found such an approach fruitful.<sup>116</sup> Appendix 7 shows some initial outputs from the Gephi tool to assess what insights and areas of new research might be revealed. Further work is required to confirm the benefits of this tool and to determine just how far it can enhance our understanding of late medieval patronage networks.

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115 <https://gephi.org/> [accessed 2 May 2020].

116 David Easley and Jon Kleinberg, *Networks, Crowds, and Markets: Reasoning about a Highly Connected World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). The study of social networks for historical analysis using tools such as Gephi has been taken up with enthusiasm at both Harvard (<https://histecon.fas.harvard.edu/visualizing/index.html>) and Stanford Universities (<http://republicofletters.stanford.edu/index.html>) [both sites accessed on 23 June 2020]. A further example can be found at Scott Breuninger, 'The Social Networks of the Irish Enlightenment: The Dublin Philosophical Society and the Royal Dublin Society', in *Social Networks in the Long Eighteenth Century: Clubs, Literary Salons, Textual Coteries*, ed. by Ileana Popa Baird (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), pp. 55–76.

## Chapter 5 - Royal service and its role in the careers of aspiring prelates

Few historians of fifteenth-century England would disagree that royal service was the primary means by which aspiring clerics could achieve prelaty. As Robert Swanson has pointed out: 'the main dynamic in their promotion was their contact with, and their service to, the state. Most bishops were some sort of civil servant: diplomats, members of the royal household, lawyers.'<sup>1</sup> However, royal service came in many forms. It could be to the institution and machinery of monarchy in a role such as king's clerk; but it could also be to the person and dynasty of the monarch as witnessed by the changing fortunes of one of the most 'successful' orders of regular clergy, the Carmelites. The profile of royal service as a path to prelaty certainly evolved across the century. Some changes were gradual and incremental, for example the laicisation of government administration and the slowly diminishing role of the king's clerks. But other forms of service, especially service for the king at the Roman curia, showed vigorous new growth. That relationship with Rome was manifest not just in the men successive English kings sent as their representatives. Later in the century, especially after the seizure of the throne by Henry Tudor, Italian churchmen were brought into England. In seeking to re-define his relationship to the universal Church, Henry was quite ready to constrain the career chances of his own clerks. Royal service must therefore be seen in all its complexity, with new characteristics in addition to an evolving, older structure. This chapter will seek to encapsulate and explain that complexity.

A key element in that older, evolving structure of royal service was the king's clerk. This chapter makes detailed use of some existing materials that have been under-exploited in the study of prelaty to see what they tell us about that

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1 R. N. Swanson, *Church and Society in Late Medieval England* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), p. 80; Virginia Davis, 'The Contribution of University-Educated Secular Clerics to the Pastoral Life of the English Church', in *The Church and Learning in Later Medieval Society: Essays in Honour of R.B. Dobson*, ed. by Caroline M. Barron and Jenny Stratford, Harlaxton Medieval Studies, 11 (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2002), pp. 255–72 (p. 267); G. L. Harriss, *Shaping the Nation: England 1360-1461*, The New Oxford History of England (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 311; Peter Meadows, 'The Fifteenth Century', in *Ely: Bishops and Diocese, 1109-2009*, ed. by Peter Meadows (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2010), pp. 122–47 (p. 122); J.A.F. Thomson, *The Early Tudor Church and Society, 1485-1529* (London: Longmans, 1993), p. 52.

catch-all category of clerics. It also uses various biographical details for the newly-appointed bishops of the period to provide additional focus, especially in association with the database of episcopal careers that has been previously described. Taking the calendars of patent rolls as a prime data source, supplemented by the calendars of close rolls, this chapter looks at the particular role of the 'king's clerk' and what that reveals about ecclesiastical careers and secular government. Both sets of rolls have the great advantage that they cover the entirety of the period. Although a somewhat amorphous term, the title of king's clerk was used quite specifically within the patent rolls, and nearly all future bishops are described as such at some point in their rise to prominence. But only a proportion of the men described as king's clerks succeeded to high prelacy, either as bishops or as deans of major cathedral chapters.

There were plenty of men whose almost faultless careers in royal service must have seemed to make their episcopal elevation just a formality of royal nomination. A section of this chapter will consider what circumstances beyond pure chance conspired to keep them from promotion when they seemed ideally qualified. Those clerks who were taken into royal service were already a small fraction of the clergy of the realm. That fraction who might then go on to the highest ecclesiastical positions were part of the 'visible neck of the national hour glass'.<sup>2</sup> Although the typical king's clerk would be drawn from the secular clergy, the regular clergy provide a contrasting and distinct example of service. The shifting fortunes of the Carmelites, men such as Stephen Patrington, provide a notable case-study. Under the Lancastrian monarchy the Carmelites achieved advancement beyond that of their fellow mendicants; however from the reign of Edward IV their position declined, and it was their relationship with the king and his family, and their adherence to religious orthodoxy that can elucidate that decline.

The social composition of the bishops' bench evolved across the century, as did the nature of prelacy. The shift towards the gentry and those expert in the law is a key aspect here. However this change was more than a demographic one – it

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2 Joel T. Rosenthal, 'Lancastrian Bishops and Educational Benefaction', in *The Church in Pre-Reformation Society: Essays in Honour of F.R.H. Du Boulay*, ed. by Caroline M. Barron and Christopher Harper-Bill (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1985), pp. 199–211 (p. 202).



reflects the influence of Roman law, the practice of justice by conscience and the wish of the English king to have men in government who owed their rise and their continuing positions to his personal rule. By the end of Henry VII's reign, the bishops were mostly highly educated men from a gentry background, acting as servants both of the Church and the crown. The features of that relationship are central to the discussion of why almost the entire episcopacy submitted tamely to Henry VIII's rift with Rome, a matter analysed in further detail in the conclusion to this thesis.

Those clerks who became high prelates brought attitudes and experience they had gained either as king's clerks or in other roles within royal service to their exalted positions. Some became central to the king's government in the highest offices of state, some as diplomats, some as trusted royal councillors, while some combined all of those roles. At a time when laymen were occupying many more positions within royal administration, the continuing presence of the prelates needs to be elucidated. The fact that they were supported financially by the Church is an obvious advantage for kings who were ever conscious of their own budget constraints. But there were other compelling reasons for their employment, and these will be discussed.

England was certainly not the only realm in which the profile of churchmen in royal service was experiencing change in the period following the re-unification of the papacy at the Council of Constance. An examination of her closest neighbour, France, and how developments there mirrored or contrasted with the English Church provides a valuable point of comparison. It will consider how far ecclesiastical royal service in France differed from that of England, and what clear parallels can be drawn. Both England and France continued to look to Rome for spiritual guidance and legitimacy. The changing relationship with Rome and the role of the papacy in the careers of prelates who provided service to the English king will therefore be examined in some detail. It will be seen how important that relationship was, and how it developed so significantly across the period. The clerics who acted for the English king were from both England and Italy, and the balance between those two groups shifted markedly at different times. Late in the century Italian clerics even made their way into the

English episcopacy, and their work on behalf of the Tudor monarchs in particular marked a new phase in the relationship between England and Rome.

### **The king's clerks**

One primary pathway into royal service and royal patronage was the role of king's clerk. The evidence seems overwhelming for the contention that the forum where aspiring prelates in England could best prove themselves as potential bishops was in royal service. Hence such service could come in many forms, although the designation 'king's clerk' was one in particular that many of the future bishops shared. As Bradford and McHardy have pointed out 'King's clerks' is a term which is attached to an amorphous group, from those holding permanent positions as clerks of the chancery, exchequer, privy seal or household, to those who fulfilled particular roles at given times or held occasional benefices at the king's gift.<sup>3</sup> Many questions therefore arise about such royal service. We need to know what services these aspiring prelates provided. We want to understand how their careers began, what particular roles they filled, and how long it was after beginning such service that they received their reward of a bishopric. If there was there any consistency between different social groups, namely the gentry, the lesser nobility and the higher nobility, then we need to tease that out. A survey of the English bishops as a whole may help to elucidate such questions and could provide further insights. The next section of this chapter will therefore adopt a prosopographical approach, using the database of bishops' careers that has been previously discussed to attempt some clarification of these questions.

For ninety-eight of the 111 bishops in the database, there is a record of their first known royal service.<sup>4</sup> Of those ninety-eight, twelve were regular clergy. However, the information collected does have some important limitations. The fact that thirteen of the bishops have no recorded royal service (of whom six

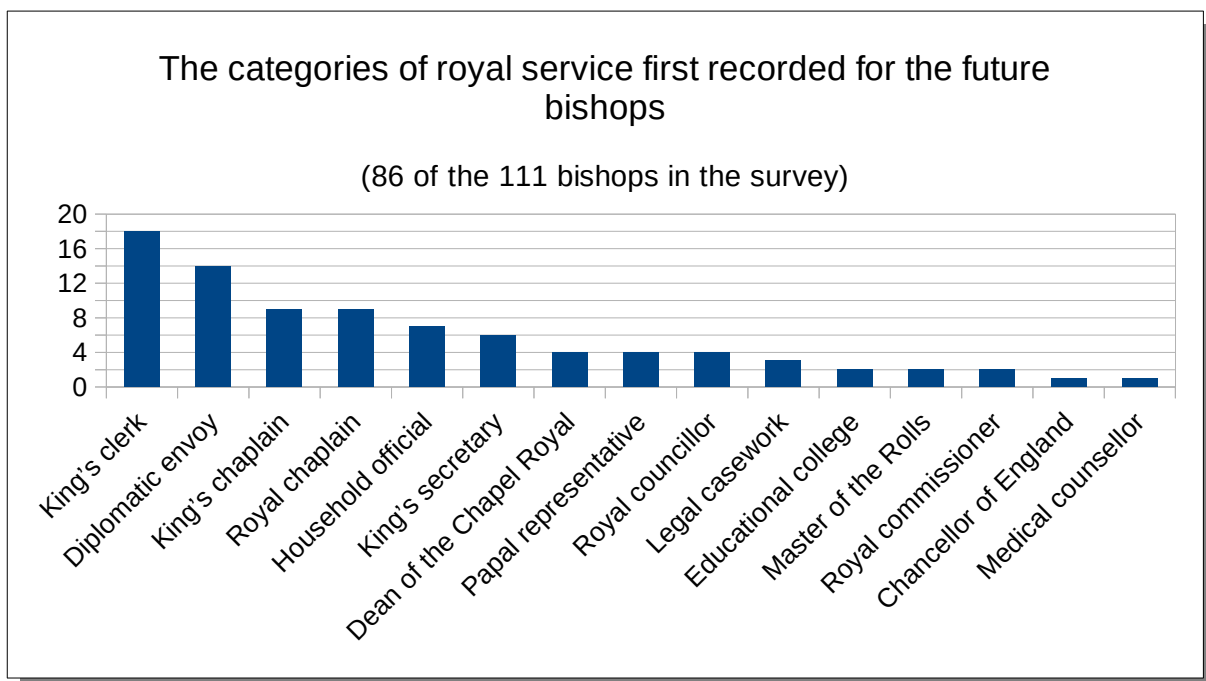
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3 *Proctors for Parliament: Clergy, Community and Politics, c. 1248-1539. Volume II: 1377-1539*, ed. by Phil Bradford and Alison K. McHardy, Canterbury and York Society, 108 (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2018), p. xxii. See also G. P. Cuttino, 'King's Clerks and the Community of the Realm', *Speculum*, 29.2 (1954), 395-409 (p. 396) for a definition of the role of king's clerk during the reign of Edward I.

4 The main sources are *BRUO*, *BRUC*, *ODNB* and a small number of individual biographies.

were regulars) does not mean that they provided no service to the king at some point in their earlier careers. They may not have held any formal position but might still have carried out activities that did not become part of the written record. Where we do have a record, this may not be the earliest date of their service, but rather the earliest date of any record of such service. Despite such limitations, there can still be value in looking at this information across the cohort to see what patterns may appear.

As shown in Figure 5.1 below, the largest single category of service is that of 'king's clerk', that potentially 'amorphous group'. For this chart, the twelve regular clergy have been excluded, so the size of the group is eighty-six.



**Figure 5.1.**

Among these categories, some would have provided close, often daily contact with the king. The duties of chaplain, or of secretary to the king, would have brought their holders into his presence with great regularity.<sup>5</sup> A post such as that

<sup>5</sup> Simon Walker, 'Between Church and Crown: Master Richard Andrew, King's Clerk', *Speculum*, 74.4 (1999), 956–91 (p. 964). Walker describes how the role of king's secretary involved daily contact with the monarch, and that it could also be both lucrative and influential. Richard Andrew, despite achieving such a high position, was never appointed to the bishops' bench, unlike his predecessor in the role, Thomas Becket.

of royal almoner would bring its holder into almost daily contact with the king.<sup>6</sup> By contrast, the king's clerks in the royal chancery might only have had an occasional glimpse of their monarch. As regards the term 'king's clerk' it should be noted that the entries in the patent rolls take care to distinguish additional roles that such clerks occupied. Phrases that are employed include 'king's clerk and chaplain', 'king's clerk and secretary', 'king's clerk and councillor', and even 'king's clerk and clerk of chancery' or 'king's clerk and keeper of the privy seal'. Just why such carefully qualified phraseology is used is not clear. The scribes might have decided that one important aspect of this person's duties needed to be singled out. However it might also be that they regarded these other roles as not the province of a king's clerk and so listed them separately. It is intriguing that one keeper of the privy seal, William Lyndwood, who held that post from 1432 to 1443, is mentioned over a dozen times in that period as 'keeper of the privy seal' but never as 'king's clerk'.<sup>7</sup> By contrast, Robert Stillington appears five times as 'king's clerk and keeper of the privy seal' but there is also one entry where he is simply 'keeper of the privy seal'.<sup>8</sup> There does seem to be some lack of consistency, but overall an attempt seems to be made to delineate 'king's clerk' as something specific and separate. However, exactly what that separate role was may never be possible to define with any clarity. The fact that a man achieved the position of king's clerk was no guarantee that he would in due course be raised to the episcopate. The patent rolls contain numerous references to such men. For example, the published rolls for Henry VI for the period 1446 to 1452 lists forty-two clerks of whom only six went on to sit on the bench of bishops. Similarly in the reign of Edward IV, the rolls for the period 1467 to 1477 list thirty-two clerks of whom only eight subsequently became bishops. The variation in these numbers suggests that a broader study of the patent rolls for an extended period might highlight some changing patterns of patronage over the long fifteenth century. The details for the two examples just discussed are given as Appendices 11 and 12.

Just how royal service could act as a spur in advancing a clerk's career might be directly measured by the awarding of benefices to those men. In particular

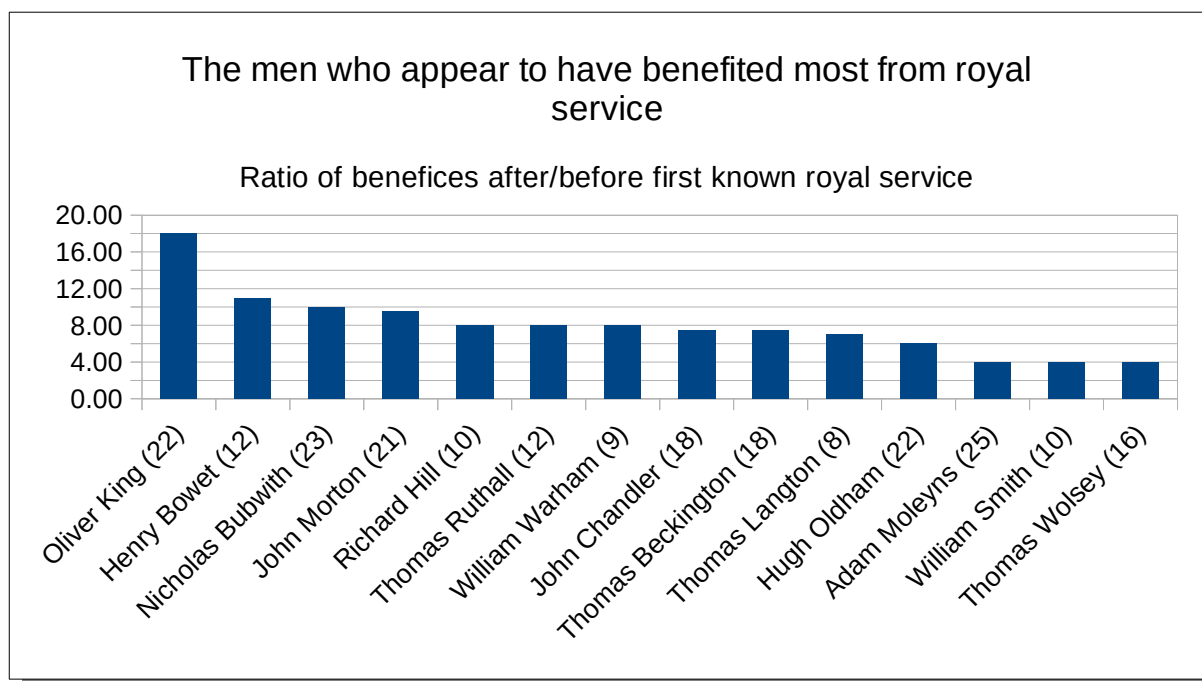
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6 See J.B. Trapp's *ODNB* portrait of Christopher Urswick at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/28024>.

7 *CPR 1429-36* (four entries), *CPR 1436-41* (seven entries) and *CPR 1441-46* (two entries).

8 *CPR 1461-67*, p. 115.

one can compare the possession of benefices achieved by these men both before and after their recorded dates of first royal service.<sup>9</sup> By taking the ratio of the number of benefices achieved after royal service over the number of benefices achieved before such service, the potential influence of such royal service can be analysed. Figure 5.2 provides a summary of those men where the ratio was highest (the numbers shown in brackets after each name give the total recorded number of benefices enjoyed by each man).



**Figure 5.2.**

From this figure we see that Oliver King takes the lead. He had just one benefice before he was made clerk of the signet in 1473. It is possible, however, that King saw royal service before that date: in the *ODNB* entry for him, Steven Gunn makes that suggestion.<sup>10</sup> He states that King may have been secretary to Edward, prince of Wales (son to Henry VI), although King does not appear in the list of men known to have been with Margaret of Anjou during her exile at

9 The provision of benefices was the method by which the king's clerks were 'paid'; the career of the secretary to Henry VI, Richard Andrew, is a case study of that system of rewards – see Simon Walker, 'Between Church and Crown: Master Richard Andrew, King's Clerk', *Speculum*, 74.4 (1999), 956–91 (especially pp. 971-2).

10 <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/15580>.

Koeur.<sup>11</sup> Gunn adds that, on a series of oak panels in King's chantry chapel at St George's, Windsor, are painted Kings' four royal masters, the first of whom is Prince Edward. What is clear is that, after 1473, King enjoyed a further eighteen benefices for which we know the dates entered (for three of his benefices we do not have those dates).

King's first benefice was the rectory of Broughton in Hampshire.<sup>12</sup> He was installed at Broughton in July 1466 (at which time he would have been in his mid-thirties) and was still in possession of that living in 1490. The benefice was a valuable one, being worth fifty marks per annum in the *Taxatio* of 1291.<sup>13</sup> Although Broughton was in the diocese of Winchester, the patronage was held by the treasurer of York,<sup>14</sup> in this instance John Pakenham, doctor of both laws. Pakenham was treasurer of York from July 1459 until his death in October 1477. Pakenham held several other senior positions including those of archdeacon of Winchester, chancellor to the bishop of London and of official in the court of York. He was a graduate of Oxford, having obtained his doctorate there by 1459. By contrast, King was a graduate of Cambridge where he had obtained his M.A. in 1456/7, although both men studied law. It is therefore not clear exactly how and why King was able to obtain his first known preferment from Pakenham. However, to receive such a valuable benefice from such an important churchman suggests that King was known and valued by his fellow clerics.

Appendix 14 provides a full list of the benefices that were held by King. It shows how King's second benefice, the wardenship of St John's Hospital at Dorchester, was not awarded to him until November 1473. The patron was the king himself, and this was the first of four benefices that he received from Edward IV. It is noteworthy that, if King was in the service of Edward prince of

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11 Ralph Griffiths, "'Ffor the Myght off the Lande, Aftir the Myght off the Grete Lordes Thereoff, Stondith Most in the Kynges Officers": The English Crown, Provinces and Dominions in the Fifteenth Century', in *Concepts and Patterns of Service in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. by Anne Curry and Elizabeth Matthew, *The Fifteenth Century*, 1 (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2000), pp. 80–98 (pp. 86–88).

12 *BRUC*, pp. 343–44.

13 <https://www.dhi.ac.uk/taxatio/benkey?benkey=WN.WN.SO.12> [accessed 23 November 2018].

14 'Parishes: Broughton with Frenchmoor', in *A History of the County of Hampshire: Volume 4*, ed. William Page (London, 1911), pp. 493–497. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/hants/vol4/pp493-497> [accessed 23 November 2018].

Wales, then he does not seem to have been rewarded with any church living before the prince's death (at or near the battlefield of Tewkesbury in May 1471). Of the twenty-two benefices that Oliver King enjoyed, six came from the king, eight from bishops and six from archbishops (both York and Canterbury).

Henry Bowet, a future archbishop of York, was a staunch supporter of Henry Bolingbroke and had been granted permission to accompany him into exile in 1398.<sup>15</sup> However Bowet's earliest royal service was as early as November 1372 in the closing years of the reign of Edward III.<sup>16</sup> Bowet's first recorded benefice was as rector of Croft, Yorkshire which he entered in October 1370. The advowson for Croft was held by the abbot and convent of the abbey of St Mary, York, and the abbot at that time was William Marray.<sup>17</sup> Relatively little is known about Marray, except for his appearance in a court case concerning a marital dispute for a John Marray to whom he may have been related.<sup>18</sup> However, the entry in the patent roll for 29 October 1370 states that the church of Croft was in the king's gift by reason of the late voidance of the abbey of St Mary, York.<sup>19</sup> There is no known record in other sources of Marray's abbacy being interrupted in 1370.<sup>20</sup> The York cause paper describes him as abbot in 1365-6, and there are other entries in the patent rolls for 1370 that suggest that the abbacy was indeed occupied.<sup>21</sup> A possible clue comes from an entry dated 20 November 1372 that states how the church of Croft was 'lately void, and in the king's gift by reason of the temporalities of the abbey of St. Mary, York, being in his hand.'<sup>22</sup> Further clarification does not seem possible, although monarchs do appear to have treated the concept of voidance with great flexibility when it

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15 Chris Given-Wilson, *Henry IV* (New Haven ; London: Yale University Press, 2016), p. 117.

16 See *CPR 1370-4*, p. 243 where he is described as 'king's clerk'.

17 *The Heads of Religious Houses: England and Wales, III. 1377-1540*, ed. by David M. Smith, The Heads of Religious Houses (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 90.

18 *The Anonimale Chronicle, 1333 to 1381: From a MS. Written at St Mary's Abbey, York*, ed. by V. H. Galbraith, [1st ed.] reprinted with minor corrections (Manchester: Manchester U.P, 1970), p. xviii; Sue Niebrzydowski, 'From Bedroom to Courtroom: Home and the Memory of Childbirth in a Fourteenth-Century Marriage Dispute', *Home Cultures*, 6.2 (2009), 123-34 (p. 125); Kim M. Phillips, *Medieval Maidens: Young Women and Gender in England, 1270-1540*, Manchester Medieval Studies (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), pp. 29-30.

19 *CPR 1370-74*, p. 11.

20 For a discussion of the abbey's history see <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/yorks/vol3/pp107-112>, where the wealth of this house at dissolution in 1539 was over £2000 per annum [accessed 26 May 2020].

21 *CPR 1367-70*, p. 439 & *CPR 1370-74*, p. 16.

22 *CPR 1370-74*, p. 243.

suiting them. Richard II appointed Richard Clifford to the prebend of Gillingham in Shaftesbury Abbey in September 1389 on the grounds of the abbey's 'late voidance', even though abbess Joan Formage had been elected to her office in 1362, and did not die until 1394.<sup>23</sup> The record of Bowet's preferments does not indicate any real momentum until later in the 1380s. His second recorded benefice, the deanship of St Patrick's in Dublin, dates from 1383, but it was only in the years 1386 onwards that he was strongly favoured by John Buckingham, bishop of Lincoln, with several benefices, including prebendaries and archdeaconries.<sup>24</sup> Bowet's one benefice awarded directly by Richard II was his grant of the king's free chapel of Jesmond in February 1392.<sup>25</sup> The complete list of Bowet's known benefices is given in Appendix 13. For the thirteen items listed (of which two entries are for his separate spells as rector of Croft), the average length of occupancy was just over five years. Some were, however, of short duration, for example his one month as archdeacon of Northampton. It also seems that two benefices in 1391 were not effective. Bowet's list is therefore less impressive than that of Oliver King.

There are of course bishops in the database who were never listed as king's clerks. Starting with the bishops of noble origin, the database contains eighteen names and it might be supposed that the proportion of those who held the rank of king's clerk would be low. The theory would be that their family connections may have sufficed to bring them to high office within the Church. Men such as Thomas Bourchier and William Percy who were greatly favoured from an early age do not feature as king's clerks. However both Richard and Peter Courtenay do, and Edmund Audley, William Dudley, the Williams Grey (both) and Lionel Woodville are all there too. By contrast Richard Beauchamp, and George and Robert Neville are not so described. The pattern seems to be that the men from the highest noble families did not function as clerks, but among the lesser nobility such a role might have been necessary, or at least a feature of their path to the episcopate. Perhaps the lower nobility were taking their lead from the gentry, seeking to emulate their qualities rather than those of the higher

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23 David Cousins, 'Monasteries and Monasticism in Late Medieval Dorset (1290-1540)' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Winchester, 2013), p. 107.

24 *BRUC*, pp. 83-4.

25 *CPR 1391-96*, p. 37. Bowet is described as 'Master Henry Bowet'. There is no reference to him as a king's clerk or other role in royal service.



nobility. Given the turbulent events of the 1450s, men from the lower nobility may well have experienced something of an identity crisis. By achieving high educational standards and working with humility in the service of the king, they may have sought to justify themselves to him. Unlike the Percys or the Nevilles who could achieve prelaty because of who they were, the lesser nobles appear to have understood that their promotion would rely on their skills, a record of achievement and an accumulation of time in royal service. Table 5.1 provides a full listing of the noble bishops who acted as king's clerks.

**Table 5.1.** The noble bishops and whether they acted as king's clerks.

<b>Name</b>	<b>King's Clerk?</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Edmund Audley	Y	<i>CPR 1467-77</i> , p. 296.
Richard Beauchamp	N	His eldest brother, William, was created Lord St Amand in 1449.
Thomas Bourchier	N	Probably the second son of William Bourchier, count of Eu, and Anne of Woodstock.
Peter Courtenay	Y	<i>CPR 1467-77</i> , p. 228.
Richard Courtenay	Y	<i>CPR 1408-13</i> , p. 238.
William Dudley	Y	<i>CPR 1467-77</i> , p. 276.
Robert Fitzhugh	N	Listed as king's chamberlain ( <i>CPR 1416-22</i> , p. 303) but not as a king's clerk
William Gray	Y	<i>CCR 1413-19</i> , p. 102.
William Grey	Y	<i>CPR 1446-52</i> , p. 404.
Marmaduke Lumley	N	The fourth son of Ralph, first Baron Lumley.
George Neville	N	The fourth son of Richard Neville, fifth earl of

Name	King's Clerk?	Notes
		Salisbury.
Robert Neville	N	Fourth surviving son of Ralph Neville, first earl of Westmoreland and Joan Beaufort.
William Percy	N	The ninth son of Henry Percy, second earl of Northumberland.
Richard Scrope Junior	N	The younger son of Richard Scrope, third Baron Scrope of Bolton.
Richard Scrope Senior	N	The third son of Henry Scrope, first Baron Scrope of Masham.
James Stanley	N	The sixth son of Thomas Stanley, first earl of Derby.
William Wells	N	From the cadet branch of the baronial family of Wells of Lincolnshire?
Lionel Woodville	Y	<i>CPR 1476-85</i> , p. 17.

Another group of future bishops for whom there is no reference among the king's clerks was the regular clergy. Among these sixteen men, a mix of monks, canons and friars, it is not surprising to find no candidates. Several did have roles close to the king, however. John Lowe, Robert Mascall and John Stanbury were all friars and confessors to the Lancastrian kings.<sup>26</sup> Henry Deane, the prior of the house of Augustinian canons at Llanthony Secunda and future archbishop of Canterbury, was described in 1494 as a royal councillor and chancellor of Ireland.<sup>27</sup> He had already been a royal chaplain since 1477.<sup>28</sup> Another very prominent example is the Carmelite, Stephen Patrington, bishop of St David's and bishop elect of Chichester, who is described in more detail later in this chapter.

<sup>26</sup> See respectively *CPR 1426-36*, p. 196; *CPR 1399-1401*, p. 405; the *ODNB* entry by Ann Rhydderch is at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/26228>.

<sup>27</sup> *CPR 1494-1509*, p. 15.

<sup>28</sup> See Deane's *ODNB* entry by Christopher Harper-Bill at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/7387>.

The two secular future bishops in the database who were not of noble stock and have no clear record of royal service are Roger Whelpdale and Reginald Pecock. In his *ODNB* entry for Whelpdale, Henry Summerson gives no indication of any known royal service for him, and Emden's biography similarly does not provide any such evidence.<sup>29</sup> As regards Reginald Pecock, things are less clear-cut. In her *ODNB* entry, Wendy Scase points out two possible royal connections. Firstly Pecock was involved with John Somerset's foundation of a chapel under royal patronage. Secondly Pecock had a connection with John Carpenter of Oriel College, Oxford (the future bishop of Worcester) who had been clerk and chaplain to Henry VI.<sup>30</sup> Such evidence clearly suggests that Pecock could have been well-known of by the king, even if he was never directly involved in royal service in the household or in another area of administration such as Chancery.

One man who merits particular attention is Robert Hallum, bishop of Salisbury from 1407 until his death near Constance in 1417. In his *ODNB* entry for Hallum, Robert Swanson states that Hallum was named as a king's clerk in May 1400. Although no source is specifically provided in support of this statement, it seems likely that the one used was *CPR 1399-1401*, p. 284, dated May 11<sup>th</sup> 1400, which begins 'Commission, during pleasure, to the king's clerk Nicholas Bubbewyth, Master Robert Halom, Nicholas Carrewe, Thomas Remys and John Buteller of the custody of the abbey of Bermondsey and its possessions...' This *CPR* entry only appears to talk of one king's clerk, namely Bubwith, so Hallum cannot also be understood as having the same status. In the same source, there is a total of three entries relating to Hallum (pp. 244, 284 & 364); in each he is referred to as Master Robert Hallum but not as 'king's clerk'. By contrast there are twelve entries for Nicholas Bubwith and they all seem to follow a certain convention. Where it is considered necessary to feature the name of the appropriate person as soon as possible in the entry, then the term 'king's clerk' follows his name (pp. 4, 483 & 542). For example when a presentation to a living is being made, or an estate is being ratified, such an approach is adopted consistently. However in five other entries the term 'king's clerk' comes before

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29 <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/29196>; *BRUO*, iii, pp. 2031-2.

30 <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/21749>.

his name (pp. 43, 60, 284, 540 & 545); this occurs where he is being discussed within a longer passage. There are four other items where Bubwith is mentioned (pp. 227, 262, 305 & 510) and here he is simply called 'clerk'; this seems to be the convention when somebody is acting purely in an administrative capacity ('Nicholas Bubbewyth, clerk, received attorneys').

Further relevant entries occur within *CPR 1401-05*. On page 23 an entry concerning the abbey of Bermondsey tells us that the king '... committed the custody of the abbey and its possessions to Master Robert Halum, the king's clerk, Nicholas Bubwith, Nicholas Carrowe, Thomas Remys and John Butiller...'. Given the consistent and punctilious way in which the clerks inscribed these rolls, the term 'king's clerk' here should be applied to the name that follows, i.e. Bubwith, and not Robert Hallum. There are numerous other references to Bubwith in this set of rolls entries, and the conventions are followed whereby his name is normally preceded by the term 'king's clerk', for example pp. 88, 90, 126 etc. The entry on p. 85 reads as follows: 'Presentation of Nicholas Bubbewyth, king's clerk, to the church of Clyve ...'. Again the entry here follows the other convention whereby a name in a presentation appears as soon as possible and therefore precedes his clerical description. Note also should be taken of entries that contain more than one king's clerk, for example pp. 205, 274 & 421, whereby the entry explicitly talks of 'king's clerks'. A more general review of the first 100 pages of *CPR 1401-05* shows that, of the thirty-two entries where a king's clerk is described, twenty-seven give the term 'king's clerk' before the name; the five cases where the reverse order occurs are all presentations or ratifications. In summary therefore it seems unlikely that Robert Hallum was ever a king's clerk. He is not described as such by Joyce Horn in her edition of Hallum's register as bishop of Salisbury, nor by A.B. Emden in his biographical entry.<sup>31</sup> Hallum's career was more distinctly ecclesiastical, and there is no known evidence that he laboured in the royal chancery, exchequer or household.

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31 *The Register of Robert Hallum, Bishop of Salisbury, 1407-17*, ed. by Joyce Madeleine Horn, The Canterbury and York Society, 72, 1982, pp. ix-xvi; BRUO, ii, pp. 854-5.

Returning to the specific term ‘king’s clerk’, what is interesting is its systematic and continuing use within the patent rolls. These rolls provide complete coverage across the fifteenth century, making it possible to characterise any changes through time. Clerics who gave service to the king should make an appearance in such records. In particular, the king’s clerks do feature frequently and provide a clear focus for analysis. Questions that can be tackled include how many such clerks feature in the rolls, and how the numbers varied through time. Was there a clear and consistent trend, and if so, why? Do these rolls reveal significant changes in the scope and nature of royal service? What do they tell us about broader trends, such as the apparent rise and fall of the gentry? Do any of the nobility feature? There are important questions where these records provide less clear or direct evidence. For example, how and when did such men first come into royal service? What the next section of this chapter will attempt is to look at the patent rolls across the period to see how far some of these questions can be answered. A subsidiary source that will be examined later in this chapter are the close rolls; however, it will be shown that they provide a relatively thin basis of evidence in comparison to the patent rolls.<sup>32</sup>

With large numbers of men being labelled as king’s clerks, there is a need to consider whether it is a term that has real and coherent meaning. Among the contemporary chroniclers, there is very little evidence that it mattered to them when describing individual churchmen.<sup>33</sup> There is a single mention of the term in just three of these sources.<sup>34</sup> It is conceivable that the term is used in a general sense and lacks any specific purpose beyond offering an honorary designation

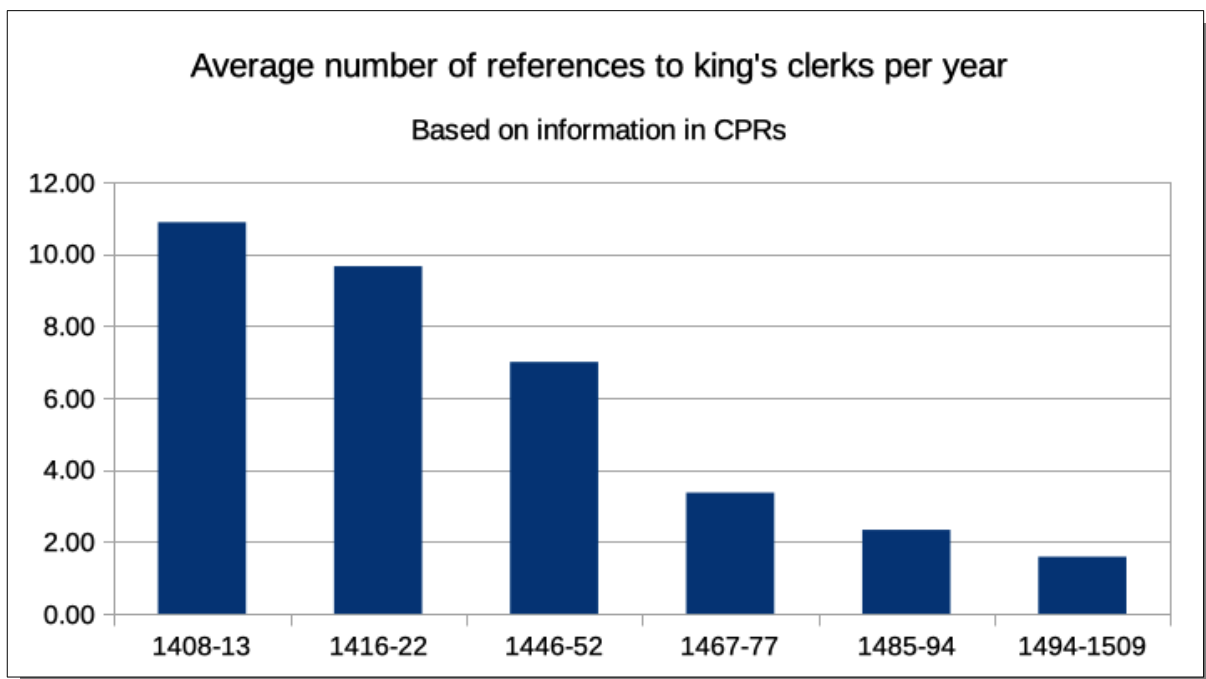
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32 See the section of this chapter entitled “The evolution of a ‘new’ episcopacy” and especially Table 5.8. The names of king’s clerks can of course be found in other places, although these lack the consistent coverage provided by sources such as the patent rolls. In the biographical details for proctors within Bradford and McHardy, *Proctors for Parliament*, pp. 456-72, a total of twenty-six names may be found, although there is sparse coverage of the period 1461-1509. A search of the TNA’s Discovery catalogue, looking for the term “king’s clerk” within the date range 1400-1520, provides four definite ‘hits’. A search of the online *ODNB* for the same produces a set of twenty-two names.

33 Twenty-nine chronicles by authors from England, Wales and France, extending across the whole of the fifteenth century, were reviewed.

34 Ranulph Higden, *Polychronicon Ranulphi Higden Monachi Cestrensis*, ed. by Joseph Rawson Lumby (London: Longman & Co., 1886), ix, p. 72, referring to John Waltham; Thomas Walsingham, *The St Albans Chronicle: The Chronica Maiora of Thomas Walsingham. Vol. 1: 1376-1394*, ed. by John Taylor, Wendy R. Childs, and Leslie Watkiss, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), p. 746, referring to John Allen; William of Worcester, *Wilhelmi Wyrcester Annales Rerum Anglicarum. Ex Autographo in Bibliotheca Collegii Armorum Londini*, ed. by Joseph Stevenson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 756, referring to John Clerk.

to men carrying out a mix of relatively mundane tasks. Were that the case, then one might expect the rate at which such men become bishops to show perhaps a random pattern. Fortunately such a hypothesis can be tested, or at least elucidated by reference to the calendars of patent rolls. The chart in figure 5.3 shows how many distinct men were named as king's clerks in a selection of the patent rolls. As each set of rolls may extend over a different number of years, the decision was taken to normalise the information by taking the average number of men named per annum within each set of rolls. The chart that results has a striking profile:

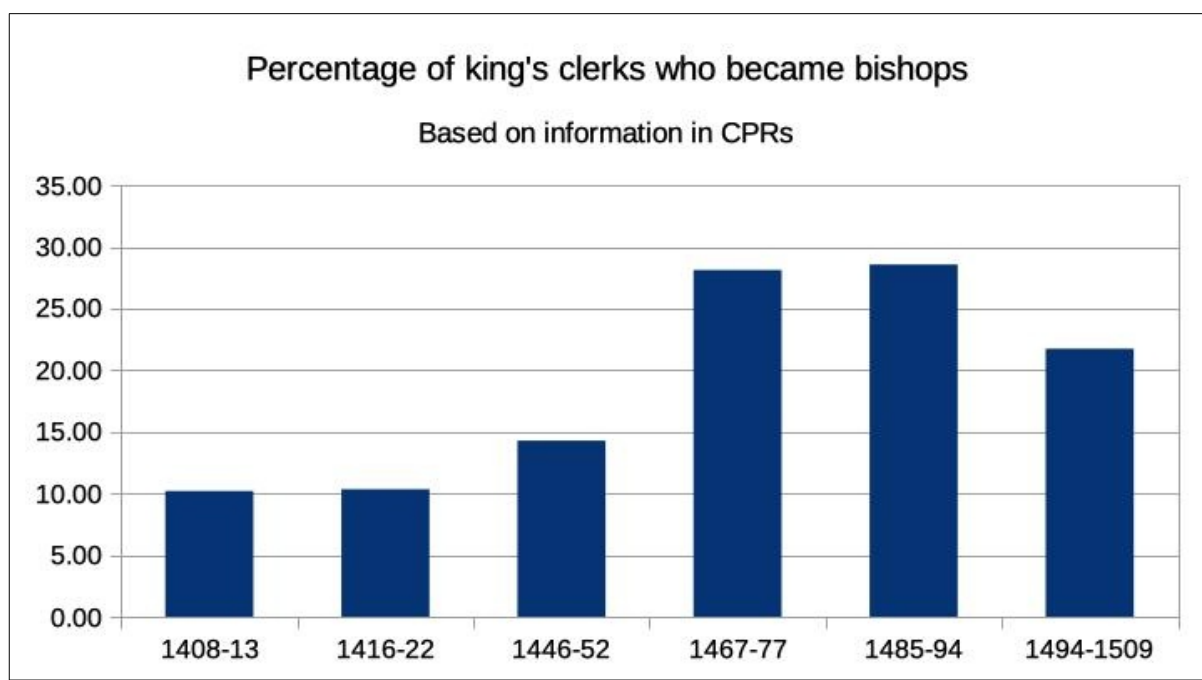


**Figure 5.3.** The declining number of king's clerks.

The chosen sets of rolls do not provide a fully comprehensive coverage of the 101 years that they encompass. However they do provide a sample covering over half of that time period. An attempt was made to include information from the reign of each monarch, although the brief reigns of Edward V and Richard III are not included.<sup>35</sup> The pattern that is revealed could be present for one of two main reasons. Firstly it could reflect an underlying reality, that fewer and fewer king's clerks were active in the king's service. Such a pattern would confirm that

<sup>35</sup> For a full list of the king's clerks in two of the *CPRs* see Appendix 11 (for the period 1446-52) and Appendix 12 (for the period 1467-77).

views of those commentators who detect an increasing laicisation in the administration of royal government.<sup>36</sup> However (and secondly) it may be that the way royal servants were described was changing within the patent rolls, so men who might previously have been called king's clerks are now, for some reason, being described in some other way. That does seem a less likely explanation, given the very clear trend displayed in the chart. Another factor to consider is whether this downward trajectory in the number of king's clerks has implications for the proportion who went on to become bishops. That information is provided in Figure 5.4.



**Figure 5.4.** The king's clerks who were provided to bishoprics.

Again there is a striking pattern, with the proportion of such men who became bishops rising steadily over time, until a decline in the latter part of the reign of Henry VII. Putting figures 5.4 and 5.5 together, it seems clear that the designation of 'king's clerk' was no honorific one. As the number of clerks declined, the proportion who went on to become bishops rose. However, that simple pattern began to fade in the period 1494 to 1509.

<sup>36</sup> Christine Carpenter, 'Henry VI and the Deskillling of the Royal Bureaucracy', in *English and Continental Perspectives*, ed. by Linda Clark, *Fifteenth Century*, 9 (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2010), pp. 1–37 (p. 15).

Another distinctive pattern from the patent rolls is the increasing proportion of of king’s clerks who were of graduate status – see Table 5.2 below. There are two ways in which their educational status is determined from the calendars: either they are described as ‘master’, or their academic qualifications are described in some other way, e.g. as professor of sacred theology, doctor of both laws etc. There is also evidence from *BRUO*, *BRUC* and other sources of graduate status for some of the other king’s clerks listed in the rolls.

**Table 5.2.** The changing proportion of graduate king’s clerks.

<b>Calendar</b>	<b>Total number of king’s clerks listed</b>	<b>Number of graduate king’s clerks (of whom lawyers in brackets)</b>	<b>The proportion of graduate king’s clerks</b>
<i>CPR 1408-13</i>	51	12 (5)	23%
<i>CPR 1416-22</i>	61	14 (6)	23%
<i>CPR 1446-52</i>	42	21 (6)	50%
<i>CPR 1467-77</i>	32	20 (10)	62%
<i>CPR 1485-94</i>	21	18 (11)	85%
<i>CPR 1494-1509</i>	24	17 (8)	71%

The table shows how the proportion of graduates rose from less than a quarter in the reign of Henry IV, to over 70% by the early Tudor period. The absolute number of graduates appears to have peaked around the middle of the fifteenth century. That pattern fits, albeit somewhat loosely, with the statement that ‘the king continued to use graduates in ever-greater numbers’.<sup>37</sup> While the overall number of king’ clerks mentioned in the patent rolls was in decline, the educational quality of those clerks was rising strongly. Of those graduates, approximately half (with small variations) had degrees in law through the period. This pattern of graduate status resembles that for the percentage of king’s clerks who became bishops as shown in Figure 5.4 above. As the century progressed, the king’s clerks were becoming a smaller, ever more highly-

<sup>37</sup> Benjamin Thompson and Jacques Verger, ‘Church and State, Clerks and Graduates’, in *Government and Political Life in England and France, c.1300-c.1500*, ed. by Christopher David Fletcher, Jean-Philippe Genêt, and John Watts (Cambridge: University Press, 2015), pp. 183–216 (p. 212).



educated group of royal servants. Their chances of reaching the episcopacy were increasing, and the bench of bishops was evolving into a meritocratic set of clerks where education, skill and experience were the pathway to advancement.

Loyal and steady service as a king's clerk was clearly one way that the career of a cleric might progress, perhaps via higher office in the royal administration and then onwards to the episcopacy. But the Church also offered potential routeways to prelacy, one of which was the office of dean at the secular cathedrals. Such service within the Church provides a contrasting perspective to service within the royal administration, but it also provides confirmation of the primacy of royal service for the ambitious cleric. For some rising churchmen, the position of dean might have represented a final destination in their career - it provided high status, possibly a very considerable income, and a distinct local community in which to pursue their interests. For others it could represent just another stepping-stone on the way to an episcopal see. Table 5.3 summarises the number of men who held such office at each location, and how many went on to become bishops:

**Table 5.3.** Deaneries of the secular cathedrals over the period 1400 – 1520.

<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Value (pence) and reference from <i>Valor Ecclesiasticus</i></b>	<b>Number of deans</b>	<b>Number who became bishops</b>	<b>Ratio bishops/deans</b>
York	76207 (v, p. 1)	18	8	1 : 2.3
Salisbury	49080 (ii, p. 73)	15	7	1 : 2.1
Exeter	37920 (ii, p. 295)	15	5	1 : 3
Bath & Wells	70957 (i, p. 124)	13	2	1 : 6.5
Lincoln	45050 (iv, p. 17)	7	1	1 : 7
Hereford	9193 (iii, p. 4)	15	2	1 : 7.5

Diocese	Value (pence) and reference from <i>Valor Ecclesiasticus</i>	Number of deans	Number who became bishops	Ratio bishops/deans
St Paul's, London	50545 (i, p. 363)	13	2	1 : 6.5
Chichester	14032 (i, p. 299)	13	1	1 : 13
Coventry & Lichfield	20640 (iii, pp. 100, 101, 102)	6	0	N/A

Several facts spring immediately from the table. The deanery of Lichfield, although relatively remunerative compared to Hereford or Chichester, produced no bishops in this period. Only six men held the deanery during the years 1400-1520, with the average length of their occupancy being almost twenty-two years. Three men in particular stand out, namely Thomas de Stretton (1390-1426), John Verney (1432-1457) and Thomas Heywood (1457-1492).<sup>38</sup> Heywood spent significant sums on the physical fabric of the cathedral, including work on the chapter house, a new bell for the belfry, a chantry chapel and the provision of a new organ. His commitment to the cathedral over a long period is clear, indicating that the position of dean may not, in his eyes, have been a stepping-stone to any higher position. Thomas de Stretton seems to have had a role in the founding of collegiate church at Manchester in 1422.<sup>39</sup> John Verney is a more obscure figure. The question mark that remains for all three is whether their careers had become becalmed once they became dean, or whether they had found a niche that fully satisfied their aspirations and circumstances.

A similar question can be applied to the deanery of Lincoln. The turnover of men here was again low, with only one going on to become a bishop (Thomas Wolsey, dean 1509-14, after which he became bishop of Lincoln). Putting Wolsey to one side as a special case, only three men held the post of dean in a

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/fasti-ecclesiae/1300-1541/vol10/pp5-7> [accessed 26 May 2020].

<sup>39</sup> Paul Jeffery, *The Collegiate Churches of England and Wales* (London: Robert Hale, 2004), p. 202; Samuel Hibbet-Ware, *The Ancient Parish Church of Manchester and Why It Was Collegiated* (Manchester: Thomas Agnew, 1848), p. 153.

period of almost a century, namely John Mackworth (1412-1452), Robert Flemming (1452-1483) and George Fitzhugh (1483-1508). Mackworth of course achieved great notoriety for his argumentative, litigious and flamboyant character.<sup>40</sup> It appears that he certainly wanted to achieve elevation to the see of Lincoln, and he was elected (whether willingly or not) by the chapter to that post in 1431. However it was William Gray who was eventually enthroned, being translated from London in April 1431. Mackworth's character and methods would not have endeared to him to patrons beyond Lincoln, and he continued as dean until his death by January 1452. The income from the deanery, valued at over £187 per annum net in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, would be something that a man like Mackworth would not wish to forgo. After such a difficult period, the appointment of Robert Flemming as dean must have seemed like a new dawn.<sup>41</sup> As nephew of Richard Flemming (bishop of Lincoln from 1419 to 1431 and founder of Lincoln College, Oxford) Robert had excellent family connections. He was also an early humanist who has been described as the first Englishman in the fifteenth century to learn Greek.<sup>42</sup> He donated a set of manuscripts to Lincoln College that made it one of the finest libraries of the time in Oxford.<sup>43</sup> Flemming's focus was on study and writing, something that he was more closely involved in than William Gray. For Flemming, the possession of the deanery of Lincoln would surely have been ideal. It gave him a position of high status in the Church, it provided a very decent income, and it would have been a community in which he could flourish. The list of future bishops who were members of the Lincoln chapter was a glittering one: Peter Courtenay, Edmund Audley, Robert Morton, George Neville, Thomas Rotherham and Lionel Woodville, although present perhaps only occasionally, comprised a group of churchmen that any dean would benefit greatly from knowing. Other key names who held one of the Lincoln archdeaconries during Flemming's time included John Morton, John Blyth and Laurence Booth. That the diocese of Lincoln included the university at Oxford was another powerful attraction to keep Flemming at the diocesan centre. Flemming's successor, George Fitzhugh, was

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40 See Margaret Bowker's *ODNB* entry at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/66133>.

41 See *BRUO*, ii, pp. 699-700.

42 Roberto Weiss, *Humanism in England during the Fifteenth Century*, *Medium Aevum Monographs*, 4 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1941), pp. 101, 105.

43 V. H. H. Green, *The Commonwealth of Lincoln College, 1427-1977* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), pp. 173-74.

from a rather different mould. His father was Henry, 5<sup>th</sup> Baron Fitzhugh and his mother was Anne Neville, sister of Richard Neville (Warwick the Kingmaker). With such connections it was possible for George at the age of only twenty-two to be installed as dean of Lincoln. The circumstances of his appointment were those of the accession of Richard III, and Fitzhugh's royal links would have been of central consideration.<sup>44</sup> Those same circumstances would not, however, help George's career to flourish after Bosworth. Had events turned out differently then Fitzhugh might well have joined the bench of bishops. Instead, his career was somewhat becalmed after the accession of Henry Tudor. Fitzhugh's family wealth meant that he suffered little hardship, and the deanery of Lincoln was a prize well worth keeping for any man dedicated to an ecclesiastical life.

In contrast to Lincoln, the deanery of York was not only the wealthiest but also the one that featured the most rapid turnover of occupants. Across the period 1400-1520 it also had the highest number of future bishops for any of the secular cathedrals. The eight men who went on to the highest positions were Richard Clifford (dean for the period 1389-1401), Thomas Langley (1401-1406), Thomas Polton (1416-1420), William Grey (1421-1425), Robert Gilbert (1426-1436), Geoffrey Blyth (1497-1503), Christopher Bainbridge (1503-1507) and Thomas Wolsey (1513-1514). There does at one point seem to be a lengthy pause in the list, and the men who occupied the deanery in that period are listed in Table 5.4 below:

**Table 5.4.** The deans of York who did not subsequently obtain bishoprics.

Name	Dates as dean	Notes
Master William Felter, DCnL	1436-51	<i>BRUO</i> , ii, p. 675.
Master Richard Andrew, DCL	1452-77	His election was unsuccessfully contested by John Berningham.

<sup>44</sup> Anne F. Sutton and Livia Visser-Fuchs, 'The Sun in Splendour and the Rose Reborn: A Yorkist Mayor of Lincoln and His Book of Hours', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, 57 (2013), 195-245 (pp. 228-29).

		<i>BRUO</i> , i, p. 34.
Master Robert Booth, DCL	1477-88	<i>BRUC</i> , p. 79.
Master Christopher Urswick, DCnL	1488-94	This 'retiring' rector of Hackney has already been discussed. <i>BRUC</i> , pp. 605-6, 685.
Master William Sheffield, DCnL	1494-96	<i>BRUC</i> , pp. 521-22.

The surname Booth suggests connections with the grand ecclesiastical family of the northern province, and it appears Robert was an illegitimate son of that clan (his father was Richard Booth of Bergham, Suffolk).<sup>45</sup> It seems likely he was born around the year 1445 as he was awarded his doctorate in 1478. He died in 1488, which would put him in his mid-forties at the time. He was elected dean in July 1477 just a year after Laurence Booth had been translated to York from Durham. Robert's importance to the life of the city was underlined in 1483 when the mayor and council pardoned one of his esquires for an assault on account of 'the gret zele and luff that the Dean has had and has to thys Cite'.<sup>46</sup> He was also active on several commissions of the peace for the East Riding in the reigns of both Richard III and Henry VII.<sup>47</sup> If he could survive unscathed from the arrest of archbishop Rotherham in 1483, and also find early favour with Henry Tudor, then Robert may have been keeping a low political profile. In the deanery of York he may well have found the niche that fully satisfied his aspirations, but in any case his death at a relatively young age brought a premature end to his career.

Booth's successor, William Sheffield, seems to have had a longer life. Given the details of his education, a birth date of approximately 1435 would seem appropriate. That would imply he was in his early sixties when he died in

45 Barrie Dobson, 'The Residuary Canons of York in the Fifteenth Century', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 30.2 (1979), 145–74 (p. 155); Hannes Kleineke and Stephanie R. Hovland, 'The Estate and Household Accounts of William Worsley Dean of St Paul's Cathedral 1479-1497', *British History Online*, 2004 <<https://www.british-history.ac.uk/london-record-soc/vol40/pp3-17>> [accessed 27 February 2019].

46 Angelo Raine, ed., *York Civic Records*, Record Series (Yorkshire Archaeological Society), 98, 9 vols (Wakefield: Printed for the Society, 1939), i, p. 70.

47 *CPR 1476-1485*, p. 579 (18 Sept. 1484); *CPR 1485-1494* (6 Dec. 1485; 12 Nov. 1486).

December 1496. His father was Sir Robert Sheffield, knight, and he was Lincolnshire born. Sheffield's long list of benefices is impressive with a focus on the dioceses of Lincoln and York. He was archdeacon of Stow in the Lincoln diocese from November 1477 until his death, and was made treasurer of York in July 1485. Other preferments included the wardenship of St. Mary's Hospital at Bootham (August 1488 until death) and a canonry with prebend at Beverley. In 1485 and 1494 he acted as vicar general for archbishop Rotherham.<sup>48</sup> Given the strength of his local connections then Sheffield might have aspired to the see of Lincoln, but that went to men by translation from other dioceses. His relatively brief tenure as dean of York was perhaps the highest point that Sheffield could realistically expect, although his diplomatic duties in treating with the Scots would suggest that he was a man of real stature within the northern province.

In summary, this group of deans of York display a variety of characteristics, with no single reason why they did not progress to the episcopate. That the position of dean within the milieu of a cathedral and chapter such as York would in itself be a prestigious, rewarding and influential position seems clear. To many incumbents it might provide sufficient for their aspirations, especially where they were able to remain within a close, local family and kinship grouping. For other men it did provide the ideal springboard for their rise to the episcopate.

### **Service unrewarded**

The number of clerks in royal service was large, and for all the men who satisfied their ambition of achieving high prelacy, there were so many more who did not. For some there may have been a flaw in their pattern of service, for others their ambition may simply have been thwarted by circumstance. The opportunities for service were so much greater than the quantity of high rewards at the king's disposal. The study of cathedral deans above has provided some clear examples of men who never made it on to the top step. Among the ranks of king's clerks themselves there were plenty who never achieved the rank of

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<sup>48</sup> That he was still acting as such in 1496 is evident from the Durham Cathedral Archives (see [http://reed.dur.ac.uk/xtf/view?docId=ark/32150\\_s12227mp66x.xml](http://reed.dur.ac.uk/xtf/view?docId=ark/32150_s12227mp66x.xml) [accessed 26 May 2020]).

bishop, and they form the focus of this section of the chapter. A few names will suffice to illustrate who they were and why they were never to occupy an episcopal throne. They include John Prophete, William Kynwolmerssh, Thomas Kirkeby, John Gunthorpe, Christopher Urswick and Geoffrey Simeon. Three of these in particular (Prophete, Gunthorpe and Simeon) provide contrasting but complementary case studies; they show how personal characteristics and external circumstances could combine to frustrate even the most ambitious.

For John Prophete there are five entries in *CPR 1408-13*, and in all of them he is described as king's clerk and in several as keeper of the privy seal.<sup>49</sup>

Prophete had seen royal service under Richard II, but was dismissed by the king in 1395. However he was quickly taken up by Henry IV after his seizure of the throne, becoming not just his clerk but also one of the most regular attendees at the royal council and, briefly, the king's secretary.<sup>50</sup> The highest ecclesiastical post that Prophete enjoyed was the highly remunerative one of the deanship of York.<sup>51</sup> He had also held an astonishing number of benefices on his way to that point: 'Between 1378 and 1407 Prophete enjoyed thirty-five benefices (although never more than twelve at once)'.<sup>52</sup> He was the only holder of the office of keeper of the privy seal who did not enter the rank of the bishops in Henry IV's reign. 'He seems to have been squeezed out by the pressure of men already bishops who wanted further advancement, and although in 1407 royal ambassadors were sent to Rome to secure his promotion, by then episcopal vacancies were at an end for the rest of the reign'.<sup>53</sup> This analysis is supported by the list of newly appointed bishops provided in Table 5.5 below. The provision of first bishoprics dried up in 1407 in England, and in Wales the only significant appointment was that of Henry Chichele to the see of St David's in October 1407. One other suggestion is that Prophete's income was so high that only a few bishoprics would do for him, and that those of sufficient value

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49 *CPR 1408-13*, pp. 168, 229, 268, 418 & 456.

50 Given-Wilson, *Henry IV*, p. 407, p. 468 n.14; <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/37868>.

51 He held the deanship from August 1406 until his death in 1416; see <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/fasti-ecclesiae/1300-1541/vol6/pp6-9> [accessed 27 May 2020]. The appointment was not a simple one (*CPR 1405-8*, p. 285) – the king saw the granting of the deanery by Pope Innocent VII as a trespass, and was keen to make it clear that only by royal pardon was Prophete licensed to take up the post.

52 <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/fasti-ecclesiae/1300-1541/vol6/pp6-9> [accessed 23 June 2020].

53 Peter Heath, *Church and Realm 1272-1461*, Fontana History of England (London: Fontana, 1988), p. 267.

that did become vacant were too political to be offered to him. In addition, the length of Prophete's occupation of the post of keeper of the privy seal (from 1406 to 1415) suggests that he was regarded as a close, loyal and effective servant, but not necessarily as a man ready to act as a diocesan bishop and peer of the realm. It may therefore be that circumstances did not work in Prophete's favour – his career path would suggest that a bishopric could in other times have been his.

**Table 5.5.** The men awarded their first bishopric in England during the reign of Henry IV.

Name	Diocese	Year of provision
William Strickland	Carlisle	1399
Richard Clifford	Bath & Wells	1400
John Bottlesham	Rochester	1400
Henry Bowet	Bath & Wells	1401
Robert Mascall	Hereford	1404
Philip Repingdon	Lincoln	1404
Thomas Langley	Durham	1406
Alexander Tottington	Norwich	1406
Robert Hallum	Salisbury	1407

John Gunthorpe (d. 1498) achieved high office in both state and Church, yet he too never attained the rank of bishop.<sup>54</sup> Part of the explanation for this may lie in the political events of his maturity, with the death of Edward IV, the seizure of the throne by Richard, duke of Gloucester, and the eventual accession of Henry Tudor. However, Gunthorpe does stand in contrast to John Morton who, despite

54 A. Compton Reeves, 'John Gunthorpe: Keeper of Richard III's Privy Seal, Dean of Wells Cathedral', *Viator*, 39.1 (2008), 307–44. For Cecil H. Clough's *ODNB* entry for Gunthorpe see <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/11752>.



his previous steadfastness to the Lancastrian cause, was elevated during Edward IV's second reign to the wealthy see of Ely in 1478. Morton's highly political role in the events of the 1450s and 1460s is in contrast to the less high-profile career of Gunthorpe. Yet, even though Gunthorpe was favoured by Edward IV in both his reigns, it was men such as Morton who achieved greater advancement. Nevertheless, Gunthorpe displayed many of the characteristics of the men who did finally achieve episcopal rank. He held many key positions, any one of which might propel a rising cleric ever further: at various times he was keeper of the privy seal, clerk of parliament, king's councillor, king's almoner, chaplain to both the king and the queen, dean of the royal chapel and dean of Wells.

The list of those future bishops in the period 1400-1520 who were once dean of the chapel royal or of the chapel within the royal household is an impressive one: William Dudley, Richard Nykke, William Atwater, Robert Gilbert, Richard Hill, Thomas Jane, Edmund Lacy, Richard Praty, Thomas Savage and John Veysey. The career prospects for the keepers of the privy seal were even more striking with many either bishops while keeper, or enjoying elevation soon afterwards. For example, taking either side of the period when Gunthorp was keeper, his fellow office-holders included Thomas Rotherham, John Hales, John Russell, Peter Courtenay, Richard Fox and Thomas Ruthall.<sup>55</sup> Of course there were keepers who did not rise to the episcopacy such as John Prophete, but they were very much the exception. Two men who progressed from the deanery of Wells to the episcopacy were John Stafford and Richard Courtenay. In the previous century, Henry Beaufort provides another example. However Wells did not provide quite the springboard that some other cathedrals represented – the deanery of Exeter provided five future bishops, that at Salisbury seven and at York a total of eight. Gunthorpe's experience also included service at the papal court, as well as employment on diplomatic missions. His career as a whole would therefore appear to be a perfect prelude for any man who sought the office of bishop. Gunthorpe's failure to achieve episcopal status is therefore problematic. It may be that he excluded himself and chose a different path for

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<sup>55</sup> *Handbook of British Chronology*, ed. by E. B. Fryde and others, Guides and Handbooks/Royal Historical Society, 2, 3rd edn (London: Royal Historical Society, 1986), pp. 95–96.

whatever reason. It does seem inconceivable that Gunthorpe's name was never considered by Edward IV as sees became vacant. The table that follows lists those men who were awarded their first bishopric during his two reigns.

**Table 5.6.** The men awarded their first bishopric in England during the reigns of Edward IV.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Year of provision</b>
John Kyngescote	Carlisle	1462
Richard Scrope (d. 1468)	Carlisle	1464
Robert Stillington	Bath & Wells	1465
John Booth	Exeter	1465
Edward Story	Carlisle	1468
Thomas Rotherham	Rochester	1468
James Goldwell	Norwich	1472
John Alcock	Rochester	1472
William Dudley	Durham	1476
Thomas Millyng	Hereford	1476
John Russell	Rochester	1476
Richard Bell	Carlisle	1478
John Morton	Ely	1478
Peter Courtenay	Exeter	1478
Edmund Audley	Rochester	1480
Lionel Woodville	Salisbury	1482

Gunthorpe's best chances of episcopal elevation were probably during Edward's second reign. However Table 5.6 indicates just how intense the

competition was. Edward favoured nobles such as Dudley and Courtenay, and regular clergy (Millyng and Bell) were being accommodated at the lesser dioceses. There were few remaining positions, and men such as Morton and Alcock had to be given their just rewards.

In Richard III's brief reign just two English sees fell vacant. The vacancy at Salisbury was filled by translation (Thomas Langton). At Durham it was John Shirwood who was preferred by Richard, and indeed he also recommended to the pope that Shirwood be made a cardinal.<sup>56</sup> The king clearly had a special desire to favour Shirwood over any other candidate. After Bosworth, it seems that Gunthorpe's star shined less brightly and that his chance of a bishopric was gone. Gunthorpe's lack of success may therefore purely have been down to timing among a very strong field of men who were also worthy of elevation.

A final exemplar of a 'bishop who never was' is provided by Geoffrey Simeon.<sup>57</sup> Simeon died in August 1508, and it seems likely that he had been born in the early 1450s because he was admitted as a scholar at Winchester in March 1463. He incepted for his D.Th. at Cambridge which he was granted in 1504-5. By 1491 he was described as dean of the chapel of the royal household. Simeon was in addition described as king's clerk and councillor when he was granted a prebend in St George's chapel, Windsor in 1502.<sup>58</sup> In 1504 he was again described as dean of the king's chapel and was also listed as dean of Chichester<sup>59</sup>. In March 1506 he was installed as dean of Lincoln. There is an interesting entry in the Parliament Rolls where 'Geoffrey Symeon, clerk' is listed among several others regarding an act of enfeoffment.<sup>60</sup> The two other clerks listed alongside him were William Barons and Thomas Ruthall - both of them went on to become bishops. During Henry VII's reign there were four other men who were listed as deans of the chapel royal, namely Richard Hill, Thomas Jane, Richard Nykke and William Atwater. All four of those also went on to

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56 See A.J. Pollard's *ODNB* article at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/25447>.

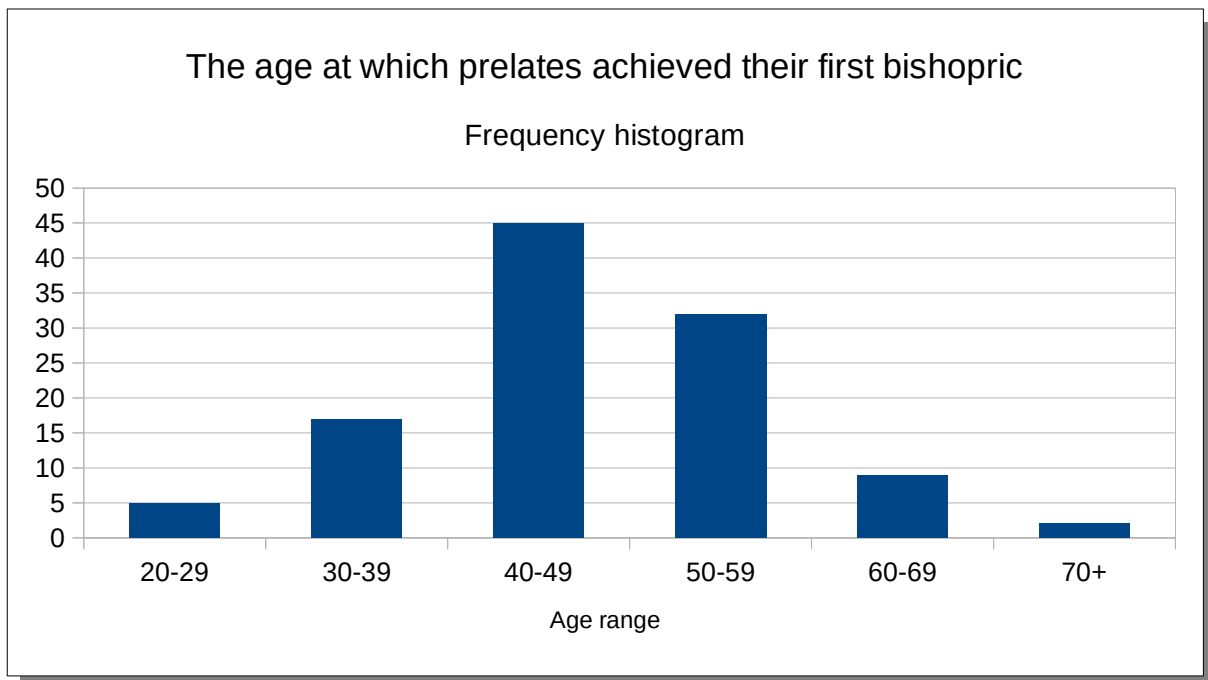
57 Marianne Louise Wilson, 'Community, Kinship and Piety: Lincoln Cathedral Close c.1450-1500.' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Nottingham, 2014), pp. 148-49 <<http://eprints.nottingham.ac.uk/44555/1/662210.pdf>> [accessed 23 June 2020].

58 *CPR 1494-1509*, pp. 268 & 396.

59 *Ibid.*, p. 380; *Fasti*, vii, p. 5.

60 *PROME*, Henry VII, January 1504.

episcopal enthronement. Simeon was therefore a member of a very strong peer group, and he had all the pedigree to join the bench of bishops. His death in 1508 would probably have been when he was in his mid-fifties. Had he lived, therefore, his chances of elevation would have seemed high, although the age profile at which fifteenth-century prelates achieved their first bishopric makes for interesting viewing:



**Figure 5.5.** The age profile for episcopal elevation.

The information on this chart must be treated with caution. For nearly all the men in our cohort, it is difficult to define their year of birth with any certainty. Intelligent estimation has therefore been used, based on relevant aspects of their biographies. For example, men who have enrolled for their first degrees will be more likely to be in their late teens than any other age. Those who have just obtained their doctorates are likely to be in their early thirties. However, despite such clues, the ages so inferred are no more than estimates and could be wrong by several years. The assumption is, when taking this group of men as a whole, that estimates biased one way are balanced by estimates that fall the other way.

Figure 5.5 shows that men had the greatest chance of gaining their first see when in their forties or fifties. The mean average age for this cohort of men was forty-seven. The group of men in their twenties were those of noble birth, namely Robert and George Neville, William Percy, Thomas Bourchier and Lionel Woodville. At the other end of the age range, both Stephen Patrington (who enjoyed the patronage of John of Gaunt) and John Rickinghall were in their early seventies before being installed at St David's and Chichester respectively. Patrington was even in the process of being translated from St David's to the diocese of Chichester when he died on 22 December 1417. As a Carmelite friar, Patrington was one of the eighteen regular churchmen in this group, and the average age of the regulars at first installation was almost fifty-two (51.56). For the secular clerks the average age was six years less (46.46). By coincidence, the youngest of the regular churchmen to be elevated was also a Carmelite friar – Robert Mascall. He was probably around the age of thirty-four when he was made bishop of Hereford in July 1404. These figures reveal that, by the age of sixty, the chances of achieving a first episcopal see were diminishing greatly. It seems that Geoffrey Simeon was already moving past the 'best' age by the time of his death.

The examples provided by these three men illustrate very clearly how a seemingly golden career might still fall short. Royal service was a pre-requisite for but no guarantee of an episcopal promotion. The king had a strong field of candidates from which to choose his bishops, and the successful clerks were those who could step off the administrative conveyor belt and match the personal preferences of their monarch. Their service had to be as much to the person of the king as to administrative structure that supported him.

### **The place of the regular clergy**

Although the great majority of English bishops were secular churchmen, the regular clergy were also an important presence. Their successes reinforce a narrative of personal service to the king, and to his broader family being another pathway of service. The Carmelites in particular provide a clear example. The Whitefriars were conspicuously prominent in their episcopal achievements, at

least in the first half of the fifteenth century. For the regular clergy as a whole, those who achieved episcopal status were provided to one of the four Welsh dioceses, and only occasionally achieved translation to more remunerative ones in England. The Carmelites were not so constrained. For example, Thomas Peverel achieved his first see in October 1395 when he was provided to Ossory in the province of Dublin. In July 1398 he was translated to Llandaff before moving on to Worcester in July 1407. He remained there until his death in March 1419.<sup>61</sup> While at Llandaff, Peverel suffered from the insecurity caused by the rebellion of Owain Glyn Dŵr. He therefore had to spend a long period outside his diocese, acting as suffragan in Winchester in 1406/7. Robert Mascall, the prior of Ludlow, achieved his first see at Hereford in July 1404, and remained there until his death in December 1416.<sup>62</sup> Stephen Patrington's brief episcopal career began at St David's between February 1415 and December 1417. He was then translated to Chichester but unfortunately died after only one week there.<sup>63</sup> Finally John Stanbury was provided to Bangor in March 1448 and then translated to Hereford in February 1453. He remained there until his death in May 1474. Stanbury had been elected to the vacant see of Norwich in early 1446, but it was Walter Lyhert who finally became its bishop.<sup>64</sup>

Much of the explanation for the success of the Carmelites lay in their relationship to the Crown and to the immediate family of the king during the Lancastrian period. Of the thirty-nine Carmelite houses in England and Wales, almost a quarter were claimed to be of royal foundation (where the king or his immediate family had an important role to play in their initial establishment).

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61 *BRUO*, iii, p. 1472; for his *ODNB* entry by R.G. Davies see <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/22075>.

62 *BRUO*, ii, p. 1239; for his *ODNB* entry by R.G. Davies see <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/18257>.

63 *BRUO*, iii, pp. 1435-6; for his *ODNB* entry by Jeremy Catto see <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/21569>.

64 *BRUO*, iii, pp. 1755-6; for his *ODNB* entry by Ann Rhydderch see <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/26228>.

**Table 5.7.** The Carmelite houses that enjoyed royal foundation or significant initial support by the king and his immediate family.

<b>House location</b>	<b>Date founded</b>	<b>Founder details</b>	<b>Knowles &amp; Hadcock reference<sup>65</sup></b>
Bristol	1256	Edward I (before his accession)	p. 234
Doncaster	1351	John of Gaunt and others	pp. 234-5
Gloucester	before 1268	Eleanor, queen consort to Henry III	p. 235
Hitchin	1317	Edward II	p. 235
Kingston-upon-Hull	1290-3	Edward I and others	p. 235
Northallerton	1356	Grant of land by Edward III	p. 236
Scarborough	1319	Grant of property by Edward II	p. 236
Stamford	1268	Henry III (claimed)	p. 237
Yarmouth	before 1277	Edward I (claimed)	p. 237

By contrast there is little evidence of direct royal involvement in the foundation of houses of the Franciscan or Austin friars. Of the fifty-four Dominican houses listed in Knowles & Hadcock, only four appear to have enjoyed a royal foundation. The Carmelites were therefore the mendicant order most closely associated with the English king, and the enduring legacy of those royal foundations would hold the Whitefriars in a more intimate relationship with the royal family.

John of Gaunt had an especially close relationship with the order. He had a series of Carmelite confessors, including John Kyningham who briefly held the position of provincial for the order.<sup>66</sup> These men were resident in his household,

<sup>65</sup> David Knowles and R. Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses, England and Wales*, 2nd edn (London: Longmans, 1971).

<sup>66</sup> Frances Andrews, *The Other Friars: The Carmelite, Augustinian, Sack and Pied Friars in the Middle Ages*, Monastic Orders (Woodbridge, UK ; Rochester, NY: Boydell, 2006), pp. 29–30.

and they were particularly active in seeking to counter the doctrines of John Wyclif. Gaunt patronised Stephen Patrington (see above), provincial from 1388-1414, granting him an annuity in 1397. The following year Gaunt requested that, were he to die outside London, his body should spend the night in the London Whitefriars before burial in St Paul's Cathedral.<sup>67</sup> The tradition of having Carmelites as confessors was continued by Henry IV. He is said to have admired those religious orders with an eremitical tradition such as the Carmelites and the Carthusians.<sup>68</sup> Henry V too had notable Carmelites in his household including Thomas Netter, author of the *Doctrinale fidei ecclesiae*, who was Henry's confessor and was with the king at his death.<sup>69</sup> The last of the four bishops mentioned above, John Stanbury, was confessor to Henry VI, served on his royal council and was with him in July 1460 when he was wounded at the battle of Northampton. Stanbury lived on as bishop until 1474 but by this time the fortunes of the Carmelites were in decline. In September 1464 the Cambridge friar, Henry Parker had preached at St Paul's Cross, an event that led to him being charged with Lollardy, along with several other Carmelites.<sup>70</sup> Compared to the era of Thomas Netter, the order had fallen on hard times.<sup>71</sup>

The closeness of the Whitefriars to the Lancastrians had served them very well during the first sixty years of the century. It allowed the order to 'out-perform' the other regular clergy when it came to ecclesiastical preferment. Their service to the dynasty was an intimate one, a feature they were not able to maintain under Edward IV. Edward was keen to pursue and suppress those who challenged religious orthodoxy. A generational change among the Carmelites appears to have led to a new perspective. Their radicalism produced a critique that was thoroughly unwelcome to a king and his prelates who sought continuity and

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67 Ibid. The London friary was situated between Fleet Street and the River Thames: see Nick Holder, *The Friaries of Medieval London: From Foundation to Dissolution*, Studies in the History of Medieval Religion (Martlesham: The Boydell Press, 2017), pp. 113–14.

68 Given-Wilson, *Henry IV*, pp. 378–79.

69 Joachim Smet, *The Carmelites: A History of the Brothers of Our Lady of Mount Carmel*, Rev. edn (Darien, Illinois: Carmelite Spiritual Center, 1988), p. 38. For the life of Netter see Anne Hudson's ODNB entry at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/19907>.

70 Cora L. Scofield, *The Life and Reign of Edward the Fourth, King of England and of France and Lord of Ireland*, 2 vols (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1923), ii, pp. 393–94.

71 Bruce P. Flood, 'The Carmelite Friars in Medieval English Universities and Society, 1299-1430', *Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale*, 55 (1988), 154–83 (pp. 179, 182).



stability. Just why certain friars should have shifted to an unorthodox position, preaching that Christ and his apostles were beggars, is hard to determine.<sup>72</sup> Writing in 1955, Du Boulay suggests poverty as being at the root of this controversy. By the later fifteenth century ‘the Order was in an unhealthy state’, and ‘a large part of the trouble was undoubtedly poverty’.<sup>73</sup> However, if young friars such as Henry Parker thought that preaching about the mendicant status of Christ and the apostles would result in a renewal of support for the Carmelites, then they miscalculated badly.<sup>74</sup> This whole episode would certainly benefit from further detailed research. Its consequences were a stark demonstration of the necessity for royal support and approval in gaining preferment to a bishopric – the Carmelites lost their favoured status and would no longer be preferred for episcopal promotion among the regular clergy.

## England and Rome

Achieving great success through royal service was possible even when king and clerk were rarely in physical proximity to each other. Men who served at the Roman court could also rise to the episcopacy. Indeed, the ways that clerical royal service evolved are exemplified by the changing and strengthening relationship between England and Rome across the fifteenth century and beyond. The character of that relationship was markedly different by the reign of Henry VII, but good service to the English king remained the pathway to high prelacy. What was so new in Henry Tudor’s policy towards Rome was his decision to admit Italian clerics to English sees. Nevertheless, serving their king at Rome still proved successful for the careers of numerous English clerks.

If we take the year 1400 as a starting point, then the relationship between England and Rome certainly had its twists and turns. With the trauma of the papal schism effectively healed in 1417, the century that followed might be seen

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72 A close study of the individuals concerned, their education, contacts and influences would be needed. Those details are beyond the scope of this study, but would seem necessary to explain the history of the Carmelites in England.

73 F. R. H. Du Boulay, ‘The Quarrel between the Carmelite Friars and the Secular Clergy of London, 1464–1468’, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 6.2 (1955), 156–74 (p. 165).

74 There was no evidence of any increase in generosity from testators after the Carmelite controversy – Jens Röhrkasten, ‘Londoners and London Mendicants in the Late Middle Ages’, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 47.3 (1996), 446–77 (p. 458).

as a period of relative stability for the English Church before the sudden and unexpected troubles of the late 1520s. By the time the Council of Constance was convened in November 1414, the Church in England had established a strong national identity, and the role of the king was powerfully entrenched. Moreover, princes across Europe were instrumental in the success of the Council. The emperor, Sigismund, feted during his visit to England in the spring of 1416, was keen to see a unified Christendom.<sup>75</sup> It would provide a bulwark against the threat of Ottoman expansion in eastern Europe, as well as challenging the threat of heresy from the Hussites and elsewhere.<sup>76</sup> He and the princes were jealous of their sovereignty, striving to achieve and strengthen their control and influence over the universal church within their territories. For the next hundred year, therefore, the shifting balance of power between Rome and nations such as England was the theatre within which royal service at the curia had to be acted.

For that foremost of Lancastrian kings, Henry V, the Church was critical to his rule. He has been described as having the role of ‘Supreme Head and Governor’ of the Church in England.<sup>77</sup> Henry was conscious of the sacral nature of his kingship; he had been keen to see the papal schism healed and for the tide of heresy represented by the Lollards and the Hussites to be challenged and defeated. The hierarchy of the late-medieval English Church was similarly consistent in its opposition to heresy, and for that effort it enjoyed the full commitment of Henry and successive English kings. In so doing, it was also in full harmony with papal policy. That certainly did not mean that the English Church wanted to sacrifice any of its own national identity. The statutes of Provisors and *Praemunire* remained in effect, and attempts by the papacy to place unwelcome candidates into English benefices and bishoprics were successfully resisted. Although there were tensions with Rome, a long period of mutually beneficial co-existence must have seemed in prospect. However,

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75 Christopher T. Allmand, *Henry V, English Monarchs* (London: Methuen London, 1992), pp. 104-9. Sigismund’s lengthy visit to England culminated in the treaty of Canterbury which supported Henry’s war with France.

76 Mark Whelan, ‘Sigismund of Luxemburg and the Imperial Response to the Ottoman Turkish Threat, c. 1410-1437’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, Royal Holloway, University of London, 2014), pp. 29-31.

77 Malcolm Vale, *Henry V: The Conscience of the King* (New Haven ; London: Yale University Press, 2016), p. 130.

beyond these very broad generalisations, there were changes and developments with a clear trajectory that need elucidation and evaluation. By the 1470s, and especially after the accession of Henry VII, the relationship between England and Rome became stronger and deeper. Indeed England was foremost in developments such as the adoption of cardinal protectors. This section of the chapter will therefore explore the policies and the personnel who contributed to that evolution. It will conclude that Henry VIII's break with Rome was not the inevitable consequence of burgeoning evangelism within England.

In the period before 1417, the major concern of Christendom had been to end the papal schism, a painful episode that had begun in 1378. England together with much of the Empire, most of Italy and other kingdoms including Hungary took the side of the Roman pontiffs, while France, Scotland and the Spanish kingdoms adhered to the Avignon claimants.<sup>78</sup> It was therefore to England's benefit to have clergy at the Roman curia on whom it could rely, who would press its cases and support the king's nominees to major posts such as bishoprics. There was a series of Italian clerks who were granted benefices in England, including remunerative and prestigious posts such as archdeaconries and deaneries. The entries in *Fasti Ecclesiae* show a total of nineteen such men during the period of the schism, of which six are shown as 'contested', although three of these relate to one archdeaconry (see Appendix 8). Clearly Rome was attempting to provide its candidates to some of these positions, but ultimately without success. For example there was a major tussle over the archdeaconry of York during the period 1405 to 1414. This was a valuable benefice, providing its holder with an income of over £90 per annum by 1535.<sup>79</sup> There were three Italian claimants, even though two English clerics are recorded within both royal and archiepiscopal sources as being granted the position (Roger Corynham from 1405-1412 and William Pilton from 1412 to 1435).<sup>80</sup> Although Francesco Uggucione, Francesco Zabarella and Rinaldo Brancaccio are all recorded as being archdeacon, there is no evidence that they ever took possession, and in

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78 Kaminsky, Howard, 'The Great Schism', in *The New Cambridge Medieval History. Volume 6: c.1300-c.1415*, ed. by Michael Jones, The New Cambridge Medieval History, 6 (Cambridge: University Press, 2000), pp. 674–96 (p. 678).

79 *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, v, p. 1.

80 *Fasti Ecclesiae*, vi, pp. 17-19.

particular it seems very unlikely that they ever derived any income from it.<sup>81</sup> At a time when the papal schism had not yet been resolved, these and the three earlier contested claims/provisions reflect the perplexing atmosphere that must have accompanied the ongoing dispute about the papacy.

Putting the contested provisions aside, the remaining thirteen cases show that Italian clerics were being accepted into prestigious and remunerative benefices by the three English kings in this period. Perhaps the most notable of these was Pietro Tomacelli who held the archdeaconsy of Taunton from 1383 to 1389. He went on of course to become Pope Boniface IX, the second of the Roman pontifical claimants during the Schism, succeeding Urban VI who had died in October 1389.<sup>82</sup> Tomacelli's papacy was not, however, the blessing that the English might have hoped for, even though he had occupied an archdeaconsy later valued at over £83 per annum net.<sup>83</sup> Once the election of Martin V had taken place, the granting of such benefices to Italian clerics came to an abrupt end. Gabriel Condulmier's attempt to take possession of the archdeaconsy of Durham beginning in July 1419 was ultimately unsuccessful. The king was determined that his candidate, Robert Gilbert, should take possession and achieved this after much time and effort.<sup>84</sup> This setback did not ultimately dent the career of Condulmier who was nephew of Gregory XII – he went on to become Pope Eugenius IV in 1431.<sup>85</sup>

When looked at as a whole within a graphical timeline, the period up until 1414 shows a distinct pattern of concurrent and overlapping possession of 'high' benefices by these Italian churchmen, many of whom were related to popes or cardinals. Several of them, as we have seen, went on to wear the triple crown themselves (see Appendix 8 and Appendix 9). That pattern then came to an end. It seems that England no longer felt the need to favour and support such

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81 Cardinal Uggucione was 'Henry's friend' and made a great impression when he visited England in 1408, urging English participation at the council of Pisa: Given-Wilson, *Henry IV*, p. 362.

82 J. N. D. Kelly, and Michael J. Walsh, 'Boniface IX' in *A Dictionary of Popes*, Oxford Reference, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Oxford: University Press, 2010)  
<<https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199295814.001.0001/acref-9780199295814-e-235>> [accessed 5 March 2021].

83 *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, i, p. 133.

84 See Irene Zadnik's ODNB entry for Gilbert at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/47839>.

85 Roger Collins, *Keepers of the Keys of Heaven: A History of the Papacy* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2009), p. 311.

clerics following the successes of the Council of Constance. In the whole of the period from the accession of Henry VI in 1422 until his deposition in 1461, only three Italians featured. However, each of those was a notable figure, and each achieved their benefices for quite specific reasons. Between 1423 and 1434 the nephew of Martin V, Prospero Colonna, was in possession of the archdeaconry of Canterbury. At first Archbishop Chichele had refused to admit Prospero when Pope Martin provided him to it in June 1424.<sup>86</sup> However, given that Chichele's kinsman, also called Henry, was the previous archdeacon and had died in office at the Roma curia, it was usual for the provision of his successor to be reserved to the pope. There was a dispute, although it ended up with Colonna taking possession of the archdeaconry but only under conditions that would stop it being reserved at the next turn. Things became more complicated in 1431 when the Colonna family took up an armed struggle against Eugenius IV during his attempt to recover fortresses that Martin V had granted to his Colonna relatives. Prospero suffered excommunication and lost the archdeaconry at Canterbury. He subsequently attempted to reclaim it but was again resisted by Chichele who had placed another of his relatives, Thomas, there. Finally Colonna admitted defeat and was compensated with several other, lesser benefices.<sup>87</sup>

The two other prominent Italian clerics in this sequence were men favoured by the bishops of Salisbury to assist in the movement to canonize Osmund, their illustrious eleventh century predecessor – a movement that came to fruition in 1457. The contributions to that effort by these two men were of contrasting efficacy, and perhaps acted as a useful lesson in the importance of vetting and assessing potential candidates before committing valuable resources to them. The first of these, occupying the archdeaconry of Salisbury between July 1444 and July 1446 (when he resigned), was Pietro Barbo. Barbo's uncle was Eugenius IV, and Pietro had been made a cardinal deacon in 1440 when he was just 23 years old. He went on to be elected pope as Paul II in 1464.<sup>88</sup> The selection of Pietro for Salisbury can therefore be seen as a prescient one. With

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86 R. G. Davies, 'Martin V and the English Episcopate, with Particular Reference to His Campaign for the Repeal of the Statute of Provisors', *The English Historical Review*, 92.363 (1977), 309–44 (p. 316).

87 Margaret Harvey, *England, Rome and the Papacy 1417-1464: The Study of a Relationship* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), p. 96.

88 Collin, *Keepers of the Keys*, p. 328.

so few high benefices being granted to foreign clerics, it looks as if England was being highly selective in its choice.

The other cleric in this sequence was Marino Orsini, who occupied the archdeaconry of Wiltshire during the period 1452-1454, and possibly until as late as 1457.<sup>89</sup> Orsini came from an illustrious clerical family that produced numerous cardinals and popes. Although Marino never achieved the rank of cardinal, he was archbishop of Taranto from 1445 until 1472. When he obtained the archdeaconry of Wiltshire, which he held formally *in commendam*, he is described as papal referendary.<sup>90</sup> The entry in the papal register for Nicholas V dated 18 August 1452 was at pains to emphasize that Orsini's appointment did not represent a papal reservation for the archdeaconry. An earlier entry in the register underlined the grandeur of his arrival in England. It spelled out Orsini's roles of nuncio, referendary and orator of the pope and described his retinue as comprising fifty individuals; it also requested safe-conduct for all of these for a period of three years only.<sup>91</sup> Bishop Richard Beauchamp appears to have been suitably impressed by Orsini when the latter paid him a visit, collating him to the archdeaconry of Wiltshire. The archbishop of Taranto stated that he had great influence with the pope and cardinals, and that he could be of assistance in the canonization of St Osmund. It seems the chapter of Salisbury Cathedral were less impressed than their bishop, and indeed Orsini seems to have provided little effective support.<sup>92</sup> It is striking that both Barbo and Orsini were granted their benefices in the diocese of Salisbury. However, while the appointment of Barbo could be seen as showing shrewdness and perspicacity, that of Orsini underlines the fact that appearances can be deceptive – despite his impressive credentials, Orsini took more than he gave to the star-struck Richard Beauchamp.<sup>93</sup> What none of these three men seem to represent, however, was

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89 *Fasti Ecclesiae*, iii, pp. 13-14.

90 *CPL*, x, p. 117, dated 18 August 1452.

91 *CPL*, x, p. 219, dated 18 July 1451.

92 Harvey, *England, Rome and the Papacy*, pp. 96–97; A. R. Malden, *The Canonization of Saint Osmund: From the Manuscript Records in the Muniment Room of Salisbury Cathedral*, Wilts Record Society, 2 (Salisbury: Bennett Brothers, printers, 1901), pp. 94–95.

93 Barbo's archdeaconry of Salisbury was valued in 1535 at just over £70 per annum (*Valor*, ii, p. 77); in contrast Orsini's archdeaconry of Wiltshire was valued at £185 per annum (*Valor*, ii, p. 74). An entry in the papal letters dated February 1453 restricted the daily cash sum that Orsini could derive from Wiltshire to 30 gros tournois of silver, 12 to a gold florin of Florence (*CPL*, x, p. 619). The value of 2.5 gold florins per day can be calculated by weight. The florin contained 3.5 grams of gold while the English 'light' noble (valued at 6s 8d or 80 pence) weighed 7.0 grams. Thus Orsini could draw the

any move by the English king to co-opt Italian clerics into his service to further his causes within the Roman curia. Beauchamp's focus was clearly on St Osmund, and the appointment of Colonna was a papal provision that followed the strict letter of law and custom. Although Barbo was later to become pope, it seems clear that, once again, he had been favoured at Salisbury to assist with the push to canonize St Osmund. He did at least make efforts in that direction.<sup>94</sup>

Clearly therefore, of the Italian clerics discussed over the period 1400 to 1457, that small group who featured after 1417 were not providing direct service to the English king. Attention therefore needs to focus on those men from England who were sent to the Roman curia. The important tasks they fulfilled highlight just how important the link with Rome was, and these men were amply rewarded for their royal service. From the end of the papal schism until the accession of the Tudor monarchy a series of men served in Rome in the post of royal proctor. There was a brief period during the very early years of Henry VI's reign when there were no official proctors (1425-1429), but that lapse was soon rectified. Appendix 10 lists all of the proctors as far as their details are known. The first of these was John Catterick who took up his post in 1413, shortly before he secured his first episcopal see at St David's in April 1414. His mission was to secure the promotion of the English king's chosen candidates to vacant bishoprics, and to pursue 'any other business of ours at the apostolic see, however it arises.'<sup>95</sup> Catterick remained continuously at the papal court until his death in December 1419. He was therefore non-resident at St David's, and at his subsequent dioceses of translation (namely Coventry & Lichfield and Exeter).

Shortly after Catterick arrived in Rome, Henry V also appointed Thomas Polton to act as his ambassador and proctor. Polton had been active at the papal court since 1395, although not permanently in residence there. His abrasive personality led him on more than one occasion to be involved in violent incidents. While at Oxford he was charged and pardoned for an affray in which

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equivalent of 40 pence x 2.5 = 100 pence per day or a little over £152 per year. According to the TNA currency calculator, that had an equivalent value in 2017 of a little under £95,000 (<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency-converter/> [accessed 27 May 2020]).

94 Malden, *The Canonization of Saint Osmund*, p. 146.

95 Harvey, *England, Rome and the Papacy*, p. 8.

another student was killed.<sup>96</sup> More famously he had scandalised St Peter's in Rome in 1422 when he came to blows with the Castilian ambassador in a dispute over precedence.<sup>97</sup> Polton regarded his own position as being that of ambassador from the English king at the curia, whereas the papal authorities stated that he had never formally provided them with such credentials. Since his appointment by Henry V in 1414, Polton had been provided to the see of Hereford in July 1420 and was then translated to Chichester in November 1422. He was clearly therefore in royal favour, both with Henry V and with the minority council following the accession of the infant Henry VI in September 1422. However his position at the curia was now more ambivalent. With the death of Henry V, Polton was formally just royal proctor again, not an ambassador. Individual members of the minority council employed different proctors, so Polton had to make a choice, and he settled on an association with Henry Beaufort - 'this made him much less useful to other members of the government, but also vulnerable during intrigues in England.'<sup>98</sup> By the middle of 1425 Polton had left Rome but no successor as royal proctor was appointed. That situation continued until 1429 during which period relations have been characterised as 'strained'.

What the story of both Catterick and Polton indicates is that royal service at the Roman curia was certainly no obstacle for the careers of men during the reign of Henry V. Both were advanced to episcopal sees after their appointment, providing them with greatly enhanced status as well as significant financial rewards.<sup>99</sup> To live and work in an environment where rank was a fundamental and distinguishing feature required a precise knowledge of how best to operate. An appropriate level of ostentation was needed, with a clear understanding of who to contact and how best to motivate them, whether by simple monetary payment or otherwise. The forceful character of Thomas Polton was well-suited to a court where diffidence would surely lead to failure.

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96 See Margaret Harvey's *ODNB* article at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/22482>.

97 B. Behrens, 'Origins of the Office of English Resident Ambassador in Rome', *The English Historical Review*, 49 (1934), 640–56 (p. 646).

98 Harvey, *England, Rome and the Papacy*, p. 12.

99 The episcopal landscape in Italy was very different to that in England. There was a very large number of bishoprics in Italy, and the members of the Roma curia may not have appreciated the disparity. 'In much of Italy ... dioceses were often so small as to be barely visible on the map' - see Joseph Bergin, 'The Counter-Reformation Church and Its Bishops', *Past and Present*, 165.1 (1999), 30–73 (p. 40).



By June 1429 England had decided that a proctor at the curia was necessary once again, and there would be no repetition of such a hiatus. The first of these new appointees was Robert Fitzhugh, son of the third Baron Fitzhugh. He too was elevated to the episcopate shortly after his arrival in Rome, being provided to the see of London in April 1431.<sup>100</sup> Another notable royal proctor was William Gray, the future bishop of Ely, whose uncle (also William Gray) was the bishop of Lincoln. He was appointed to the curia in November 1445 and assisted with the continuing push to secure the canonization of St Osmund, a matter dear not just to the Salisbury Chapter but to Henry VI and Margaret of Anjou also.<sup>101</sup> In December 1450 Pope Nicholas V wished to provide Gray to the vacant see of Lincoln. However the electors, acting on royal licence, had already elected John Chedworth. Gray's turn came in June 1454 when Thomas Bourchier vacated his bishopric of Ely upon translation to Canterbury.<sup>102</sup> Gray had left the curia in October 1453 at a time when England's government was in turmoil after the mental collapse of Henry VI in August of that year.<sup>103</sup> Gray's ancestry, his closeness to the king and his work on projects that the king favoured all facilitated his provision to the see of Ely which he occupied until his death in 1478.<sup>104</sup>

In contrast to Gray and his predecessors, none of the next three royal proctors achieved episcopal rank. William Babyngton, the abbot of Bury and president of the general chapter of the Benedictines in England, was first appointed as proctor alongside Gray in March 1449.<sup>105</sup> His death in 1453 following Henry VI's mental collapse could only lead to further difficulties and confusion. For at least some of the period that followed, Vincent Clement acted as royal proctor. Although originally from Catalonia, Clement was naturalised in 1438, and appears to have acted for Henry VI on the matter of the Eton indulgences.<sup>106</sup> At the same time that Clement was active as occasional proctor, John Lax also

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100 See the *ODNB* entry by Irene Zadnik at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/9609>.

101 Malden, *The Canonization of Saint Osmund*, p. 105.

102 See Roy Martin Haines' *ODNB* article at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/11567>.

103 Grummitt, *Henry VI*, p. 170.

104 'He perhaps helped obtain indulgences for Eton': Harvey, *England, Rome and the Papacy*, p. 14.

105 For details on Babyngton see the *ODNB* article by Antonia Gransden at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/54429>.

106 Harvey, *England, Rome and the Papacy*, pp. 37–38.

fulfilled that function, in particular during the period 1455 to 1460. It might be 'difficult to discover precisely what went wrong for so successful an operator', but the changes on the English and papal thrones created instability that could not have helped his career.<sup>107</sup> Despite holding a series of benefices, Lax was weighed down by financial commitments that took him into debt. He only slowly recovered during the period 1462 to 1465. By that time any possibility of a bishopric was probably gone, and in any event there was some doubt whether he was ever ordained to higher orders.

After this period of political difficulty in England, the position of royal proctor reverted back to one where its occupants moved smoothly upwards into bishoprics. The first such proctor was Peter Courtenay, the future bishop of Exeter and then Winchester, who took up his post at the curia in November 1463. He was the first of a line of men who provided stable representation for the new Yorkist king. Edward's desire for a consistent presence in Rome began a period of more settled and deeper relations with Rome that strengthened markedly over the next half century. That attitude surely stemmed, among other considerations, from Edward's perspective on foreign policy – Edward III's great war with France was over and a new, realistic approach to England's near neighbours was required. In his first reign, Edward could never be sure that his English enemies might not form allegiances with foreign powers such as France or Scotland to attack him. He was therefore keen to achieve a *détente* with Louis XI which he did in the convention signed at Hesdin in October 1463.<sup>108</sup> By May 1467, there seemed the prospect of an alliance with France, the latter seeking to outwit and dismember the territories of the Burgundian duke. However such a policy as favoured by the earl of Warwick was not favoured by Edward. By the middle of 1468 he was cementing an alliance, albeit a brittle one, that cast France as the traditional enemy. When Warwick turned against Edward, France was only too ready to assist Warwick with his plans. Thus Edward, having regained his throne in 1471, was only too keen to seek revenge on Louis. Although an English campaign in France seemed likely by 1472, it was not until July 1475 that Edward's army landed in Calais. However, Edward's

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<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 15–18. For the quotation see p. 16.

<sup>108</sup> Ross, *Edward IV*, p. 56.

alliances proved resolutely unreliable. The promised support from Burgundy and Brittany did not materialize, and Edward would have realised that a lengthy military campaign would be hugely expensive and immensely risky. Edward either needed a quick and decisive victory or to seek, from his position of current military strength, a negotiated settlement that would recoup his financial outlay and allow him to withdraw without dishonour. With no victory in sight he chose the settlement that was signed at Picquigny on 29 August 1475. This outcome, though hardly recalling the glorious victories of Henry V, did allow English merchants and producers to benefit from the commercial agreement signed at Picquigny. France was now too formidable an adversary to tackle in any further large-scale military adventure. Henceforth therefore English kings would need to consider broader diplomatic alliances, especially when there was a common interest to rein in French ambitions. It is from that perspective that the changing relationship with the papal court needs to be viewed.

Even before the events of 1475, Edward IV was showing his understanding of the need for settled and formal relations with the pope and the Roman curia. His appointment of Peter Courtenay as proctor reflects that.<sup>109</sup> In his first reign, Edward needed to secure peace at home and to enhance his position by effective diplomacy. Courtenay's education at Padua meant that he was already familiar with academic and church life in Italy and would have built up a sizeable network of contacts. In September 1462 he was back in Italy, presenting Edward's award of membership of the order of the Garter to the Duke of Milan.<sup>110</sup> Courtenay was therefore regarded by Edward as a man of suitable status and with the right abilities to be entrusted with such a commission. Once Courtenay had arrived in Rome, it is unclear when his time as proctor ended. It seems likely he was still there in August 1464 on the death of Pius II. Courtenay subsequently weathered the readeption period very successfully and went on to be appointed bishop of Exeter in 1478 before translation to the riches of Winchester in 1487. His close relationship with John Morton must certainly have helped him to obtain the latter.

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109 For a summary of Courtenay's life, see the *ODNB* article by Rosemary Horrox at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/6454>.

110 Scofield, *The Life and Reign of Edward the Fourth*, i, p. 280.

Courtenay's successor in Rome was another highly qualified ecclesiastical lawyer and future bishop, James Goldwell.<sup>111</sup> John Shirwood, proctor from December 1477 to January 1493, also went on to achieve episcopal status.<sup>112</sup> Shirwood was resident in Rome from 1474 onwards and had been made an apostolic protonotary in 1476. Behrens lays particular emphasis on Shirwood being described not only as proctor but also as 'orator' of the English king, in other words ambassador to the Roman court.<sup>113</sup> The role of proctor was becoming more formalised, and the length of Shirwood's incumbency suggests that value was placed on having a stable and full-time representative at the curia. Shirwood displayed no little skill in remaining proctor under four monarchs, and in 1484 was rewarded for his labours by Richard III with the see of Durham. During the period 1482 to 1488 he was joined in Rome by John Dunmowe, the future bishop of Limerick. Shirwood died in Rome in January 1493.<sup>114</sup> Just over a year previously, David William had also died in Rome during his brief time as a proctor.<sup>115</sup>

A more decisive change now followed, as Italian churchmen were called on increasingly to act for the English king. From one perspective, such a move might be seen as the 'outsourcing' of a key element of royal service, potentially to the detriment of English clerics. However, from another perspective, this embrace of important Italian churchmen could be seen as the 'insourcing' of influence and accountability. One of the first and one of the most notable of these clerics was Giovanni de Gigli, the future bishop of Worcester, who was acting as proctor by January 1486.<sup>116</sup> Gigli had strong connections with England through the mercantile activities of his father. In 1477 Giovanni himself was granted letters of denization, not long after he had been appointed papal collector in England by Sixtus IV. Gigli's service was well-appreciated by Henry VII, who was urging the pope to provide him with a cardinalate. However Gigli's death in August 1498 meant that his wish was never fulfilled. Although Henry

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111 See the *ODNB* entry by Rosemary C.E. Hayes at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/10926>.

112 See A.J. Pollard's *ODNB* article at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/25447>.

113 Behrens, 'Origins of the Office of English Resident Ambassador in Rome', p. 645.

114 The year of his death is variously described as 1492, 1493 and 1494. Using modern dating conventions, there is no doubt that he died in January 1493.

115 See the *ODNB* entry by Jennifer Ledfors at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/101323>.

116 See the *ODNB* entry by J.B. Trapp at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/10670>.

may have been frustrated by this unfortunate turn of events, a key new development had occurred in 1492 with the appointment of England's first cardinal protector in the person of Francesco Piccolomini, the future Pius III and nephew of Pius II. Giovanni Gigli had played a role in Piccolomini's appointment, and the cardinal protector commended Giovanni's cousin Silvestro to Henry VII to be Giovanni's successor as proctor.<sup>117</sup> Henry agreed, and did not stand in the way of Silvestro's provision to the see of Worcester.

The purpose of appointing a cardinal protector, and how it enlightens the understanding of the relationship between the English crown and Church, and Rome requires discussion.<sup>118</sup> The viewpoint of Wilkie is that 'the emergence of the national protectorships of cardinals in the Roman Curia during the fifteenth century coincided with the emergence of national monarchies and of organised diplomacy in Renaissance Italy.'<sup>119</sup> Thus, with the emergence of Spain as a more unified state, and the strengthening of France as one of the leading nations of Christendom, the papacy wished to enhance its position within a changing balance of power and influence. It was successful in placing itself at the centre of a diplomatic exchange to which all those powers wished to subscribe. England was clearly no different, choosing to appoint successive cardinal protectors, and with its selection of Piccolomini it had chosen well. He was elected as successor to the somewhat notorious Pope Alexander VI in September 1503, although he was in frail health and died within a month of taking office. During his term as England's cardinal protector, he worked assiduously on her behalf. The role of the protector included the task of conveying the king's nominee for vacant bishoprics to the pope, and impressing on him that the desire of the king should be fulfilled. He was also expected to see the production of the bull of provision through to successful completion. He should accompany the king's ambassadors in audience with the pope and the consistory and act as a source of information to expedite the king's interests at the curia. In all these respects, Piccolomini did not disappoint Henry VII. What is perhaps most remarkable is that Henry was the first of the European monarchs

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117 For Cecil H. Clough's *ODNB* article on Silvestro see <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/10671>.

118 The fullest account of the protectors remains W. E. Wilkie, *The Cardinal Protectors of England: Rome and the Tudors before the Reformation* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1974).

119 *Ibid.*, p. 5.

to appoint a formal cardinal protector. Edward IV had employed the services of Cardinal Ferry de Clugny in Rome, but his role was more ad hoc and not so clearly defined.<sup>120</sup> Yet Edward's desire to make use of a cardinal at the curia to further his objectives shows that the concept of the cardinal protector was already there in embryonic form before 1483. Henry VII's desire for a protector underlines the early fragility of his reign, and his desire for the papacy to continue providing the strong support it gave him when he first took the throne. His marriage to Elizabeth of York and his own direct claim to the throne were underpinned by the legitimacy of papal approval, and Henry undoubtedly understood the importance of that. The support of the papacy also gave Henry added status among the other nations of Christendom.

Once Piccolomini had become pope, his replacement as cardinal protector was Adriano Castellesi who had been acting as royal proctor since June 1494. Castellesi had been made a cardinal in May 1503 and had no desire to share his position with his chief rival, Silvestro Gigli. 'Castellesi claimed to be Henry VII's sole representative at Rome, shouldering Gigli aside'.<sup>121</sup> Castellesi had been provided to the see of Hereford in February 1502 by Henry VII and was close to pope Alexander VI who had confirmed his position as papal collector in England. Eventually Castellesi seems to have lost his influence and standing with Pope Julius II, perhaps as the result of the hostile work of Gigli. A new cardinal protector was appointed in July 1504, namely the pope's nephew, Galeotto Franciotti della Rovere. However it is clear that Henry VII attached great value to Castellesi, securing his translation to Bath & Wells in August 1504. The complex interplay of rivalries at the Roman court was something Castellesi managed to negotiate with some real success until towards the end of his life. The reign of a pope could be short, and his successor might not share the loyalties of the one who has just died. The English king would need to be vigilant to the shifting balance of forces in Rome, but he would also understand that a man at the curia with experience and resilience was one to be valued, and if he was suffering current misfortune, that might only be of temporary duration. Castellesi's luck ran out in July 1518 with the loss of his

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid., pp. 10–11.

<sup>121</sup> See T.F. Mayer's *ODNB* entry at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/174>.

cardinalate and of his see at Bath & Wells which went to Thomas Wolsey. Castellesi died in December 1521, very shortly after the death of pope Leo X and just a few months after his great rival, Silvestro Gigli.

Castellesi's replacement as cardinal protector, Galeotto Franciotti della Rovere, held that office from July 1504 until September 1508.<sup>122</sup> Little has been found in the English historical record concerning his activities on behalf of England. His successor, Francesco Alidosi, was only briefly protector before his murder in Ravenna in May 1511.<sup>123</sup> He had 'proved to be of little value to England'.<sup>124</sup> In contrast to their immediate predecessors, the last two cardinal protectors before England's break with Rome were men of great note.<sup>125</sup> Their relation to Thomas Wolsey was a key aspect of their role. Giulio de' Medici, who served from 1514 to 1523, was the future Pope Clement VII ('without doubt the most ill-fated pontiff that ever sat on the papal throne').<sup>126</sup> Lorenzo Campeggio, who succeeded Medici, was protector until his dismissal by Henry VIII in 1531. Medici benefited greatly from being cousin to Pope Leo X who, shortly after his accession in 1513, raised Giulio to an archbishopric and then to the cardinalate.<sup>127</sup> His closeness to the pontiff was seized on by both England and France in appointing him as their protector. Campeggio was formally appointed as protector in January 1523 and was greatly favoured by both Thomas Wolsey and Henry VIII.<sup>128</sup> He was also protector for Holy Roman Empire, and this created the division of loyalties that was to be tested to breaking point over Henry's desire to end his marriage with Katherine of Aragon. Among other benefits showered on him, Campeggio was provided to the see of Salisbury on the death of Edmund Audley in 1524 (having been promised that see as early as 1518).<sup>129</sup> However the events that surrounded Henry's 'Great Matter' led to

122 For an account of his life, see *DBDI*, v.50, 165-67. See also [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/franciotti-della-rovere-galeotto\\_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/franciotti-della-rovere-galeotto_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/) [accessed 27 May 2020].

123 See *DBDI*, v.2, 373-76 for details of his life. There is some debate as to whether Alidosi formally occupied the role of cardinal protector for England. His profile as secretary to Pope Julius would have been an attraction to a nation seeking a replacement protector.

124 Wilkie, *The Cardinal Protectors*, p. 37.

125 'After 1514 the cardinal protectorship of England became vastly more significant': *Ibid.*, p. 81.

126 See Collins, *Keepers of the Keys*, p. 346 who in turn is quoting Leopold von Ranke.

127 See *DBDI*, v.26, 237-59 for an account of de' Medici's life.

128 For details of Campeggio's life and career see *DBDI*, v.17, 454-62 and the *ODNB* article by T.F. Mayer at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/4538>.

129 Such an appointment did not just provide the benefit of a substantial income to its absentee holder. In assuming the temporalities of the diocese, the new bishop had to swear fealty to his lord the king. He

the seismic rupture that rendered the role of the cardinal-protector thoroughly redundant. Campeggio lost his position at Salisbury as a result.

Alongside this line of cardinal-protectors, two other Englishmen need special mention for their service to the English king and their part in Anglo-papal relations, namely Christopher Bainbridge and of course Thomas Wolsey. Bainbridge became the first resident English cardinal at the Roman court in over a century when he was raised to that rank in March 1511 by Pope Julius II. Bainbridge had been in royal service to Henry VII to whom he became a chaplain in 1497. He rose steadily, being appointed master of the rolls in 1504 and then to the see of Durham in August 1507. By September 1508 he had been translated to York, retaining that archbishopric until his death. A year later he was sent by the new king, Henry VIII, as his ambassador to Rome where, among other responsibilities, he was pressed into service as a military commander by Julius. The dispatch of one of his archbishops to Rome shows what importance Henry attached to relations with the Holy See. In the ongoing diplomatic manoeuvres concerning France and the Empire, Rome was clearly perceived as an important player. It provided much useful information as all the major powers in Europe had representation there.<sup>130</sup> There was much spiritual business to be conducted, and the papacy was also a temporal power within a highly contested region. In particular England was concerned with the territorial aspirations of the French, and how to balance those against its relationship with the Emperor.<sup>131</sup> Being the new king of England, Henry was looking to pursue an energetic policy aimed at safeguarding and extending his realm's interests. He perceived those interests as being thoroughly integrated with life, both spiritual and temporal, on the mainland of Europe – he was no isolationist. Indeed the relationship with Rome could be seen as reaching its most intense apotheosis right up to the events of 1529-30.

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was therefore under a direct obligation to Henry. Furthermore administrative control of the diocese fell to Thomas Wolsey while he already had direct or effective control of so many more.

130 Peter Gwyn, *The King's Cardinal: The Rise and Fall of Thomas Wolsey* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1990), p. 68.

131 Crucially for Henry when his 'Great Matter' weighed upon him, his wife Queen Katherine was aunt to the Emperor Charles V.



Henry's appointment and employment of Thomas Wolsey, 'the king's cardinal', was a prime manifestation of that mindset. In the eyes of king, Church and state were aligned as twin pillars of his kingdom, and Wolsey was the man to hold them in a joint embrace. Henry ensured that Wolsey was showered with benefactions across them both. In particular, Henry wanted to bring the ecclesiastical power of Rome as close to home as possible, something he achieved by pressing for Wolsey to be appointed legate *a latere*, originally in 1518 and then in 1524 for life.<sup>132</sup> Wolsey now exercised powers second only to the pope within England, in effect having a writ that exceeded that even of Archbishop Warham, and all directed to serving the interests of his king. Wolsey was never appointed to the Roman curia, unlike his cardinal predecessor, Bainbridge. By this time Henry could see the advantage of holding the devolved power of Rome as close to himself as possible. When the legatine court comprising Wolsey and Campeggio convened in London to discuss the king's request for a marriage annulment, it must have seemed to Henry VIII that Rome had come to him and was ready to resolve his Great Matter once and for all. The explosive disillusion that followed was therefore all the greater.

Campeggio was but one of a number of Italian absentee bishops appointed from the 1470s onwards. Although the diocese of Worcester has always been noted as their stronghold during the period after 1497, the first Italian to occupy a see in the British Isles was Ottaviano de Palatio who became archbishop of Armagh in 1478, remaining there until his death in 1513.<sup>133</sup> His appointment was at first disputed; the nominee of pope Sixtus IV was de Palatio for whom Edward IV's nominee, Edmund Connesburgh, stepped aside. Although this was not to Edward's liking, the archbishopric was heavily indebted, something that greatly complicated matters. As a consequence it had remained vacant for ten years. Ottaviano's kinship with the apostolic banker, Antonio de Palatio, was probably a decisive factor in his appointment to Armagh, one of the four archbishoprics of Ireland. Edward IV did not, in the end, resist de Palatio's

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<sup>132</sup> Gwyn, *The King's Cardinal*, p. 265.

<sup>133</sup> Aubrey Gwynn, *The Medieval Province of Armagh, 1470-1545* (Dundalk: W. Tempest, Dundalgan Press, 1946), pp. 8–11; William Reeves, 'Octavianus Del Palacio, Archbishop of Armagh', *The Journal of the Royal Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland*, 3.21 (1875), 341–52; Mario Alberto Sughì, 'The Appointment of Octavian de Palatio as Archbishop of Armagh, 1477-8', *Irish Historical Studies*, 31.122 (1998), 145–64.

appointment, even though Ireland was, at least in theory, as subject to the Statute of Provisors as England. Given such extraordinary circumstances, the appointment of de Palatio might be seen as exceptional, not part of a definite trend with respect to Anglo-Papal relations. Nevertheless de Palatio was the first of a series of Italian prelates within sees that were subject to the English crown.<sup>134</sup> He remained in office through the reigns of five English monarchs and had established a precedent for occupation of English sees by non-English churchmen.

At Worcester there were four Italian bishops from 1497 onwards: Giovanni de Gigli (1497-8), Silvestro de Gigli (1498-1521), Giulio de' Medici (1521-2) and Geronimo de Ghinucci (1423-33).<sup>135</sup> Also, in addition to Campeggio's possession of Salisbury, Adriano Castellesi had possession of Hereford (1502-4) and Bath & Wells (1504-1518), being deprived of the latter in July 1518, along with the loss of his cardinal's hat.<sup>136</sup> This use of bishoprics to reward, encourage and constrain Italian prelates in royal service was unprecedented. The ambitions of English clerks were in consequence somewhat frustrated, in particular when wealthier sees such as Salisbury or Bath & Wells were so occupied. The interpretation of how and why this new involvement with Italian prelates took place has generally resulted in negative comments from historians. Down's view is forcefully made: 'Using the bishopric of Worcester merely to furnish a royal orator with adequate dignity and income was no doubt reprehensible, but it was not an unique phenomenon'.<sup>137</sup> However, from the point of view of the English king, it would be prudent to enhance the status of his representatives. His agreement to the provision of an English see would highlight the seriousness of his intent. Amidst the clamour for attention in Rome, the dignity provided to the English king's representatives would be enhanced. As mentioned earlier, a bishop was very much a temporal as well as a spiritual lord. He owed his temporalities directly to the king, and was therefore

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134 Armagh had in effect a split personality, its jurisdiction extending across parts of both English and Gaelic Ireland.

135 Fryde et al., *Handbook of British Chronology*, p. 280.

136 Castellesi had been implicated in a plot to murder Pope Leo X, although his involvement had only been 'slight'. Gwyn, *The King's Cardinal*, pp. 102-3.

137 Kevin Down, 'The Administration of the Diocese of Worcester under the Italian Bishops, 1497-1535', *Midland History*, 20.1 (1995), 1-20 (p. 2).

bound to him. If the king wished, he could deprive a bishop of those temporalities, a move that would symbolize his rejection of his prelate, as well as putting him into practical and financial difficulties. The king would then benefit from the temporal income of the see until he agreed to their restoration. The fact that neither Henry VII nor Henry VIII chose to do so, but continued to accept the provision of Worcester and other dioceses to their Italian helpers, provides clear evidence of their satisfaction with those arrangements. The period from 1497 up to 1529 can be seen as one where England was moving closer to Rome, when it saw its best interests as being served by identifying itself with those of the papacy. In that context, the shock and strength of the recoil from that relationship, and the subsequent desire to demonize the erstwhile partnership have a clear logic.

In summary, the relationship between England and the papacy, and the role that English churchmen and Italian churchmen played as royal servants at the Roman court, developed and strengthened markedly over the course of the period 1400 to 1530 - 'Italians were of great and increasing importance'.<sup>138</sup> The appointment of well-chosen Italian clerics to archdeaconries and deaneries and similar posts in the period before 1415 came to an end with the healing of the papal schism. However England thereafter maintained its presence at the curia, sending a series of notable clerics, many of whom achieved episcopal sees. To serve as their king's proctor, emissary and servant in Rome was clearly no obstacle or interruption to a burgeoning ecclesiastical career. But the period of greatest change occurs after the accession of Henry Tudor. This was the period of the cardinal protectors, of Italian holders of English sees, of an English resident cardinal in Rome, and of the activities of papal legates *a latere*. English clerics needed to be well-attuned to these developments, and to ensure that their services were well-matched to the evolving needs of their king. Theirs was a very different kind of royal service to that of the more traditional king's clerk at work in the royal administration back home. Both Henry VII and Henry VIII fostered their relationship with Rome as part of their diplomatic strategy, and they handsomely rewarded men who they saw as providing valuable royal service in that strategic context. The crisis of Henry's Great Matter was one

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<sup>138</sup> Harvey, *England, Rome and the Papacy*, p. 248.

wholly out of tune with that relationship, and was all the more seismic as a result.

### **The evolution of a 'new' episcopacy**

Across the fifteenth century the social composition of the episcopate was changing. That change reinforces the model of royal service as the pathway to high prelacy. The number of men who could enter the episcopacy as young nobles was declining, and those of noble birth who did become bishops had often studied for higher degrees and proved themselves in royal service before their elevation. The analysis that follows will consider the growing role of the gentry and the practice of the law, and how kings drew increasingly on a group of professional and skilled clerks at the very highest levels of government. A clear trajectory with its beginnings in the second reign of Edward IV will be identified. For the kings of both France and England, the need to have clerics they knew and could trust as on the bishops' bench was paramount. These prelates took a central role in royal government, occupying some of the highest offices of state, as well as being members of both parliament and convocation. Monarchs relied on them for good counsel, as well as for spiritual guidance. They were also required to enact the decisions taken by the king and his council. In England across the fifteenth century the presence of senior bishops was an abiding one. Henry IV's royal council in 1406 included bishops Langton, Beaufort and Bubwith. The most notable member, however, was Thomas Arundel, whose dominant presence was a reflection of the key role he played in placing Henry Bolingbroke on the throne. Even Arundel was not immune to the difficulties experienced in the opening years of Henry's reign, and the events of 1405 forced him to assert his loyalty on bended knee in the king's presence.<sup>139</sup> By 1410, the bishops continued to feature among the most regular attendees at council, including Arundel, Henry Beaufort, Henry Chichele, Thomas Langley and Nicholas Bubwith. Several of these men continue to appear in the reign of Henry V, notably Beaufort, Langley and Chichele, as well as Richard Courtenay.<sup>140</sup> During the reign of Henry VI, historians have emphasized the

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<sup>139</sup> Given-Wilson, *Henry IV*, p. 265.

<sup>140</sup> C. T. Allmand, *Henry V*, *English Monarchs* (London: Methuen London, 1992), pp. 357, 360.

growing importance of the royal household in the government of the realm, especially in the period 1445 to 1450 after Henry's marriage to Margaret of Anjou.<sup>141</sup> At that time Henry's counsel was dominated by a small group of intimate companions, including William Aiscough, the king's confessor and bishop of Salisbury, Adam Moleyns, bishop of Chichester and Reginald Bouchers, abbot of Gloucester and subsequently bishop of Hereford. Earlier in Henry's reign, when the council that ruled in the name of the infant king was constituted, there was a strong representation from the bishops' bench, including Henry Chichele, John Kemp, Henry Beaufort, John Wakering and Philip Morgan.<sup>142</sup>

By the reign of Edward IV, 'the Crown still relied heavily on the higher clergy for the conduct of government at the centre'.<sup>143</sup> In his first reign, Charles Ross identifies prelates of high birth as playing the more significant role, for example men such as archbishops Thomas Bourchier and George Nevill. After 1471, men of more humble origin appointed by Edward feature, including Thomas Rotherham, John Russell and John Morton.<sup>144</sup> This change reflects the increasing preference of Edward and his successors to enhance their personal rule rather than to act in the more collegiate fashion of their predecessors. In his first reign, Edward had expended much time and effort in seeking to bring those nobles and knights who had opposed him before Towton back into his favour. Probably the most public failure of this policy of rapprochement was Henry Beaufort, duke of Somerset, made so much of by Edward during 1463. *Gregory's Chronicle* describes the "fals dysposyscyon of thys fals Duke Harry of Somersett".<sup>145</sup> Although he had been pardoned by Edward, was feted generously and had been saved from the wrath of the people of Northampton by the king, he then went over to the Lancastrian cause, paying for it with his head after the battle of Hexham in 1464.<sup>146</sup> Other notable defectors included Henry Courtenay, Thomas Hungerford and Ralph Percy. Once Edward returned in his second reign with the decisive victories at Barnet and Tewkesbury, he no

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141 David Grummitt, *Henry VI*, Routledge Historical Biographies (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017), pp. 100, 106.

142 *Ibid.*, p. 55.

143 Ross, *Edward IV*, p. 318.

144 *Ibid.*, p. 309.

145 Gairdner, *Three Fifteenth-Century Chronicles*, 17, p. 223.

146 See Michael K. Jones's *ODNB* article on Beaufort at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/1860>.

longer needed to curry favour with any half-hearted potential recidivists. He was determined to enforce his personal rule, a policy that Henry Tudor continued to pursue.

When Henry VII took the throne he was an outsider. Although he continued to use many of Edward's men on his royal council, he was not entangled in the structure of the nobility in the way that Richard duke of Gloucester had been. If Edward's reign represented 'the beginnings of something different', then Henry continued and developed that beginning.<sup>147</sup> Both kings were therefore looking to men who came without 'baggage' - those who would serve loyally and with competence. Such men could be raised up by the king and, if so required, put away again. However, both Edward and Henry kept loyal to many of their appointees, especially churchmen such as Morton, Courtenay and Fox. In the brief reign of Richard III, the personnel had been shuffled, but the bishops remained a distinct presence on the royal council. With the accession of Henry VII, commentators such as Steven Gunn detect a change in the nature of royal government, even if bishops and archbishops remained within: 'The council became the central institution of government in Henry's reign, in a way it had not been for previous English kings, though it remained a fluid body...'.<sup>148</sup>

The changing structure of the episcopate from the second reign of Edward IV onwards requires special note. The continuing rise of the gentry, and in particular those skilled in the study and practice of law, was a key characteristic. Law had always been a means of social advancement, providing remunerative employment as well as allowing men to function within legal forums where they could build networks of acquaintance and patronage. However law also provided protection from arbitrary and even violent interventions by those higher up the social scale. Such interventions afflicted both lay and clerical individuals.<sup>149</sup> One aspect of the law in which the bishops in royal government

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147 Steven J. Gunn, *Early Tudor Government, 1485-1558*, British History in Perspective (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995), p. 24.

148 Steven J. Gunn, *Henry VII's New Men and the Making of Tudor England* (Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 39.

149 The struggles of the Paston family against violent interventions by their adversaries have been widely described by many authors including Colin Richmond and Helen Castor. For a discussion of violent interventions on episcopal estates, in particular the despoiling of deer parks, see *Negotiating Clerical Identities: Priests, Monks and Masculinity in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Jennifer D. Thibodeaux

showed particular interest was that of statute law.<sup>150</sup> By the fifteenth century, statute had achieved a higher status than common law, not something of which the common law judges approved. It meant that parliament had a role in the framing of law that surpassed that of the judges. To lawyers trained at the universities who sat in judgement outside the common law, this was a favourable scenario. However, for ecclesiastical judges in particular, there could be a major drawback – acts of parliament could be passed that concerned areas of the Church’s jurisdiction, for example heresy or benefit of clergy. Nevertheless, the fact that the development of statute law was something that prelates participated in shows their instinct for centralised control, and for the regularisation of legal issues that could have been left to the procedures of the common law. As trained lawyers, the bishops and their staff would have been the draftsmen of new statutes. They were therefore able to set the tone and direction as well as the wording of those acts. Robert Stillington, bishop and chancellor, stated in 1467 that ‘justice depended on three estates, the lords spiritual, the lords temporal and the commons, under the royal estate of the king’.<sup>151</sup> To a man such as him, trained in Roman law, the idea of passing statutes by a majority vote would not have been alien. The support of these gentry prelates for such a process of change demonstrates an instinct for the reform and development of royal government. It also suggests that their experience of balancing forces within the Church led them to seek an equitable balance within the secular government.

This new culture of the gentry within government was a trait that even extended to churchmen drawn from the lesser nobility such as Peter Courtenay. Courtenay was a doctor of canon law and is also shown as a king’s clerk and in addition as secretary to the king in 1470 and 1472.<sup>152</sup> His early career path was strikingly similar to many of his gentry contemporaries, and he was clearly close to men such as John Morton; the latter was appointed as proctor by the Exeter

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(Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 204–37.

150 Much of the discussion that follows is based on A. R. Myers, ‘Parliament, 1422-1509’, in *The English Parliament in the Middle Ages*, ed. by R. G. Davies and Jeffrey H. Denton (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1981), pp. 141–84.

151 *Ibid.*, p. 153.

152 *CPR 1467-77*, pp. 228, 332.

chapter to present Courtenay as bishop elect of Exeter to his see and to the king.<sup>153</sup>

As regards the great offices of state, the prelates continued to fill many of these throughout the period.<sup>154</sup> There were strong reasons why the English king chose those men to fill such important posts. Cost was one such factor, especially where the prelate already held a bishopric; he needed no further income from his work for the king, even where that work was so all-consuming as that of royal chancellor.<sup>155</sup> The chancellorship indeed became very much the preserve of the archbishops, with successive chancellors being drawn from Canterbury and York. There were good reasons for this: 'The more senior the cleric in office, the more this could be made to reflect positively on the comprehensive and all-embracing nature of royal authority in the kingdom. If the first primate in all England served the king in office, this was suggestive of the greater subservience to the king of the English Church as a whole'.<sup>156</sup> Having a clerical primate as the king's foremost councillor was also a symbol of stability at a time of political uncertainty and civil unrest.<sup>157</sup> Prelates were, almost by definition, men of high education, and those occupying bishoprics were *ex officio* peers and lords in Parliament. The king frequently called on them for diplomatic duties, and their episcopal rank gave them the necessary status to visit foreign royal courts. The bishops were all men who were well-known to the king, and he therefore had confidence in their skills and loyalty.<sup>158</sup> Throughout the fifteenth

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153 Exeter, Cathedral Library, D&C 2378. Morton may even have been the pontiff's preferred candidate for the vacant see at Exeter in 1478 (*CPL*, xiii, p. 657).

154 For a well-argued discussion of the role of churchmen as royal chancellor and in other key posts in the royal bureaucracy, see Gwilym Dodd, 'The Clerical Chancellors of Late Medieval England', in *The Prelate in England and Europe, 1300-1560*, ed. by Martin Heale (Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2014), pp. 17-49.

155 Robert Swanson talks of 'the state's use of ecclesiastical resources to fund its bureaucracy' - Swanson, *Church and Society*, p. 121. However, there is clear evidence that clerks, even in a post as high as that of keeper of the privy seal, were paid wages directly from the royal exchequer. John Prophete was granted payment of the backlog of 'the wages of his office' in June 1413 (*CCR 1413-1419*, p. 24); R. G Davies estimates that Prophete enjoyed a rich set of benefices 'reckoned at £750-£900 p.a.', and a '£100 salary on top' (<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/37868>). John Wakeryng was awarded the arrears due to him in that same office in July 1415 (*CCR 1413-1419*, p. 223). In December 1422, wages were awarded 'to Simon Gaunstede the king's clerk, keeper of the chancery rolls and late keeper of the great seal, for his wages and wages of his fellows and the clerks and other ministers of the chancery who mess with him from 28 September last, on which day the said seal was delivered to him, to 17 November following' (*CCR 1422-1429*, p. 32).

156 Dodd, 'The Clerical Chancellors', p. 43.

157 *Ibid.*, p. 46.

158 'Episcopal experience in royal service meant that kings continued to avail themselves of their administrative skills' - Thomson, *The Early Tudor Church and Society*, p. 55.



century the Chancery remained under the control of clerics, an appropriate division of labour, given their particular role in the administration of royal justice. From the dismissal of Michael de la Pole in October 1386 until the appointment of Sir Thomas More by Henry VIII in 1529, the office of chancellor of England was filled exclusively by prelates (with the brief exceptions of Thomas Beaufort in 1410-11 and Richard Neville 1454-5).<sup>159</sup>

Likewise the office of keeper of the privy seal was held solely by clerics of significant status throughout the period – every holder was at least a dean or archdeacon, many were already bishops. Only in 1523 was the first lay keeper appointed.<sup>160</sup> Even in an office such as the treasurer of England where lay holders featured prominently in the reign of Edward III, there were still several clerical occupants until bishop John Stafford was superseded by Walter lord Hungerford in 1426. Thereafter, with two brief exceptions, the post remained in lay hands, the great majority being aristocrats.<sup>161</sup> It seems clear that the exchequer and chancery ‘were moving in opposite directions: whilst the exchequer seemingly embraced the move to the appointment of lay personnel, the clerical standing of the heads of the chancery appeared to become more and more entrenched’.<sup>162</sup> However, underneath both the chancellor and treasurer, the proportion of laymen at work in these departments was increasing. By the middle of the century, even the chancery was staffed predominantly by lay clerks.<sup>163</sup>

### **The evidence from the close rolls**

Evidence that appears to indicate a significant reduction in the presence of clerks in royal service, or at least to a much reduced royal concern for their payment and support, comes from an examination of the close rolls. The

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<sup>159</sup> *Handbook of British Chronology*, ed. by E. B. Fryde and others, pp. 87–88.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 95–96. Sir Henry Marny, 1<sup>st</sup> lord Marny, succeeded Thomas Ruthall, bishop of Durham, in February 1523 for just three months. The clergy then made a final comeback in the form of Cuthbert Tunstall until 1530. Thereafter all the occupants were laymen throughout the Tudor period. This office was also referred as the ‘treasurer of the Exchequer’.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 105–7. The exceptions were Marmaduke Lumley, bishop of Carlisle, from December 1446 to September 1449, and William Gray, bishop of Ely, who briefly held the post from October 1469 until July 1470.

<sup>162</sup> Dodd, ‘The Clerical Chancellors’, p. 41.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*

calendars for the period 1381 to 1509 were surveyed, looking for instances of the phrase “king’s clerk”. The findings are summarised in Table 5.8 below, and a striking pattern emerges.

**Table 5.8.** The number of king’s clerks appearing in each of the calendars of close rolls.

<b>Date range of the Calendar of Close Rolls</b>	<b>Number of men listed as king’s clerks</b>	<b>Number of men, divided by the date span of the calendar in years (result rounded)</b>	<b>Number of entries for the most frequently named king’s clerk</b>	<b>His name</b>
1381-1385	42	10	6	John de Ravenser, keeper of the hanaper
1385-1389	38	10	12	John de Ravenser, keeper of the hanaper
1389-1392	36	12	15	Roger Walden, treasurer of Calais
1392-1396	36	9	4	William Waltham, keeper of the hanaper
1396-1399	47	16	6	William Waltham, keeper of the hanaper
1399-1402	20	7	23	Robert Claydoun, keeper of the hanaper
1402-1405	28	9	11	Robert Claydoun, keeper of the hanaper
1405-1409	30	8	17	Robert Claydoun, keeper of the hanaper
1409-1413	16	4	8	Robert Claydoun, keeper of the hanaper
1413-1419	12	2	23	Henry Kays, keeper of the hanaper
1419-1422	20	7	23	Henry Kays, keeper of the hanaper
1422-1429	10	1	4	Henry Kays, keeper of the hanaper
1429-1435	4	<1	2	John Stopyndoun, keeper of the hanaper

Date range of the Calendar of Close Rolls	Number of men listed as king's clerks	Number of men, divided by the date span of the calendar in years (result rounded)	Number of entries for the most frequently named king's clerk	His name
1435-1441	7	1	3	John Stopyndoun, keeper of the hanaper
1441-1447	9	1	2	John Pyvell
1447-1454	3	<1	1	n/a
1454-1461	5	<1	1	n/a
1461-1468	7	1	3	Thomas Eyre
1468-1476	4	<1	1	n/a
1476-1485	0	0	0	n/a
1485-1500	1	<1	1	William Elyot
1500-1509	1	<1	1	Richard Nikke

Because the duration of each calendar in terms of number of years may vary, a column has been included that normalises the numbers for comparative purposes. The simple calculation was to divide the number of unique names of king's clerks in each calendar by its duration in years. The result was rounded to the nearest whole number. The figures above indicate a real 'cliff edge' after the accession of Henry VI to the throne in 1422. Suddenly the number of 'clerks per year' calculation falls to one or below. Many of the entries in the calendars refer to payments made to king's clerks in various ways. The most common are those where the king requires a newly installed bishop or abbot to provide a pension for a named clerk until such point as they provide a benefice for him.<sup>164</sup> For example, in *CCR 1396-1399*, of the forty-seven king's clerks listed, twenty-five are being named for pensions. Those requests, together with instructions to the keeper of the hanaper to make various payments, constitute the majority of the entries where the term "king's clerk" is used. It seems likely that the majority of the 'pensioners' were young, junior clerks who had not so far obtained any benefice, and for whom the king was seeking an external income to reduce their financial dependency on him. Only three of them also have entries in the Patent Rolls for the same period. None of those pensioners feature in the following Close Rolls for the period 1399-1402. If any of them

<sup>164</sup> Two such men can be found in the online *ODNB*. William Gray (d. 1436), the future bishop of Lincoln, was awarded a pension from Whitby Abbey in 1413 (see Roy Martin Haines' entry at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/47838>). Richard Medford (d. 1407), the future bishop of Salisbury, was awarded a pension from the abbot of Colchester in 1349 (see Brian Golding's entry at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/95136>).

continued in royal service as king's clerks then their names might appear within the Patent Rolls in subsequent years. However, in examining the Calendar for the period 1408-1413, only one, John Bathe, appears again as a king's clerk.<sup>165</sup>

The fact that the number of entries relating to king's clerks fall so suddenly may suggest a change in the method of recording. It may also reflect a significant reduction in the number of clerks for whom the king is seeking pensions from ecclesiastical patrons; that in turn may be the result of an increase in lay clerks in royal service for whom a pension from the Church would not be appropriate. In the close rolls examined, for the reign of Henry VI onwards, there were few references to pensions; that those did occur were either for the very small number of king's clerks, or were for miscellaneous items. There was clearly no move to obtain payment for laymen via the option of pensions from the Church.

Christine Carpenter in particular has pointed to the laicisation of the royal bureaucracy during the reigns of Henry V and Henry VI. Her viewpoint is that these changes 'deskilled' both departments, that they had begun the fifteenth century 'very much fit for purpose', but that by the later Tudors the 'great medieval civil service' had suffered 'destruction'.<sup>166</sup> Her somewhat bleak depiction of a trajectory of decline is problematic. The period of adult rule by Henry VI was undoubtedly a time of profound crisis, especially from 1450 onwards. The administration of royal government was assailed by a series of grave problems that any bureaucracy or civil service would have struggled to overcome. These included the severe economic difficulties of the mid-century 'Great Slump', compounded by the prolonged political crisis following the events of March 1450 and the death of duke of Suffolk.<sup>167</sup> Henry VI's subsequent descent into mental instability added a further twist to the crisis of the Lancastrian monarchy. Alongside these particular difficulties were longer term trends. The 'age of the household' has been described as a change in the nature of royal government across Europe that had begun in the fourteenth

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<sup>165</sup> *CPR 1408-1413*, p. 370. M. John Bathe was a graduate who was dead by March 1438. He held prebendaries in the dioceses of Lincoln, Salisbury, London and Bath & Wells (see *Fasti* i, p. 97, iii, pp. 27 & 39, v, p. 34 and viii, p. 78 respectively). The entry in *BRUO*, i, p. 131 is for an Irish clerk studying at Oxford in 1417, so it seems unlikely this is the same man.

<sup>166</sup> Carpenter, 'Henry VI and the Deskilling of the Royal Bureaucracy', especially pp. 15, 22 & 36.

<sup>167</sup> Grummitt, *Henry VI*, pp. 117-8, 158.

century.<sup>168</sup> The structure of the royal administration was evolving, and this did not necessarily mean that it was less effective than what had come before.

When Edward IV took the throne in 1461, he inherited a severe crisis in the royal finances. However, over a period of almost a decade and a half, he strengthened the structure and functions of the royal household, which resulted in a much improved position by 1475.<sup>169</sup> Such changes as the re-coinage of 1464-5 and the consequent devaluation benefited the export trade of English goods. Alongside this effective financial management, the administration of royal justice was tackled with energy by Edward's legal bureaucracy, even if there is scepticism as to the real effectiveness of his policies on law and order.<sup>170</sup> He was also able to muster a credible military force for his invasion of France in 1475: the 'finest, largest, and best appointed force that has ever left England'.<sup>171</sup> All of these Yorkist improvements in the governance of the nation demonstrate that the royal administrative machine was capable of some progress and reform, something that continued into the early Tudor period: 'Early Tudor government was a creation of considerable strength, but also of serious inflexibilities and dangerous limitations'.<sup>172</sup> The foregoing analysis suggests that Christine Carpenter's narrative on the decline of the great medieval civil service needs to be kept in perspective. The recovery of royal power under the Yorkist kings was followed by the 'breadth and intensity of the state's development in the early Tudor period'.<sup>173</sup> The state machine was therefore very different to the one that had been moulded in the reign of Edward III, but it was by no means dysfunctional.

A symbol of stability amidst the evolution of royal government were the prelates at the heart of royal government. The chancellor would normally be in attendance at royal council meetings (often to chair them), and the keeper of the privy seal would likewise often be present. These post-holders would,

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168 Ibid., p. 100.

169 Ross, *Edward IV*, pp. 379-80.

170 Ibid., p. 404.

171 Thomaso de Portinari writing to Lorenzo de' Medici in June 1475 - *Calendar of State Papers in Foreign Archives. Italy: State Papers and Manuscripts Existing in the Archives Collection of Milan, 1359-1618*, ed. by Allen B. Hinds (London: PRO, 1912), pp. 197-8.

172 Gunn, *Early Tudor Government*, p. 211.

173 Ibid., p. 209.

however, be needed in the king's presence at other times as the demands of royal government required. On such occasions these clerics might find themselves alongside fellow churchmen who held less exalted but nevertheless important (and possibly influential) positions in the royal household. The king's chaplains, confessors and royal secretaries, and the deans of his chapel of the household, or of St Stephen's at Westminster or of St George's at Windsor represented a group from which future bishops and archbishops might be drawn. Others in this group might not have wanted to be elevated to such positions of responsibility and prominence, when they could enjoy influence and reward within or around the royal household.

It might not be unreasonable to suggest that this group of clerics clustered around the king would have played a significant part in the appointment of new bishops. The king may have had his favourite candidate already in mind when a vacancy occurred, but his clerical councillors and other intimate clerical servants would surely have been ready and willing to voice their opinions. As has been shown in the previous chapter, the bishops themselves in their earlier careers had been the recipients of much patronage from existing bishops. The bishops were, in a sense, carrying out succession planning, and the result was a stable and quite predictable pattern of appointments. The two archbishoprics, and the senior bishoprics such as Winchester and Lincoln, were filled by translation. It was only in the reign of Henry VIII where the king was asserting his absolute supremacy over episcopal appointments, that a very different pattern began to emerge. Henry's 'bizarre' selection of Thomas Cranmer, 'a Cambridge don with no experience of the wider Church' as archbishop of Canterbury was in marked contrast to the promotion by translation of his predecessors.<sup>174</sup>

If we look back to the start of our period with the reign of Henry IV, and especially in the context of a divided papacy during the papal schism, the English king must have seemed to be in almost total control of the appointment of bishops. However, things were not that simple. The English had taken sides

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<sup>174</sup> Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Thomas Cromwell: A Life* (London: Allen Lane, an imprint of Penguin Books, 2018), pp. 168-9. MacCulloch sees the 'enthusiastic backing' of Anne Boleyn as the reason for Cranmer's preferment.

during the schism, pledging their support for the pope in Rome and in opposition the claimant supported by the French in Avignon. Loyalty was therefore due to 'their' pope by the English Church and king. But what seems clear is that a balance was achieved between England and the papacy that seemed to endure throughout the subsequent century. Successive English kings appear to have been tactical and pragmatic in their dealings with Rome and questions of patronage. That did not mean that conflict and disagreement did not occur – the tussle over Robert Hallum and the archbishopric of York has been well-rehearsed.<sup>175</sup> However, the papacy needed the support of the English monarch among others in its desire to escape the restrictions of conciliar authority; it was therefore ready to accept the *de facto* authority already enjoyed by the English king over the national Church.<sup>176</sup> It seems, therefore, that the appointment of new bishops was something carried out by mutual agreement, and that a process of give-and-take operated to the benefit of both sides. If a resurgent papal monarchy might seem destined to be in conflict with an English monarch brandishing the statutes of Provisors and of *Praemunire*, the outcome was a recognition of the need to co-exist, to acknowledge the benefits of *quid pro quo*, and to appreciate the fruits of such flexibility.

### **The French Church as a point of comparison**

In fifteenth-century France relations between clergy and government were changing just as in England. This section of the chapter seeks to compare and contrast the two realms, and it will be clear how royal service could be just as important for clerical careers in France, even though clear differences with England can also be found. The similar trajectories of the two Churches suggest that there was a wider movement across western Christendom that fostered the development of distinctly national Churches, and it can justifiably be proposed that England was on the leading edge of that movement. Just as Henry VI was seen as a most devout king of England, so too was Charles VII as king of France. The reigns of both monarchs coincided in time with remarkable closeness, but whereas Charles's reign could be portrayed as ascending the

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<sup>175</sup> Horn, *The Register of Robert Hallum*, p. x.

<sup>176</sup> Christopher Harper-Bill, *The Pre-Reformation Church in England 1400-1530*, Revised Edition (Harlow: Addison Wesley Longman Limited, 1996), p. 15.

wheel of fortune, Henry's fate was to be cast down from the crown of two kingdoms. Like Henry, Charles's piety and religious observances were 'lavish'.<sup>177</sup> Jean II Jouvonal des Ursins (historian, diplomat and prelate), addressed Charles as follows: 'You are not only a lay person but a prelate, the first in your kingdom after the pope, the right hand of the church'.<sup>178</sup> Nevertheless it was this same king who introduced the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges in June 1438. The assembly of the clergy at Bourges was one example of a series of such meetings that have been characterised as 'tractable extensions of the royal council, instruments of the kings' fiscal and broader ecclesiastical policies'.<sup>179</sup> The ordinance issued at Bourges redefined the allegiance of the French Church to both king and pope. The assembly, meeting in the presence of the king, endorsed the decrees emerging from the council of Basle, modifying them as appropriate to meet the needs of the French Church. The French monarchy was no different to its English cousin in wanting to assert a strong role in the governance of its national Church. Bourges included provisions that were very similar to those of the statutes of Provisors and of *Praemunire* introduced in England in the preceding century. The papacy was strongly opposed to the Pragmatic Sanction and tried to have it rescinded, just as Pope Martin V had tried to have the English statutes overturned. Successive French kings used the Sanction as a negotiating tool in their relations with Rome, by turns showing resistance to or compliance with papal demands.

Clerical assemblies were important in France as a form of royal service by the Gallic Church. For the English Church, the convocations of the two provinces of Canterbury and York were similarly crucial to the Church's role in support of the king. Above all the convocations were summoned by him to provide much-needed revenue. They had provided Henry V with substantial sums to finance his war in France.<sup>180</sup> Edward IV made regular and significant demands on the clergy in convocation.<sup>181</sup> Henry VII sought large sums of money from the

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177 R. J. Knecht, *The Valois: Kings of France 1328-1589* (London: Hambledon and London, 2004), p. 65.

178 Ibid., p. 74; Tyler Lange, *The First French Reformation: Church Reform and the Origins of the Old Regime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 4.

179 Jothan Wood Parsons, 'Assemblies of the French Clergy from Philip the Fair to Louis XIII', *Parliament, Estates and Representation*, 23 (2003), 1–16 (p. 8).

180 Allmand, *Henry V*, pp. 393–94.

181 Scofield, *The Life and Reign of Edward the Fourth*, ii, p. 390.



convocation of Canterbury held in 1489; on 27 February a great subsidy of £25,000 was granted, payable in two instalments.<sup>182</sup> Henry obtained a further £40,000 in 1496.<sup>183</sup> Clearly the role of the English Church as a secular institution therefore needs to be emphasized. Not only did it provide finance to the state, it populated parliament with a large group of men, both bishops and abbots, who were present for their secular power as for their spirituality. They acted as peers of the realm, and therefore participated as men who governed by right, as well as in executive and advisory roles. Their possession and management of large sets of temporalities provided them with a status equivalent to the lay lords. Hence, although the bishops were part of the ecclesiastical convocation, they also remained an important element within parliament. The king selected such men with care, drawing on his direct and personal knowledge. While the nobility could expect their family line to continue in the upper house by virtue of inheritance, the king was able to mould and remould the ecclesiastical membership of the bishops' bench throughout his reign.<sup>184</sup>

In France as in England, royal service was one route by which aspiring clerks rose to the rank of bishop. More so than in England, however, successful men were drawn from aristocratic families. Clerics such as Louis d'Harcourt, Guillaume d'Estouteville and Louis de Luxembourg came from such a background.<sup>185</sup> However, there was an added complication in the first half of the fifteenth century in that loyalty to the king could mean very different things, depending on where such men chose (or were compelled) to place their allegiance. Louis de Luxembourg, archbishop of Rouen, committed himself to

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182 *The Register of John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1486-1500*, ed. by Christopher Harper-Bill, Canterbury and York Society, 75, 78, 89, 3 vols (York, Woodbridge: Canterbury and York Society, Boydell Press, 1987), i, p. 118.

183 Gunn, *Early Tudor Government*, p. 141.

184 Such expectations by the nobility could of course be dashed by acts of attainder. These acts had become especially prominent during the 1450s onwards, with attainders being imposed or rescinded as regimes changed or as rebels surrendered themselves to the new authority. J.R. Lander has had much to say on this issue, for example J. R. Lander, 'Attainder and Forfeiture, 1453 to 1509', *The Historical Journal*, 4:2 (1961), 119–51.

185 For Harcourt see *Dictionnaire de Biographie Française*, ed. by J. Balteau, M. Barroux, and M. Prevost (Paris: Librairie Letouzey et Ané, 1933), fascicule 99, pp. 1057–58; For Estouteville see 'Diocèse de Rouen', ed. by Vincent Tabbagh, *Fasti Ecclesiae Gallicanae: Répertoire Prosopographique Des Évêques, Dignitaires et Chanoines Des Diocèses de France de 1200 à 1500*, Tome 2 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998), pp. 130–36; For Luxembourg see ODNB entry by Lucia Diaz Pascual at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/95142>.

the Lancastrian monarchy and would also end up as bishop of Ely, holding his office *in commendam*. By contrast d’Harcourt, an earlier archbishop of Rouen, did not recognise English authority and was exiled. Robert de Rouvres, elected as bishop of Sées and ratified by the pope in January 1423, always remained loyal to the Charles VII despite the English occupation of his see, and would be one of the longest-serving of Charles’s royal council.<sup>186</sup> Jean de la Roche-Taillée was of humble birth but rose to become bishop of Paris, archbishop of Rouen and then archbishop of Besançon. His loyalty was to the English administration where he was favoured by Henry V. A doctor of both laws, he had been at the papal court in 1411, and in 1426 was made a cardinal.<sup>187</sup> For many of these men we have records of their royal service before their elevation. Guillaume Chartier, doctor of canon law and treasurer to Charles VII as dauphin, became bishop of Paris in 1447.<sup>188</sup> Jean Courtecuisse, doctor of theology, was almoner to the king before his installation in Paris.<sup>189</sup> For others, the service may have been that of their fathers. The father of George d’Amboise had been chamberlain to Charles VII and Louis XI. George himself rose very rapidly, finally achieving a cardinal’s hat and acting as principal minister to Louis XII. Although his progress owed much to his family connections, he was no intellectual lightweight, having obtained a doctorate in canon law.<sup>190</sup> The fifteenth century French bishops shared their high educational attainment with their English cousins.

One prominent French cleric who followed a different path was Thomas Basin. He clearly owed his appointment as bishop of Lisieux in 1447 to his service at the papal court. A native of Normandy he owed his fealty to the English crown, and it was to Henry VI that he personally swore his oath of loyalty in 1448. Under the agreement made between Henry V and Pope Martin V in 1418 for those French territories ruled by England, a bishop was appointed by the pope’s nomination and the king’s consent. By contrast the Gallican Church followed the

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186 Christopher Thomas Allmand, ‘L’évêché de Sées sous la domination anglaise au quinzième siècle’, *Annales de Normandie*, 11:4 (1961), 301–7 (302).

187 Balteau, Barroux, and Prevost, fascicule 93, pp. 1057–58.

188 Balteau, Barroux, and Prevost, Tome 8, pp. 671–72.

189 Balteau, Barroux, and Prevost, Tome 9, pp. 1009–10.

190 Balteau, Barroux, and Prevost, Tome 2, pp. 491–503; Hervé Martin, ‘Le legs du Moyen Age’, in *Histoire des Catholiques en France du XV<sup>e</sup> Siècle à Nos Jours*, ed. by François Lebrun (Toulouse: Privat, 1980), pp. 9–73 (p. 20).

Pragmatic Sanction. The return of Normandy to French rule by 1450 would see the end of English influence in northern France (with the exception of the enclave of Calais in the diocese of Th rouanne).<sup>191</sup>

The similarities that there were between England and France with respect to the achievement of episcopal status must not be overstated. 'In reality, the largest proportion of the bishops both before and after 1516 came from the nobility of the provinces in which their sees were situated'.<sup>192</sup> At first sight it would seem that the French bishops had not become a gentry-dominated group. However, the term *noblesse* needs to be considered with care. The high nobility of France, the *noblesse de sang*, had their equivalent in the English aristocracy. At a lower level, however, the *noblesse de robe* equated in England to the provincial gentry.<sup>193</sup> As regards royal service Potter estimates that only 25 per cent of the bishops after 1516 were awarded their sees following service to the king at court, and that this proportion had not changed greatly since the fifteenth century. Also, the number of bishops who served on the king's council or who were occupied in royal service varied. In 1438 nearly one fifth of the French bishops were occupied in the service of the state.<sup>194</sup> In the period 1483-1515, of the 109 bishoprics outside Brittany, there were 44 who members of the royal council, and another 88 were members of their families.<sup>195</sup> The sources make it difficult to establish who attended royal council meetings in this period, but one surviving list from 1475 contains 4 princes or counts, 4 bishops, 6 nobles and 24 commoners. Later in the reign of Louis XI the *conseil  troit* included one prince of the blood, one bastard of France, 14 nobles, 15 commoners and 2 clergy.<sup>196</sup> From this information it seems very possible that the extended families of many bishops may have been represented on the royal council, but the number of bishops themselves was low.

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191 For a detailed biography of Basin see Bernard Guen e, *Between Church and State: The Lives of Four French Prelates in the Late Middle Ages* (Chicago ; London: University of Chicago Press, 1991), pp. 259-375.

192 David Potter, *A History of France, 1460-1560: The Emergence of a Nation State*, New Studies in Medieval History (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995), p. 230.

193 Wallace K. Ferguson, *Europe in Transition: 1300-1520* (Boston, Mass: Houghton Mifflin, 1962), pp. 498-99; Marilyn Manera Edelstein, 'The Social Origins of the Episcopacy in the Reign of Francis I', *French Historical Studies*, 8.3 (1974), 377-92 (pp. 381, 383-84).

194 Graeme Small, *Late Medieval France*, European History in Perspective (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 20.

195 Potter, *A History of France*, p. 126.

196 *Ibid.*, pp. 95-96.

In summary therefore, the nature of French society and the structure of lordship meant that the way the Church worked within royal government showed some significant differences when compared to England. The relationship between Church and state was 'intimate', and the Church was indeed a key way that the state imposed itself upon the nation.<sup>197</sup> However the French Church was never pressed by its monarch to make the break with Rome that Henry VIII imposed on its English cousin. Whether it could have withstood such an edict is uncertain, given the interdependence of Church and monarchy. What the developments in France do emphasize is that each national Church, while decidedly in communion with Rome, was developing strongly local characteristics. England's monarchs had sought an accommodation with the papacy that satisfied their desire for control over the Church as a temporal force within the realm. They also made great use of the resource that the Church provided in terms of highly educated manpower to administer government itself, to dispense justice and to practise diplomacy. Such developments can also be seen in France, but with their own national flavour, and moving at their own pace.

## Conclusions

To summarise and conclude, the main dynamic in episcopal careers was contact with and service to the state.<sup>198</sup> According to Robert Swanson it was 'state service which really counted' when it came to achieving the status of bishop: 'Royal patronage was therefore crucial, whether through personal contacts, or through the institutional structure which gave the bureaucrats access to patronage as one of the perks.'<sup>199</sup> What this chapter has attempted to do is to subject those views to critical analysis. By taking the careers of king's clerks in particular it has attempted to chart the role of such service in the career advancement of men, both those who succeeded and those who failed to become bishops. Any man who was raised to the episcopate without significant time in royal service as a king's clerk is singled out as exceptional,

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<sup>197</sup> Ibid., p. 219; Small, *Late Medieval France*, p. 20.

<sup>198</sup> Swanson, *Church and Society*, p. 80.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid., p. 81.

with Richard Nykke being characterised as such.<sup>200</sup> However there is a danger in over-stating Nykke's exceptionalism. Not only was he dean of the Chapel Royal and registrar of the Order of the Garter, he was also an active attendee at Henry VII's council from 1498.<sup>201</sup>

To characterise the men who achieved prelacy as just calculating, career-focused administrators who used their positions to advance themselves trivialises their intellectual and pastoral achievements. Their lack of literary output might suggest they were but grey, faceless bureaucrats, a set of men to be contrasted with the intellectual grandeur of earlier bishops such as the remarkable Robert Grosseteste.<sup>202</sup> The prevalence of many lawyers among both the bishops and among those of lower rank such as cathedral deans or the king's clerks was of course bemoaned by Thomas Gascoigne.<sup>203</sup> However, there are differing perspectives that show these clerical lawyers in a less harsh light. A central pillar of medieval royal government was the administration of justice, and the bishops especially were involved in the dispensing of discretionary justice, something very compatible with their role as ecclesiastics.<sup>204</sup>

The role of 'king's clerk' has been shown as clearly in decline numerically across the period 1400-1520. The number of men described as such fell consistently within the patent rolls. However those men who were still bore that label were more likely to become bishops as a consequence. Hence the label of 'king's clerk' had real meaning. The 'amorphous' nature of this group of men does make further comment difficult. It is hard to discern just how the work of such men changed over the decades. Furthermore there were many future

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200 George W. Bernard, *The Late Medieval English Church: Vitality and Vulnerability before the Break with Rome* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), p. 52.

201 See Norman P. Tanner's ODNB entry for Nykke at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/20205>.

202 The literature on Grosseteste is extensive. Some of the many historians who have written about him include Samuel Thomson, Frederick Powicke, Richard Southern and James McEvoy. A good starting point is Southern's ODNB entry at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/11665>.

203 Thomas Gascoigne, *Loci e Libro Veritatum: Passages Selected from Gascoigne's Theological Dictionary Illustrating the Condition of Church and State 1403-1458* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1881), p. 127 where he cries: '*Sic diversi servant legem, non quia lex est, nec quia justum est, ut fiat, sed quia sic facere est medium congregandi sibi ipsis divicias, et etiam quia laetantur inferre aliis poenam et verecundiam*'.

204 See Gwilym Dodd, 'Reason, Conscience and Equity: Bishops as the King's Judges in Later Medieval England', *History*, 99.335 (2014), 213-40 (p. 213). Dodd argues that 'the strong theological underpinning of discretionary justice meant that bishops' involvement in secular government did not stand in opposition to their spiritual vocation or their role as leaders of the church.'

bishops to whom the term never applied. While Nicholas Bubwith makes many appearances as such, Robert Hallum did not, yet they were contemporaries who both achieved the rank of bishop in opulent dioceses. It is also pertinent to highlight that men of noble birth might still carry out the duties of king's clerk. Those at the very pinnacle of nobility might move swiftly into episcopal roles, but those from a lesser status could work their way through university and into royal service before later achieving the rank of bishop. In that sense the ecclesiastical career trajectory of the lesser nobility came more and more to resemble that of the higher gentry.

Churchmen did of course provide service in the royal household in other ways. The analysis has highlighted those who acted as chaplains or confessors, as diplomats, or in specific roles such as secretary or almoner, either to the king himself or to members of his close family (and some occupants of these roles could also be found as king's clerks). Their regular proximity to the monarch and his family could lead to benefits for their own careers, but also the opportunity to influence and advise the king. The assumption is that such men are nearly all visible, i.e. they appear in the patent rolls or associated documents such as the papal registers because they are of relevance and interest to the king. That such men, whether also king's clerks or not, might be provided with a bishopric is clear, but so also is an alternative path, to key roles such as deaneries. Here men may have found a niche that fully met their aspirations and interests and that kept them within existing networks of family and scholarship. The deanery of Lincoln was a striking example of a position that provided a lengthy sojourn as a final destination for several of its holders. Wells also seems to have been a desirable and remunerative branch-line destination for several important figures. By contrast the deaneries of York and Salisbury were very active with respect both to turnover and to the production of future bishops. The great demands placed on a fifteenth-century bishop and the heavy responsibilities of his position would not have suited the inclinations or abilities of all churchmen rising within the ecclesiastical fast stream.

The arrival of new interests such as Italian humanism does not seem to have been highly pervasive within our cohort of bishops, or among those who were

one step down. However there were some men who were clearly involved and active in such learning such as Robert Flemming, dean of Lincoln.<sup>205</sup> These men do not appear to have suffered for their novel interests, even when their earlier careers took them to Italy and the papal curia for years at a time. Such men must have made a conscious decision to stay within the mainstream of the English Church and not to make service in Rome the focus of their careers. They would have benefited from the personal networks that their interests would engender and support, and their innovative perspectives demonstrate the vivacity within the late medieval Church that more recent historians have highlighted.

A distinct cohort of men were those chosen by the king to act as his proctors, orators and ambassadors in Rome. A significant proportion were granted bishoprics shortly after taking up their places at the Roman curia.<sup>206</sup> The relationship with the papal court also resulted in a string of Italian clerics being awarded benefices in England, but with some very distinct patterns. Before the ending of the papal schism there was a steady group of such men awarded high benefices such as archdeaconries and deaneries. That practice fell into abeyance after 1415, and it was only from the 1470s onwards that Italian churchmen began to be provided to bishoprics in England. Contemporaneously the English king began to use cardinal protectors in Rome to safeguard his interests there. Thus the relationship with Rome was strengthened and deepened in the fifty years before the break with Rome. Indeed, of all the trends seen during the fifty years after 1470, that growing closeness to Rome was the most striking and the most important. To many commentators, it was this closeness and compliance that led to the 'shock of rejection' from which Henry VIII recoiled when Clement VII was unable to resolve Henry's 'great matter'.<sup>207</sup>

The regular clergy occupy their own niche within the framework of episcopal appointments. They did not hold the post of king's clerks, although some such as Henry Deane provided other services such as that of royal chaplain which brought them within the king's intimate circle. The rewards that the king could

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205 See Cecil H. Clough's ODNB entry at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/9714>.

206 Examples here include John Catterick, Robert Fitzhugh and James Goldwell.

207 Harper-Bill, *The Pre-Reformation Church in England 1400-1530*, p. 17.

visit upon secular clergy in terms of benefices were not, of course, appropriate to men within the regular orders.<sup>208</sup> We cannot therefore assess numerically just how much the king favoured them, unlike the seculars where we can take a simple look at the benefices he provided to them. However there were clear avenues of promotion for the regulars. The Welsh dioceses of St Asaph, Bangor and Llandaff were very much their domain; by contrast the see of St David's was often the first episcopal appointment for secular clerics such as Henry Chichele or Thomas Langton who then moved on to greater things. The proportion of regulars in the episcopacy as a whole was not high, but even in the 1490s we see Henry Deane making his way from Bangor via Salisbury and then on to Canterbury. The fact that Deane as an Augustinian canon should rise so high, while Carmelite friars could also feature so strongly in the royal circle, illustrates the variety and continuing relevance of the religious orders. The success of the Carmelites highlights the importance of their close relationship to the king's person and to his family. The Benedictine order also remained a critical participant with its possession of seven cathedral priories in England. Not only were they formally the electors for vacant bishops' chairs, they also exercised extensive patronage in terms of benefices and dignities within their gift. However, as has been described elsewhere, cathedral priories suffered woefully from the application of great external pressure in consequence.

The conclusions that can be drawn from a data-focused analysis must not be over-stated. Although the date of first known royal service has been collected and analysed for a good proportion of the bishops, there are gaps that may be filled as new evidence emerges. In addition, men may have been active in close proximity to the king before the dates currently known. For almost every man who became a bishop in this period we lack definite knowledge of their dates of birth. Informed estimation can provide us with a good idea of their birth year, but this is potential source of error in any discussion. However, when such caveats are carefully considered, it is possible to apply some of the systematic methods in this chapter to elucidate and characterise the careers of our cohort of clerks.

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<sup>208</sup> There could of course be exceptions to this rule. In September 1397, Stephen Patrington received a papal dispensation to hold a benefice with or without cure of souls (see Jeremy Catto's *ODNB* entry for Patrington at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/21569>).



What therefore of Swanson's view that it was state service that really counted when it came to episcopal careers? There is little doubt that royal patronage, or at the very least royal acquiescence, was required for the final major step of provision to a bishopric. The competition for such provision was intense, the field of suitable candidates was sizeable, and the personal nature of royal government all suggest strongly that prior service of some sort to the king and his immediate circle were at least very helpful if not essential to achieve a see. However nothing was inevitable. The final choice resided almost invariably in the person of the monarch, not in the machinery of government or through a well-constructed career path. Highly suitable candidates could have the perfect career profile yet fail to make it. The lacuna in appointments late in Henry IV's reign was just one circumstance to frustrate the career of a man such as John Prophete. The fifteenth century saw a decline in the appointment of men of noble birth to the episcopate, especially by the reign of Henry VII. Thus a future bishop had to prove himself and earn his place to gain a cathedral enthronement. Few men could hold an English see by papal provision alone – the English king was jealous to safeguard what he saw as his prerogative in the appointment process. In that he shared the same attitude as his French counterparts, even if the social structure of the French episcopacy provides contrasts with that of England. Compromises with the papacy could and did take place, however. Unless contradictory and unexpected new evidence emerges, Swanson's analysis, when taken in its full breadth, remains compelling.

## Chapter 6 - Conclusion

The path to prelacy was, for most aspiring clerks, a long and testing one. Episcopal office in the late medieval period placed great demands on its occupants. This small group of men who sat on the bishops' bench had to be worthy of their position and to be able to meet the many challenges they faced. A few men of noble birth were able to obtain their episcopal see at an early age with great ease. But for the majority, and for an increasing proportion of them as the fifteenth century progressed, their journey to an episcopal throne was a challenging one. For many of these gentry bishops, education was a critical factor in their progression. Those who succeeded in reaching the episcopacy were part of a distinct cadre, perhaps not so much a 'fast' stream as a 'designated' or 'reserved' stream of churchmen. The early career of these clerks therefore represents a critical point of departure. This thesis has attempted to demonstrate just how these 'designated' clerks developed, looking at their route through graduate status and their rise by patronage and the practice of their professional skills.<sup>1</sup> Above all else, royal favour was essential, either in putting the king's chosen candidate forward for papal provision, or in avoiding royal opposition to Rome's preferred cleric.

Once in office, the expectations placed on a bishop and the requirements of his position were intimidating. He had to practise both temporal and spiritual lordship at a scale and at a level almost without parallel. He was expected to be the pastoral leader of his diocese, acting as a focus for the religious life of his lay flock, as well as directing his fellow ecclesiastics. He was the source of sacramental power - only he or his chosen suffragan bishops had the ability in canon law to ordain men to the priesthood and thereby continue the sacramental ministry as passed down from the earliest days of the Christian Church. He had to uphold the essential truths of the faith, and to combat those

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1 This was not the view of Thomas Gascoigne who, in the analysis by his editor James E. Thorold Rogers, thought that 'The bishops owed their elevation to court intrigues, to simony, and to bribes at the Papal court', Thomas Gascoigne, *Loci e Libro Veritatum: Passages Selected from Gascoigne's Theological Dictionary Illustrating the Condition of Church and State 1403-1458*, ed. by James E. Thorold Rogers (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1881), p. lxxvii. Thorold Rogers does not wholly agree with Gascoigne's viewpoint as, on p. xlv, he described the king as the 'bishop-maker in England'.

who sought to challenge the Church's teachings. He had to manage the affairs of the clergy within his diocese, both secular and regular.<sup>2</sup> He was responsible also for the good administration of canon law and the dispensing of justice within his purview. Nor could he ignore the other half of his identity as a prelate, namely his role in royal government and the affairs of state. The king required his bishops to act as his counsellors, to occupy the highest offices of state, to travel on diplomatic missions across Europe, to uphold the king's justice, and to legitimise his rule by their indispensable role in his coronation. The bishops were the high command of the Church within England and Wales, but they were also members of the universal church, centred on Rome and the papal court. In that sense they were part of a select community that existed across national boundaries. As if all of this were not enough, bishops and archbishops also patronised the arts, sciences and learning, were scholars and collectors, and were responsible for a major programme of building works across their dioceses.<sup>3</sup> In England and Wales in the fifteenth century, only the king and the higher nobility had a similar level of responsibilities and expectations placed upon them. In the view of Gascoigne and other contemporary commentators, few higher prelates fulfilled those obligations satisfactorily. For Gascoigne the bishops spent too much time with the king, his court and other laymen; their focus on affairs of state was gravely prejudicial to their role as pastors. Later commentators have been more sympathetic to the position that fifteenth-century prelates were in, given the huge range of responsibilities across Church and state that they shouldered.

John Morton has been chosen as a key focus of this thesis because he was so pre-eminent within the realm in the period from 1486 to his death in 1500. His career was not a straightforward one, and in studying his lengthy path to high office, many of the features of fifteenth-century prelacy are thrown into clear

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2 The bishop had final responsibility for this task, but would delegate such work to a vicar general or to his archdeacons. The latter might not, as has been shown, be available and active in such duties, and other deputies might be called on. William Lyndwood was keen to spell out the duties and responsibilities of archdeacons, but also to clarify the constraints on their actions: William Lyndwood, *Lyndwood's Provinciale: The Text of the Canons Therein Contained, Reprinted from the Translation Made in 1534* / Edited by J.V. Bullard and H. Chalmer Bell. (London: Faith Press, 1929), passim.

3 George W. Bernard, *The Late Medieval English Church: Vitality and Vulnerability before the Break with Rome* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), p. 55.

relief. He was born into a gentry family, and without immediate noble connections had to achieve advancement through his own abilities, and through the nurturing of good patronage. Chapter 2 considered the graduate clerk and indicated how their number grew across the fifteenth century, with a corresponding rise in their influence and professionalism. Morton's early education was not in what might be called the premier league. Unlike his fellow bishop and native of Dorset, Thomas Jane, who went to William of Wykeham's Winchester College, Morton was probably schooled in the more ancient monastic education system before going on to Oxford.<sup>4</sup> Here once again Morton remained in the older system of inns and halls, rather than belonging to one of the well-endowed collegiate foundations such as New College. However he excelled in his chosen field of study, that of civil or Roman law. He obtained his doctorate after what was clearly a lengthy period of study and residence at Oxford, and went on to practise his skills within the court of the chancellor of Oxford. For Morton and for many of his peers, it was this period at one of the universities that established them within the 'designated' stream from which future prelates would be chosen. One skill that any prelate would need was that of proficiency in 'performance'. For this Morton's study of law was invaluable, requiring an advocate to be able to put a case with clarity, to be able to think quickly on his feet and to employ techniques of memorisation and recall while under pressure in a public forum.<sup>5</sup> Such performance was also something required in religious observance as well as when entertaining and informing superiors in a less formal atmosphere.

The universities naturally provided an entry-point to a crucial network of friendships, acquaintances and patronage that helped to shape and advance Morton's peer group. Although largely religious by their nature, the two universities of Oxford and Cambridge also admitted students who were clearly from the lay community.<sup>6</sup> These included sons of the nobility who were not

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4 For the *ODNB* article on Jane by Edmund Venables (revised by Rosemary Hayes) see <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/14649>.

5 Mary Carruthers, *Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 99.

6 Ralph Evans, 'The Number, Origins and Careers of Scholars', in *The History of the University of Oxford, Vol. 2, Late Medieval Oxford*, ed. by J. I. Catto and Ralph Evans (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992), ii, 485–538 (p. 520).

destined for the Church.<sup>7</sup> The universities therefore provided the forum for many invaluable social and professional connections to be made. One key example in Morton's case is that of Gilbert Kymer who was chancellor at Oxford for a second time during the period 1447 to 1453.<sup>8</sup> Kymer was dean of Salisbury from 1449 to 1463 and was also a royal physician who attended Henry VI.<sup>9</sup> With Morton active in the chancellor's court, here was one excellent patron who could help to further his career. Kymer would have been able to assess Morton's character and skill, as well as finding him of great value in pursuing legal actions on behalf of the university. For clerks such as Morton, the drive to obtain a benefice to provide them with a secure and regular income would have been compelling. He certainly had at least one benefice by the time he seems to have left Oxford in 1453, provided by the Benedictine house at Abingdon in January of that year. He might well have had an expectation of further such benefactions – the path of the rising prelate was smoothed by the provision of multiple benefices, many of them *sine cure*, without the responsibility of the cure of souls. Despite completing his doctorate in civil law, Morton remained no more than one of the *tonsurati* for several more years. It was only in 1458 and 1459 that he was ordained into the three higher orders. For men such as Morton (and later William Warham) it was at this point that they committed themselves to an ecclesiastical rather than a legal career, and to the celibate life.

Like many of his graduate peer group, Morton would have practised his skills in the church courts (see Chapter 3 of this thesis). These provided his cadre of ambitious legal experts with invaluable experience of church law in action, as well as expanding further their network of contacts, especially within the upper reaches of the Church. The diocesan courts were a very active forum for legal clerks, but it seems likely that Morton moved from Oxford to practice in the much more prominent court of the Arches, the highest court within the province

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7 Ibid., p. 512.

8 Kymer had clear family and other connections with the Salisbury diocese as witnessed by his will. Of all the churches to which he left money for their fabric, there were several in the diocese including Wimborne Minster (of which he had been appointed dean), Fordingbridge, Mere, Gillingham, Heytesbury and Stratford sub Castle. He also left money to Thomasina Kymer, a nun at Shaftesbury Abbey (TNA, PROB 11/5/14).

9 See Faye Getz's ODNB article on Kymer at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/15820>.

of Canterbury.<sup>10</sup> Not only did the Arches have dealings with the highest-ranking churchmen in England and Wales, both secular and regular, it also had dealings with the legal system of the Roman court. Morton was therefore starting to be involved with and known by the very highest levels of the universal church. Although much of the evidence for work of the court of Arches has been lost, some corresponding material remains for the *curia Ebor*, its parallel jurisdiction in the province of York. In York much of the work revolved around matrimonial cases, as well as on testamentary issues. If that were anywhere near the same at St Mary-le-Bow then Morton would have become involved with a good number of wealthier lay patrons. Such involvement could help to explain the patronage he later received from the Audley and De la Warr families. The advocates at the court of Arches were later to form a distinct professional community, the Doctors Commons. This group was surely the formal evolution of an earlier community of legal experts active at the court, and suggests how Morton's peer group of legal clerks shared common goals and interests. These same church lawyers, with their expertise in civil and canon law, were also drawn into the work of other courts, including those of Admiralty and Chivalry. All of this experience prepared them for work later in their careers in the higher courts of the realm such as those of Chancery, Star Chamber and Requests. Once again this cohort of men were part of a separate stream within the church legal system, comprising the advocates, the acknowledged experts in their field. The more mundane tasks of the courts such as those at the *curia Ebor* were performed by proctors. In the 1450s Morton was clearly securing his position within an elite group of cleric-lawyers, a path that was also followed by men such as John Alcock and William Warham.

Chapter 4 of this thesis showed that, if experience, skill and demonstrable ability were important for a clerk who might aspire to prelacy, little could be achieved without the indispensable benefits of good patronage. Morton and the men of his cohort were totally reliant on building a network of contacts who could advance their careers. Being men of middling gentry backgrounds, their ascent relied upon those with patronage and influence. At every stage in their

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<sup>10</sup> This assumption comes from secondary sources. There is no known primary evidence of Morton at work as an advocate of the Arches.

careers, fostering relations with those who could advance them further was essential for progress to be maintained. The joys and tribulations of an eremitical life, inspired by tales of saints and scholars from the early years of the Christian church, might appeal to some, but the realities of the fifteenth-century church showed men that achievement in this life rested on relationships and community. In its narrowest sense, a patron was someone who provided a clerk with a church living. The analytical work that has been carried out on the patronage enjoyed by the bishops-to-be was described in detail in Chapter 4. It is here in particular that the benefits of a systematic approach to the exploitation of data regarding the benefices that each man enjoyed can be seen. By researching, populating and analysing a database of this information, patterns and features that could otherwise be overlooked were brought to light. The major role played by bishops and archbishops in bestowing benefices on this cadre of future bishops came across very clearly. These prelates were seeking to nurture men who they saw as their potential successors. They sought men who would uphold the best interests of the Church and might act as responsible stewards of their dioceses.

To obtain a canon's cathedral stall with its associated prebendal income, was a major milestone in any clerk's career. As well as providing enhanced status and welcome financial support, the possession of a canonry brought the newly-promoted clerk into a group of contacts who could further enhance his career. Some men were especially fortunate in the patronage they received. Clerks such as Richard Clifford were singled out by the king himself for early and sustained preferment.<sup>11</sup> Richard II granted Clifford a total of twenty-one of his thirty-one known benefices, beginning when Clifford was probably only around twenty years of age. Richard II's investment of so much patronage in one favoured clerk confirms the narrow but intense circle of acquaintances that Richard fostered.<sup>12</sup> The appendices in Chapter 4 made using the Gephi tool illustrate graphically just how exceptional, indeed obsessive, those acts of patronage were. Edward IV's patronage of William Dudley was similar though

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11 For the *ODNB* article on Clifford by R.G. Davies see <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/5657>.

12 Nigel Saul, *Richard II*, Yale English Monarchs (New Haven ; London: Yale University Press, 1997), p. 454.

less intense. By the time of his second reign, Edward's focus for his patronage of church livings was increasingly around those men who went on to obtain bishoprics.

One pattern of patronage that evolved decisively over the century was that of granting multiple concurrent archdeaconries and deaneries. Such benefices were among the highest that a rising clerk might obtain before preferment to an episcopal see.<sup>13</sup> The database has shown that there was a conscious method in the way such posts were bestowed, and that the attitude to this evolved across the century. After 1450 a man such as John Morton could hold five archdeaconries at once, something never seen before. The arrival of Thomas Bourchier as archbishop of Canterbury coincided with this changing pattern, and his influence behind the scenes might be one part of the explanation. By 1461 Edward IV was on the throne, and he too may have been pressuring others to grant preferment to his chosen beneficiaries. Both men may have concluded that church resources were there to be used to best effect to meet specific objectives, and that a simple desire to achieve equity and balance was perhaps laudable, but not their chosen *modus operandi*. Throughout the century prelates had no inhibitions when granting benefices to clerks within their extended family group. Such behaviour reflected a tradition from the previous century and seemed little changed after 1400. Nephews were a particular target for preferment. John Blyth, Robert Morton and Thomas Kemp all enjoyed great preferment from their prelate uncles. This was clearly regarded as normal behaviour for a prelate, even if it might have raised some eyebrows among other ambitious clerks.

The king was among the top grantors of benefices to those men who were to become bishops in future years. However, the king had a much more important function to fulfil, namely to shepherd his preferred candidate successfully into post when a bishopric became vacant. Each monarch began his reign with a bishops' bench already occupied by men chosen (or at least agreed to) by his

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<sup>13</sup> According to William Lyndwood there were two classes of prelate. The inferior prelates included the archdeacons and deans, while the higher prelates were the bishops and archbishops – see Lyndwood, *Provinciale*, pp. 138, 155 respectively. He is silent on where the mitred abbots might fit into this definition.



predecessor. It was rare for a bishop or archbishop to leave his office except at his death. There was a natural replacement rate of approximately one per year, although that rate was not consistent. The hiatus in Henry IV's reign when no new bishops were appointed contrasts with the year 1500 when both archbishops, an archbishop-elect, and several other bishops all died. The choice of a new prelate was a critical one, and it involved several, potentially competing interests. In most cases, the candidate preferred by the king would be admitted, but that was not always as straightforward as the king might want. Formally the bishop was elected as a diocesan by his cathedral chapter or priory. This was their longstanding constitutional right, and that procedure continued to be respected, at least as a necessary formality, by the two other parties with a keen interest in the outcome, namely the English king and the pope. However getting the 'right' result was where clashes could occur. All parties were jealous of their privileges, but they were also conscious of the realities of power and influence. The king was keen to see a man he knew well and trusted being placed into office. This could be through a process of translation, especially for the grander sees such as Canterbury, Winchester or Durham. In those circumstances there could be a complex shuffling of seats, involving two or more dioceses. All of that would need to be considered and agreed between the king and the pope, with the expectation that the relevant cathedral(s) would accept the outcome. A prelate was a temporal as well as a spiritual lord, and might be called on by the king to fulfil a series of roles, many of which were essential for the good government of the state. England already had statutes in place, those of Provisors and *Praemunire*, that sought to constrain Rome's *de iure* role within the realm. The king therefore saw the provision of his candidate as vital to his interests, and would expect the pope to accept his choice. Most often the pope would agree without dissent, seeing opposition as either futile or not tactically desirable. In many cases, therefore, the king decided on a candidate, the relevant cathedral chapter or priory would 'elect' him and the pope would carry through the formal act of provision.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Christopher Harper-Bill, *The Pre-Reformation Church in England 1400-1530*, Revised Edition (Harlow: Addison Wesley Longman Limited, 1996), p. 25.

The man that the king chose would, almost without exception, have been engaged in service to him at some point. Monarchs were seeking men of proven ability who could be relied on to provide loyal and effective service. Kings increasingly looked to men who would be energetic and competent administrators, as well as councillors, diplomats and pastors. Chapter 5 of this thesis demonstrated that any aspiring clerk would therefore seek to serve his king, preferably in a manner that brought him into frequent and intimate contact. A role as king's confessor, or as his secretary, or as dean of one of his key institutions such as the chapel of St Stephen at Westminster would be most advantageous. Training as a theologian could be a suitable background for a confessor or dean; for a diplomat or royal administrator a background in the law would be ideal. The somewhat amorphous group of men described as 'king's clerks' was also a desirable place for men to serve, and this applied to men of noble rank, not just gentry aspirants. In their work within the royal household or administration, these clerks could be assessed by the king and his intimate council. Candidates who might be suitable for episcopal elevation could be identified and nurtured. Above all, the king would want a man who, as prelate, would succeed in both his spiritual and temporal roles.

John Morton is first seen in royal service in September 1457 when he was appointed as chancellor to the infant Edward, prince of Wales. That role would have put him in the household of Margaret of Anjou, Henry VI's queen consort. Morton appears by 1459 to have been under consideration for the see of St David's, but the details on that are ambiguous. It was to Margaret's court in exile that Morton chose to stay loyal after the Lancastrian reversals at Towton and beyond. Morton's time abroad was by force of circumstance, but residence at the Roman curia was an increasingly desirable and important destination as the century progressed. The relationship with Rome deepened and strengthened after the Lancastrian period, and in particular with the accession of Henry Tudor. To act as proctor, orator or ambassador to Rome for the Tudor monarch often led to a bishopric and even to a cardinal's *galerum rubrum*. This strengthened relationship with Rome had another consequence, with the appointment of a

series of key Italian clerks to the bishopric of Worcester, and also to Salisbury and Bath & Wells.

Once a successful clerk had reached the bench of bishops, his place was generally secure. Even the violent overthrow of one monarch by his successor might not, at least for long, disturb a bishop's grip on his see. Many successfully accommodated themselves to changing circumstances. William Clifford, so greatly favoured by Richard II, was subsequently made a bishop by Henry IV.<sup>15</sup> Thomas Bourchier, for better or worse, served five monarchs while at Canterbury. Morton provides something of a contrast. He chose to remain loyal to Henry VI, joining Thomas Bird, bishop of St Asaph, in exile after Towton.<sup>16</sup> After Edward IV's decisive return to power in 1471, Morton, together with nearly all the other loyal Lancastrians such as Sir John Fortescue and Sir Richard Tunstall, submitted to Edward's rule. Morton, now bishop of Ely, remained stubbornly loyal to Edward and his family after 1483 when Edward V was usurped by Richard, duke of Gloucester. However it was that combination of loyalty and partisanship, together with his great abilities as a counsellor, negotiator and administrator, that brought Morton successfully to his final golden age. As both cardinal archbishop of Canterbury and chancellor to Henry VII, Morton was one of the most notable churchmen of the fifteenth century.<sup>17</sup>

Born a generation after Morton, Richard Nix, the future bishop of Norwich, provides a compelling link for the final section of this concluding chapter.<sup>18</sup> Like many of his episcopal contemporaries in the first quarter of the sixteenth century, his training and rise to prominence were rooted in the fifteenth century. The early sixteenth-century Church of which he was to become a prelate was in many ways little changed from that of John Morton. Why and how the bench of bishops of which Nix, William Warham and others were members could submit to the tumultuous changes brought in by Henry VIII therefore demands an explanation. The contention of this section is that the explanation lies in the

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15 Saul, *Richard II*, p. 126.

16 Bird has been little studied and even lacks an entry in *ODNB*. He has too often been confused with Thomas Knight, bishop of Down and Connor from 1453 to 1469.

17 See Harper-Bill, *The Pre-Reformation Church*, p. 31 where he describes John Morton and Henry Chichele as the two outstanding incumbents at Canterbury during the fifteenth century.

18 See Norman P. Tanner's *ODNB* article on Nix at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/20205>.

fifteenth-century, and the intertwining of Church and state that had taken place. England's national church saw itself as belonging alongside and in service to its secular prince. In tracing the careers of Richard Nix and William Warham, a discussion that necessarily cuts across the traditional divide between the late medieval and the early modern periods is required.

Nix was probably born in 1447, the very year in which Henry Beaufort, that grand prelate of the Lancastrian ascendancy died. Beaufort was born around 1375 when Edward III was still on the English throne. As a great and wealthy cardinal prelate, Beaufort was from the highest of noble circles and occupied his posts in Church and state as much by right of birth as through his natural abilities and energy. By the time Nix was into his middle years, John Morton was the English cardinal of the day, occupying the see of Canterbury rather than that of Winchester where Beaufort had reigned for over forty years. Morton's death and that of several of his fellow prelates, created the openings that led to Nix's provision to the see of Norwich in February 1501. Nix, like Morton, was a doctor of laws who had risen from a middling background through his own merits to become a prelate.

Nix's long life continued into the reign of Henry VIII, where he witnessed the rise of that grandest of prelates of the pre-Reformation church, Thomas Wolsey. Wolsey shared many of the characteristics of Morton, in that he was not of noble birth, he rose through royal service and was a man of immense drive and ability. As well as a prelate archbishop he was of course Henry's chancellor, and sat at the very heart of royal government. However there was a key difference from Morton's time, in that there was an incumbent at the see of Canterbury in William Warham. Wolsey, Warham and Nix all faced the grave difficulties of Henry's Great Matter. Wolsey's fell from grace and died in 1530, Warham died shortly after in 1532, but Nix, though increasingly incapacitated, endured, dying finally in 1535. By that time Thomas Cranmer was archbishop of Canterbury and Thomas Cromwell was officially Vicar-General and Vice-Gerent in Spirituals of the Church of England after Henry VIII's break with Rome. The dynamics that had prevailed at the start of Nix's career, and at the height of Morton's, had now

shifted significantly. Their character was complicated by the particular circumstances of the 1520s and 1530s. The roles and relationships of the prelates of the moment, Wolsey and Warham, were central to those changing dynamics.

After the death of John Morton in September 1500, Henry VII first turned to Thomas Langton, the bishop of Winchester, to be the next archbishop of Canterbury. Langton unfortunately died within days of his provision, and his successor at Canterbury was Henry Deane who was translated from Salisbury in May 1501. Deane was already the keeper of the great seal, a responsibility entrusted to him in October 1500. As the last member of the regular clergy to hold the primacy at Canterbury, Deane had only a brief tenure, dying in February 1503.<sup>19</sup> The king then turned to William Warham, bishop of London since October 1501, to fill the vacancy at Canterbury. Warham had already taken over custody of the great seal from Deane in August 1502, so he was now from the same mould as John Morton – a highly qualified church lawyer occupying the highest offices of Church and state.<sup>20</sup> By January 1504 Warham was confirmed with the full dignity of the office of Lord Chancellor, and so the mantle of John Morton was most clearly placed on his shoulders. After Henry VII died in April 1509, Warham's future at the pinnacle of Church and state seemed secure. He was confirmed as the new king's chancellor and he crowned Henry VIII as king in June of that year. However, a few months later, in November 1509, the king appointed as his almoner another clerk who had served his father well, Thomas Wolsey. It was Wolsey rather than Warham who knew best how best to appeal to the ebullient new king and how to relieve him of the burdens of administering the realm; in so doing he allowed Henry to devote himself to pleasures, 'wherewith the king was wonderly pleased'.<sup>21</sup> Wolsey's enormous energy, his keen instinct for how best to serve the king and his success in running the royal council brought him great preferment. Already dean of Lincoln and Hereford when made royal almoner, he was dean of York

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19 For further details of Deane see Christopher Harper-Bills's *ODNB* article at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/7387>.

20 See J. J. Scarisbrick's *ODNB* article on Warham at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/28741>.

21 George Cavendish, *The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey* (Boston & New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1905), pp. 15–16.

by February 1513 and a year later replaced as bishop of Lincoln another of Henry VII's great lawyer prelates and founder of Brasenose College, Oxford, William Smith. In August 1514, Wolsey had stepped up to become archbishop of York after the death of Christopher Bainbridge, and just over a year later was awarded a cardinal's hat by pope Leo X.<sup>22</sup> It was Warham who ceremonially bestowed the galero on Wolsey in Westminster Abbey. Among that group of men recently discussed, namely Morton, Warham, Smith, Nix, Bainbridge, Wolsey, and Cromwell, it was only Wolsey who had not studied or practised law.

The nature of Wolsey's preferment, with such an intense focus on his rise by the king and those he influenced, was more reminiscent of Richard II's lavish and focused patronage than that of any other recent monarch. Wolsey the cardinal archbishop had finally taken on the role of Lord Chancellor in December 1515. Warham was, by several accounts, more than content to be relieved of the burden of that office. The chancellorship was of course a high office, but it 'did not automatically ensure that the incumbent became the king's most influential minister'.<sup>23</sup> But Wolsey was clearly a man who was the most trusted and favoured of all Henry's servants. It was Henry who pressed the pope to grant Wolsey legatine powers in 1518, and he again was instrumental in obtaining Clement VII's agreement to grant Wolsey legatine powers for life in January 1524. These powers placed Wolsey as *legatus a latere* in an unprecedented position with respect to Warham who held the lesser status of *legatus natus* by virtue of his primacy. The acknowledged position of the incumbent at Canterbury as the senior primate had effectively been settled in England since the twelfth century.<sup>24</sup> Now Wolsey could legitimately by-pass Warham within the latter's own province. Although Wolsey's enhanced position has been regarded as a greedy power-grab by him, the 'blame' should be placed at Henry's door. He was keen to see the exercise of jurisdiction over the church being handled by his closest counsellor and servant, not by an older prelate appointed in his father's day. Wolsey could now proceed with visitations, reforms and

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<sup>22</sup> *L&P*, ii, 960.

<sup>23</sup> Peter Gwyn, *The King's Cardinal: The Rise and Fall of Thomas Wolsey* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1990), p. 104.

<sup>24</sup> See 'The Two Archbishops' in Chapter 8 of Robert Bartlett, *England under the Norman and Angevin Kings: 1075-1225* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/exeter/detail.action?docID=5892369> [accessed 10 April 2020].

rationalisation across the whole of the English and Welsh ecclesiastical estate. His ambitious programme of the suppression of religious houses to fund the foundation of Cardinal College, Oxford and Ipswich Grammar School was in some ways shockingly radical, but it was also the continuation of a tradition of church reform aimed at the enhancement of educational standards. Such a tradition stretched back to Henry Chichele and William of Wykeham, a most respectable pedigree. Wolsey was the man to achieve such changes because of the authority he derived from his position, but most of all from his unstinting support from the king. Morton while primate at Canterbury had enjoyed similar support from his king, whereas Warham was no longer Henry VIII's chosen instrument.

To historians, especially those writing in the last twenty years, William Warham presents an enigmatic face. Their struggle is to understand his behaviour in the critical period of 1532 to 1534. How and why did a prelate who seemed ready to oppose the break with Rome in 1531 agree, seemingly tamely, to the Submission of Clergy and the Oath of Supremacy? For earlier writers, there was less of a struggle to understand his motives. Dean Hook's perspective on Warham was an emollient and sympathetic one. Hook saw no inconsistency between his earlier protests and his subsequent acts, and took the view that 'his tendency was to yield to persons of stronger will than his own'.<sup>25</sup> A. G. Dickens placed Warham within a broader context. He saw the late Medieval Church as demonstrating intellectual slackness.<sup>26</sup> However, in acknowledging that the bishops were university-educated, he concluded that the behaviour of the English bishops during the Henrician schism

'seems in no small degree to have been conditioned by their academic backgrounds. Few were theologians and most had undergone legal training. ... by far the greater part had taken degrees in civil law. ... This civilian emphasis ... helps to explain why, almost to a man, they followed King Henry when he severed relations with the Papacy. They were

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25 Walter Farquhar Hook, *Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury*, ed. by C. E. Woodruff, 12 vols (London: Richard Bentley, 1868), VI, pp. 416, 418.

26 A. G. Dickens, *The English Reformation*, 1st ed (London: Batsford, 1964), p. 8.

already well attuned to the claims of the sovereign State. ... theologically-educated bishops tended to become Reforming'.<sup>27</sup>

Warham himself was a doctor of civil law and so, by Dicken's analysis, was ready to submit to his sovereign before all other claims to his loyalty. Other authors simply point to Warham's age as a key reason for the fact that 'defiance had oozed out of his old bones.'<sup>28</sup>

To more recent authors, these explanations seem too simplistic, and they wrestle with the changing positions of Warham before his submission at Convocation in May 1532. In his ODNB article, J. J. Scarisbrick considers the fact that Warham was one of only three bishops who gave their unqualified consent to the Submission; Scarisbrick pleads 'It is not easy to explain his conduct'.<sup>29</sup> Scarisbrick emphasizes Warham's devotion to the martyred Thomas Becket: 'Apparently the octogenarian Warham was seriously bracing himself for martyrdom. Had he lived a little longer and indeed chosen the path that John Fisher took, it would be much easier to pass a final verdict on him'.<sup>30</sup> But that was not the course that Warham chose, and G. W. Bernard similarly wrestles with Warham's motivations. Like others, he points to Warham's advanced years, seeing those as a possible explanation for 'the inconsistencies in his behaviour'.<sup>31</sup> In one of the most lengthy and detailed analyses of Warham's shifting position in the period 1531 to 1532, Bernard offers a series of possible reasons for Warham's submission to King Henry.<sup>32</sup> Perhaps the threat of further *praemunire* action deterred him; perhaps he thought outright resistance would simply be futile; perhaps he thought that the battle against heresy was more

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., pp. 43-4.

<sup>28</sup> G. R. Elton, *Reform and Reformation: England, 1509-1558*, The New History of England, 2 (London: Edward Arnold, 1977), p. 154.

<sup>29</sup> See the section entitled 'Manoeuvring between Westminster and Rome' in <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/28741>.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid. (see the concluding section entitled 'The archbishop and the man'). None of Henry's bishops could have doubted the king's determination to respond with lethal force to those who challenged his commands. By way of example, the May Day rioters of 1517 had been brutally suppressed with a number accused of treason and executed for not obeying Henry's commands - see Paul S. Seaver, 'Apprentice Riots in Early Modern London', in *Violence, Politics and Gender in Early Modern England*, ed. by Joseph P. Ward, Early Modern Cultural Studies, 1500-1700 (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp. 17-40 (p. 20).

<sup>31</sup> G. W. Bernard, *The King's Reformation: Henry VIII and the Remaking of the English Church* (New Haven, Conn. ; London: Yale University Press, 2007)p. 173.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, pp. 176-8.



important than a struggle over the relationship between Church and monarch.<sup>33</sup> If Scarisbrick and Bernard find it difficult to explain Warham's behaviour, then they are also joined by Dickens in another part of his analysis where he says '... we can give no clear explanation for the sudden collapse of his resistance'.<sup>34</sup> The puzzlement therefore as to why the clerical resistance 'crumbled' at the 'Rump Convocation' is a shared phenomenon.<sup>35</sup>

The reason why a study of the fifteenth century prelacy is so pertinent to this debate is reinforced by the analysis of Dickens concerning the academic background of many of the bishops. Warham, like Morton before him, was a doctor of civil law, and was well-practised in both the study and exercise of the law. The foundation provided by civil/Roman law was seen as highly relevant to the church's administration as well as to its problems. The basis of Roman law as studied in late medieval England was founded on a set of key texts whose discovery or re-discovery had extended over much of the twelfth century and made up the *Corpus Iuris Civilis* - the body of civil law. The *Digest* of the emperor Justinian lay at the heart of that Corpus, as well as his *Institutes*, the *Code* and the *Novels*. However, by the fifteenth century, these texts were seen through the lens of two hugely important authors of commentaries on the civil law from the previous century, namely Bartolus de Saxoferrato and his disciple, Baldus de Ubaldis. Indeed, by the early sixteenth century, Guillaume Budé, the noted French humanist scholar, held that the *Corpus Iuris* of Justinian, together with the commentaries of Bartolus and Baldus, must form the basis of a contemporary legal system.<sup>36</sup>

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33 Ibid.

34 Dickens, *The English Reformation*, p. 116.

35 Ibid., p. 116; Richard Rex, *Henry VIII and the English Reformation*, British History in Perspective (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993), p. 16; Peter Marshall's view is that Warham simply lost his nerve (Peter Marshall, *Heretics and Believers: A History of the English Reformation* (New Haven ; London: Yale University Press, 2017), pp. 196-99; for Michael Kelly, this 'humiliating defeat' for the Church was a demonstration of 'the profound strength, prestige, and loyalty the King commanded' (Michael Kelly, 'The Submission of the Clergy', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th series, 15 (1965), 97-119, (p. 118).

36 The viewpoint of Douglas Osler as quoted in Edward Peters, 'The Sacred Muses and the Twelve Tables: Legal Education and Practice, Latin Philology and Rhetoric and Roman History', in *Law as Profession and Practice in Medieval Europe: Essays in Honour of James A. Brundage*, ed. by Kenneth Pennington and Melanie Harris Eichbauer (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), pp. 137-51 (p. 142). For a survey of the study of civil law at the University of Oxford, see J. L. Barton, 'The Legal Faculties of Late Medieval Oxford', in *The History of the University of Oxford, Vol. 2, Late Medieval Oxford*, ed. by J. I. Catto and Ralph Evans (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), pp. 281-313.

Bartolus was concerned in particular with the problems of overlapping and potentially contradictory jurisdictions. How far could or should local laws and customs override those of the emperor's legal system?<sup>37</sup> How could such issues be untangled, and what should be the practical way to achieve a consonant rather than a dissonant legal system? He illustrated how the details of local legislation could take precedence over the letter of the imperial law where the former remained true to the spirit of the emperor's intentions. Bartolus could also see conflicts between civil and canon law, and saw that they had to be dealt with by conciliatory methods. In all of this, Bartolus was seeking to signpost a practical way for the law to be understood and implemented. Again, Peter Stein sums him up very well:

'By making explicit the rationale that seemed to lie behind the spare rulings of the Roman texts, Bartolus was able to produce a set of new rules, which could claim to enjoy the authority of imperial law. Jurists were agreed that henceforth no one could be a lawyer who was not a Bartolist (*nemo jurista nisi Bartolista*). His methods were followed by a whole school, known as Commentators, of whom the most distinguished was his pupil, Baldus de Ubaldis'.<sup>38</sup>

A key aspect of Baldus was the way his work showed that law and religion are inextricably interwoven. To him it would be very natural to discuss a theological issue using the format of a court of law, with the case being argued out by the protagonist before judgement being reached. Baldus continued and built upon the work of Bartolus in seeking to adapt the law to contemporary issues.

It is clear from the texts that they owned and bequeathed that English prelates of the long fifteenth century were intensely interested in the thinking of both

<sup>37</sup> For a comprehensive perspective on the life and writings of Bartolus see the work of Peter Stein (Peter Stein, *The Character and Influence of the Roman civil law: Historical Essays* (London: Hambledon, 1988); *Roman Law in European History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999)). For a discussion of the concept of *civitas sibi princeps* in Bartolus, see Magnus Ryan, 'Bartolus of Sassoferrato and Free Cities. The Alexander Prize Lecture', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 10 (2000), 65–89; Julius Kirschner, 'Civitas Sibi Faciat Civem: Bartolus of Sassoferrato's Doctrine on the Making of a Citizen', *Speculum*, 48 (1973), 694–713.

<sup>38</sup> Stein, *Roman Law in European History*, p. 73.

Bartolus and Baldus. In his bequest to New College Oxford the contents of William Warham's library included works by both authors. All Souls College was also the recipient of many volumes by both authors, donated by other high-ranking clergy.<sup>39</sup> Thomas Rotherham had many texts by Bartolus (at least eight) and Baldus among his bequest to the university at Cambridge. Henry Chichele and John Russell both had several texts by Baldus, and John Morton certainly had a printed volume of Bartolus.<sup>40</sup> Indeed it is notable that by the last quarter of the fifteenth century, these churchmen were keen to have printed editions of these works; Morton's copy of a lecture by Bartolus on the *Infortiati* of Justinian was printed in Venice in 1475.<sup>41</sup>

These civil lawyers were therefore accustomed to acknowledging and seeking to bridge the gap between competing jurisdictions. They could see how a local jurisdiction may have a prior claim over the established jurisdiction of a broader empire. The English episcopate had long become accustomed to English royal claims of authority in matters pertaining to the Church, acknowledging and implementing statutes such as those of Provisors, Mortmain and *Praemunire*. Their close interest in the writings of the Italian jurists was thus of more than academic interest. Had they viewed Henry VIII's difficulties with Rome as a purely secular issue, then they may rapidly and comfortably have fallen into line with the King's claim to primacy. However, the papacy laid claim to having a divine mission for which it had received direct authority from God while he was on Earth. The late Medieval Church of England fully subscribed to that belief system, something it and English kings had adhered to across all the difficulties of the western Papal Schism. The new counter-claim by Henry VIII to authority over the Church of England was therefore a legal point of the greatest tension for prelates such as Warham. All of their experience and training showed them that Church and state, whatever the particular difficulties or disagreements they may have experienced, had stood together and provided legitimacy and protection to each other. Now that Henry was turning to a very different position, the prelate was left disoriented and gravely discomfited. But with a parliament

39 N. R. Ker, *Records of All Souls College Library 1437-1600*, Oxford Bibliographical Society Publications, New Series Volume XVI (Oxford: University Press, 1971).

40 See the relevant entries in *ODNB*, *BRUO* and *BRUC* for these details.

41 London, British Library, UIN: BLL01000217071.

that was clearly seeking to subscribe the power and privileges of the clergy, Henry may have seemed a lesser evil in a political fight that the prelacy was ill-equipped to fight. In the previous century, even during the height of the Wars of the Roses, the episcopate as a group, whatever their academic background, had not explicitly taken sides but had acknowledged each monarch while he occupied the throne. Henry VIII was close at hand, his power was very great, he was the traditional defender of the Church's liberties and few men, with the exception of John Fisher and certain others, were prepared to endure martyrdom to defy him.

Warham, archbishop and primate of all England, had clearly lost the will to provide any lead in resisting Henry, so the prelacy could do little but rather quietly accept the new limits to its jurisdiction and influence. All of their experience and their training as judges, upholding the King's laws, as well as their academic training and instincts, left them unable and unwilling to break his new commandments. They were only too aware that they all owed their positions to their formation in the king's service and to his preferment when bishoprics became vacant. It might be over-stating the case to say that papal provision to the episcopacy was purely a formality for the Roman curia, but the balance of power in naming a new bishop was weighted very heavily in favour of the English king's chosen candidate.

This discussion of Warham and his episcopal colleagues has illustrated just how deeply they were moulded by their experiences and training across the long fifteenth century. Much of their response to the Henrician crisis can be explained by that history and indeed needs to be understood within that context. 'The church conceded too many hostages to fortune: when faced with a determined assault on what was left of its autonomy, it had already given up the territory.'<sup>42</sup> For these reasons, an informed discussion of the fifteenth prelacy must look forward to the sixteenth century and the revolution that overtook the English Church.

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<sup>42</sup> Benjamin Thompson, 'Locality and Ecclesiastical Polity: The Late Medieval Church between Duality and Integration', in *Political Society in Later Medieval England: A Festschrift for Christine Carpenter*, ed. by Benjamin Thompson and John Watts (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2015), pp. 113–45 (p. 145).

After Wolsey's failure to settle the king's Great Matter led to his fall, Henry was not inclined to turn back to Warham now that the decision to break with Rome had been made. Henry had appointed himself as head of the Church in England but he was long accustomed to use a most trusted and close counsellor to act for him. He therefore seized on Thomas Cromwell. At first Cromwell had no official status with respect to the Church. Wolsey had been replaced at York by Edward Lee, while at Canterbury the death of Warham in August 1532 had been followed by the installation of Thomas Cranmer. Although Cranmer was of course compliant with the king's decisions concerning church governance and practice, it was Cromwell who was in early 1535 given the unique title of Vice-Gerent in Spirituals.<sup>43</sup> This now made Cromwell effectively a *legatus a latere* to his monarch who was himself now fully installed as Supreme Head of the Church. Addressed as 'your Lordship', Cromwell (never ordained to any church office) sat in convocation above all others, being present in place of the king himself as the head of the Church. Extraordinary as all of this must have seemed, Cromwell's position could also be seen as one that maintained a tradition.<sup>44</sup> Men such as Beaufort, Morton and Wolsey who had acted as clerical lord chancellors, their power enhanced by the unqualified support of their king, provided examples from a more orthodox past. However, the way in which both Wolsey and Cromwell were lifted up by a powerful ruler, driven by his own inclinations, made them supremely vulnerable to his displeasure and rejection. Wolsey may have had his church appointments to fall back on after his fall from grace, but it was only his premature death when en route to the Tower to face the charge of treason that saved him from the bloody end that came to Thomas Cromwell ten years later.

Wolsey was not the very last of the late-medieval prelates in England, but he was the last of the truly grand members of that cadre. Nix and Warham may have outlived him, but they were figures diminished by the power of Henry VIII's rule. John Veysey, another very long-lived prelate, who survived as bishop of

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43 Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Thomas Cromwell: A Life* (London: Allen Lane, an imprint of Penguin Books, 2018), p. 269.

44 Henry's radicalism with respect to church structure had not resulted in the abolition of convocation.

Exeter until 1554, witnessed the significant diminution of his temporal possessions under Henry VIII and Edward VI.<sup>45</sup> Thomas Cranmer had no option but to surrender such pleasant possessions as his palaces at Knole and Otford to his acquisitive master. None could attempt to challenge the ascendancy of the monarch over all aspects of church life.<sup>46</sup> The words reportedly said by Warham when advising Katherine of Aragon that the anger of the prince is death were a truth that any churchman was well-advised to heed.<sup>47</sup>

The prelates of the fifteenth century had had to respond to uncertain political times, but their sixteenth century counterparts faced doctrinal changes that presented even graver challenges. Thomas Bird, the bishop of St Asaph, may have travelled into exile as personal chaplain to Margaret of Anjou in the 1460s, but there is no evidence that he had major disagreements with his fellow bishops on matters of doctrine. By contrast William Barlow, at one time bishop-elect of the same diocese, also fled abroad, although this was in 1555 during the reign of Mary I, a very different era. Characterised as a 'fervent reformer', Barlow began his clerical career, just like Bird, in the regular clergy.<sup>48</sup> Whereas Bird was a Dominican friar, Barlow began as an Augustinian canon. Bird had been deprived of his see by Edward IV in around 1463 when the custody of his diocese was granted to a succession of vicars general. Although he was pardoned in October 1471, he was not restored as bishop, the diocese of St Asaph passing instead to the Premonstratensian Richard Redman. Bird was unlucky – his fellow clerical exile, John Morton, was greatly favoured by the king.

Bird's loyalty to Queen Margaret did not assist his subsequent career, whereas that of William Barlow prospered through the patronage of Queen Anne Boleyn. He became prior of Haverfordwest and then of Bisham, but was then quickly elected to the see of St Asaph in 1536. Very shortly thereafter he was translated

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45 See Nicholas Orme's *ODNB* article at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/28262> where he describes Veysey as being deprived of office in 1551, only to be restored in 1553 upon the accession of Mary I as monarch.

46 And because of a focus on secular prelacy, the whole topic of the suppression of the religious houses and the end of abbatial prelacy has been completely passed over here.

47 Quoted by J. J. Scarisbrick in his *ODNB* entry at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/28741>.

48 See Glanmor Williams' *ODNB* article on Barlow at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/1442>.

to St David's where he remained for the next twelve years. Barlow's radical views led him to oppose Henry VIII's *Six Articles Act* of 1539. He was not alone among the bishops' bench in doing so. To the ardent reformers, Henry's articles were a manifesto for catholic practice within the church. Nicholas Shaxton and Hugh Latimer both opposed them and were forced to resign, their disgrace causing 'a sensation'.<sup>49</sup> Barlow managed to retain his see despite the fact that, also around this time, he was married.<sup>50</sup> Almost eighty years earlier, Thomas Bird had lived through a bewildering period when the English throne changed hands several times. However there was never any doubt that the orthodox faith upheld by the Lancastrian kings was the same one upheld by the Yorkist monarchs. The eleven years that spanned the period from 1547 to 1558 were, in total contrast, ones of doctrinal turmoil. William Barlow had seen the early reformation zeal of Henry VIII become too backward-looking for his radical instincts. The arrival of Edward VI on the throne was therefore very welcome, and Barlow was favoured with translation to the see of Bath & Wells in February 1548. His ardent Protestantism chimed with the viewpoint of the new king and his supporters. But change came suddenly in 1553 with Edward's early death. Barlow may well have hoped that Jane Grey's abortive rule would succeed in July 1553 (Nicholas Ridley preached vigorously in her favour).<sup>51</sup> But it was Mary Tudor who triumphed in the power struggle that summer, and Barlow was to suffer for his views. By September 1553 he had been committed to the Tower, recanted before Stephen Gardiner in 1555 and then fled over to Emden, the domain of Anna von Oldenburg. However his exile was not to be a lengthy one. Mary I died in November 1558, and Barlow was able to return to England upon the accession of Elizabeth I. By December 1559 he had been appointed bishop of Chichester, a post he retained until his death in 1568.

Barlow's career illustrates the hazardous nature of being a bishop in the middle of the sixteenth century. Those who opposed Henry VIII's divorce and declaration of supremacy over the church faced deadly retribution (as

49 See Susan Wabuda's *ODNB* article on Latimer at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/16100>.

50 It is not clear when the king knew of Barlow's marriage; Thomas Cranmer only 'confessed' his marriage to Henry in 1443, some eleven years after it took place. See Kenneth Carleton, *Bishops and Reform in the English Church, 1520-1559*, Studies in Modern British Religious History, 3 (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2001), p. 129.

51 See Susan Wabuda's *ODNB* article on Ridley at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/23631>.

demonstrated by the execution of John Fisher). Whether willingly or not, the other prelates acquiesced to Henry's demands – they had little choice. In the previous century, prelates had faced extreme retribution (the case of Richard Scrope as already discussed). However the general approach of bishops to the twists and turns of the dynastic struggles was one of accommodation. They might suffer temporary setbacks when a new king took the throne, but they generally chose rehabilitation over defiance. They were not being tested for their doctrinal purity, simply for their acceptance of a new political reality. By contrast, the bishops in the period 1529 to 1558 were faced with doctrinal revolutions emanating from within a single ruling family. Deprivation of sees took place on both wings of the catholic/protestant divide. Men such as Cuthbert Tunstall, Edmund Bonner, Robert Holgate and John Bird provide clear examples. Hugh Latimer, Thomas Cranmer and Nicholas Ridley all suffered execution for their opposition to Mary Tudor. One man who survived, if only just, was Stephen Gardiner, bishop of Winchester and 'one of the giants of Tudor politics'.<sup>52</sup> Under Edward VI he suffered imprisonment and deprivation, only to be restored to his see at Winchester by Mary I when he also became Lord Chancellor. His success as a skilful survivor among prelates may have earned him subsequent criticism by a protestant ascendancy, but the lack of a desire for martyrdom cannot be seen as the gravest of flaws.

For those bishops who took up office in the years 1520 to 1539, the variation in their careers and fates illustrates very clearly the hazardous nature of their positions in the mid-Tudor period. The proportion of these who could be classified as unambiguously evangelical was low at only five out of twenty-six.<sup>53</sup> All five of those had studied at Cambridge, and indeed Cambridge had become the greater source of new bishops. Out of the twenty-five men whose studies were at either of the two old universities, sixteen were at Cambridge and nine at Oxford. If the 'morning star' of the Reformation had shone at Oxford then its sunrise was clearly to the east.<sup>54</sup> Ironically in this era of monastic suppression,

<sup>52</sup> See C.D.C. Armstrong's *ODNB* article at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/10364>.

<sup>53</sup> Goodrich, Latimer, Shaxton, Edward Fox and Cranmer.

<sup>54</sup> The first reference to Wyclif as the 'morning star' is acknowledged to be Daniel Neal, *The History of the Puritans or Protestant Non-Conformists, from the Reformation (to the Act of Toleration ... in 1689): With an Account of Their Principles, Etc.*, 4 vols (London: printed for Richard Hett, 1732), vol. 1, p. 3.



the regular clergy achieved a degree of prominence exceeding that of the earlier period. Seven of the men listed were regulars who became bishops of English sees. Five of those made their escape from the confines of the Welsh dioceses where the regulars had previously established a niche.<sup>55</sup> The classic path to prelate that had prevailed in the fifteenth century was now clearly changing. That did not mean that these men were not highly educated. Most continued to come from a cadre who had achieved higher degrees, with doctorates in law and theology still prominent. But it seems clear that choosing new bishops had now become something even more personal to the king or his closest adviser, with less moderation or 'shortlisting' by the existing bench of bishops. With their role as temporal lords greatly diminished, the men chosen for elevation might come from a broader and more eclectic group.

In the century that followed the death of Elizabeth I in 1603, William Laud attracted much of the bile and criticism aimed at earlier prelates such as Wolsey, but 'for all his prominence in the king's counsels, Laud was never a Richelieu or a Wolsey'.<sup>56</sup> In the seventeenth century, prelates such as Richelieu and Mazarin prospered in France, while the prince-archbishops of the German states continued in office right up until the upheavals of the Napoleonic era. What happened in the English church in the 1530s and the decline of the great English prelate was not an inevitable fact; without the Henrician Reformation, succeeding centuries could have seen a continuing place for the prelate, albeit with a particularly English flavour.

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55 The seven regulars were the monks William Rugg, John Salcot and Robert Warton, the canons William Barlow and Robert Holgate, and the friars John Hilsey and John Bird.

56 See Anthony Milton's *ODNB* article on Laud at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/16112>.

## Appendix 1 - The English bishops from 1399 to 1520.

See the end of the sheet for notes on abbreviations.

	Bishop	Diocese	Date	Translate d later	Social origin	University education	Career length	Ecclesiastical administration	At home		Council	Miscellaneous
									Sec.	Rome		
	Strickland	Carlisle	1399		G	A	32	X				<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/26670">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/26670</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , iii, 1806.
	Bottsham	Rochester	1400		M	L	7					<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/2967">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/2967</a> . <i>BRUC</i> , 76.
	Bowet	B & W	1400	Y	G	L	30	AD,D	1372	1393	1383	Trs to York 1407. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/3062">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/3062</a> . <i>BRUC</i> , 83-4.
	Clifford	B & W	1400	Y	N	A	21	AD,D	1382			Keeper of the Privy Seal, Wardrobe. Trs Worcester 1401 and London in 1407. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/5657">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/5657</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , i, 440-2.
R	Mascall	Hereford	1404		M	Th					1404	Royal confessor. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/18257">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/18257</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , ii, 1239.
R	Repingdon	Lincoln	1404		M	Th			1400			<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/23385">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/23385</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , iii, 1565-7.
	Langley	Durham	1406		G		21	D	1399	1414		Chancellor. Keeper of the Privy Seal. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/16027">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/16027</a> .
R	Budwith	London	1406	Y	G	A	27	AD	1380			Keeper of the Privy Seal. Trs to Salisbury 1407 and then to B&W in same year. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/37238">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/37238</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , i, 294-6.
R	Tottington	Norwich	1406		M							<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/95160">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/95160</a> .
	Chichele	St Davids	1407	Y	G	L	16	AD	1396	1405	1407	Trs to Canterbury 1414. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/5271">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/5271</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , i, 410-12.
	Hallum	Salisbury	1407		M	L	19	AD				Pisa, Constance <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/12005">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/12005</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , ii, 854-5.
	Courtenay	Norwich	1413		N	L	30	AD,D	1407	1406		Councilor. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/6455">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/6455</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , i, 500-2.
	Gatterick	St Davids	1414	Y	M	L	17	AD	1402	1406	1405	Trs to Lichfield 1415 then Exeter 1419. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/15487">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/15487</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , i, 371-2.
R	Patrington	St Davids	1415	Y	M	Th						King's confessor. Trs to Chichester 1417. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/21569">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/21569</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , iii, 1435-6.
	Wakering	Norwich	1415		M		19	AD	1394			Keeper of the Rolls. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/28424">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/28424</a> .
	Lacy	Hereford	1417	Y	M	Th	17	AD	1400			Trs to Exeter 1420. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/15846">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/15846</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , ii, 1081-3.
	Chaundler	Salisbury	1417		M	A	30	D	1400	1399		<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/95181">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/95181</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , i, 397-8.

Royal service

Diplomatic

## Appendix 1 - The English bishops from 1399 to 1520.

See the end of the sheet for notes on abbreviations.

													Royal service		At home		Diplomatic			
Bishop	Diocese	Date	Translate d later	Social origin	University education	Career length	Ecclesiastical administration		Sec.	Rome	Council	Miscellaneous								
Barrow	Bangor	1418	Y	M	L	18	VGen				Constance	Trs to Carlisle 1423. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/95126">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/95126</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , i, 118-9.								
Ware	Chichester	1418		M	L	24	VGen	1407	1414			<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/4200">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/4200</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , ii, 1312-13.								
Morgan, P	Worcester	1419	Y	M	L	21	AD	1409	1414			Chancellor of Normandy. Trs Ely 1426. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/19231">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/19231</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , ii, 1312-13.								
Kemp, J.	Rochester	1419	Y	G	L	12	AD	1414	1415			Keeper of the Privy Seal. Trs to Chichester 1421 then London 1421 then York 1425 then Canterbury 1452. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/15328">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/15328</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , ii, 1031-2.								
Heyworth	C & L	1419		M		20						<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/95154">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/95154</a> . <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/9709">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/9709</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , ii, 697-9.								
Fleming	Lincoln	1419		M	Th	17			1422	1417	Pavia	<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/29196">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/29196</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , iii, 2031-2.								
Whelpdale	Carlisle	1419		M	Th	7	x					King's chaplain. Trs to Chichester 1421 then Worcester 1426. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/22482">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/22482</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , iii, 1494-5.								
	Polton	Hereford	Y	M	L	21	AD,D	1417	1419	1414	Constance	<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/16011">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/16011</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , ii, 1093-4.								
	Langdon	Rochester		M	Th							<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/95148">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/95148</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , iii, 1744.								
R	Spofford	Hereford		M	Th						Pisa, Constance	Keeper of the Privy Seal, Treasurer. Trs to Canterbury 1443. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/26209">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/26209</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , iii, 1750-52.								
	Stafford, J	B & W	Y	N	L	20	AD,D	1418	1419			Trs to Lincoln 1431. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/47838">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/47838</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , ii, 808-9.								
	Gray	London	Y	N	L	11	D				Sienna	Bedford's confessor. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/23604">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/23604</a> . <i>BRUC</i> , 480.								
	Rickingham	Chichester		M	Th	45	AD			1426		Keeper of the Privy Seal, Secretary. Trs to Lincoln 1436. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/421">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/421</a> . <i>BRUC</i> , 11.								
	Almwick	Norwich	Y	M	L	11	AD,D			1421		Trs to Durham 1438. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/19962">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/19962</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , ii, 1350.								
	Neville, R	Salisbury	Y	N	A	14					Constance									

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Royal service													
At home													
Diplomatic													
	Bishop	Diocese	Date	Translate d later	Social origin	University education	Career length	Ecclesiastical administration		Sec.	Rome	Council	Miscellaneous
	Sydenham	Chichester	1429		G	L	40	ADD		1401	1401		<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/95137">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/95137</a> . BRUO, iii, 1838.
	Lurnley	Carlisle	1429	Y	N	L	14	AD					Trs to Lincoln 1450. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/17180">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/17180</a> . BRUC, 377.
	FitzHugh	London	1431		N	Th	32			1429	1429	Basle	<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/9609">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/9609</a> . BRUO, ii, 689-90.
	Brouns	Worcester	1433	Y	M	L	29	AD		1418	1420	Basle	Trs to Rochester 1434 then Norwich 1436. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/3652">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/3652</a> . BRUO, i, 281-3.
R	Lowe	St Asaph	1433	Y	G	Th				1432	1422		Royal confessor. Trs Rochester 1444. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/17083">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/17083</a> . BRUO, ii, 1168-9.
	Bourchier	Worcester	1433	Y	N	A	9						Yorkist family. Trs to Ely 1443, then Canterbury 1454. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/2993">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/2993</a> . BRUO, i, 230-2.
	Gilbert	London	1436		M	Th	28	ADD					<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/47839">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/47839</a> . BRUO, ii, 766-7.
R	Wells	Rochester	1436		M	Th							Constance, Pavia BRUO, iii, 1744.
	Aiscough	Salisbury	1438		M	Th	9			1422	1444		Councilor. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/954">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/954</a> . BRUC, 28.
	Praty	Chichester	1438		M	Th	16	Chanc		1430			<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/1908">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/1908</a> . BRUO, i, 157-9.
	Bekynnton	B & W	1443		M	L	24	AD		1424	1432		Keeper of the Privy Seal. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/1514">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/1514</a> . BRUO, iii, 1514.
	Carpenter	Worcester	1443		M	Th	21			1430			Royal chaplain. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/4729">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/4729</a> . BRUO, i, 360-1.
	Pecock	St Asaph	1444	Y	M	Th	20						Trs to Chichester 1450. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/21749">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/21749</a> . BRUO, iii, 1447-49.
	Moleyns	Chichester	1445		M	L	23	ADD		1436	1441	Basle	Keeper of the Privy Seal. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/18918">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/18918</a> . BRUO, ii, 1289-91.
	Lybert	Norwich	1446		M	Th	20						With Queen & Suffolk. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/17247">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/17247</a> . BRUO, ii, 1187-8.
	Waynflete	Winchester	1447		G	Th	32			1441			<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/28907">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/28907</a> . BRUO, iii, 2001-3.

## Appendix 1 - The English bishops from 1399 to 1520.

See the end of the sheet for notes on abbreviations.

Royal service													
At home													
Diplomatic													
	Bishop	Diocese	Date	Translate d later	Social origin	University education	Career length	Ecclesiastical administration		Sec.	Rome	Council	Miscellaneous
	Booth, Wm	C & L	1447	Y	G		26	AD		1445			Trs York 1452. A student of common law at Gray's Inn. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/2896">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/2896</a> .
	Stanbury	Bangor	1448	Y	G	Th				1440			Royal chaplain. Trs to Hereford 1453. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/26228">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/26228</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , iii, 1755-56.
	Kemp, Th.	London	1448		G	Th	17	AD		1443			Royal chaplain. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/95158">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/95158</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , ii, 1032-34.
	Beauchamp	Hereford	1448	Y	N	L	13	AD					Trs Salisbury 1450. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/1839">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/1839</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , i, 137-8.
	Close	Carlisle	1450	Y	M	Th	6	AD		1446	1449		Trs to C & L 1452. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/5705">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/5705</a> . <i>BRUC</i> , 142.
R	Boulers	Hereford	1450	Y	M	Th				1443	1442		With Suffolk. Trs to C & L 1453. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/50264">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/50264</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , ii, 228-9.
	Chedworth	Lincoln	1451		M	Th	17	AD					<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/5205">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/5205</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , i, 401-2.
	Percy	Carlisle	1452		N	A	16						<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/95127">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/95127</a> . <i>BRUC</i> , 450, 681.
	Grey	Ely	1454		N	Th	23	AD			1445		Notable humanist. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/11567">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/11567</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , ii, 809-814.
	Neville, G.	Exeter	1456	Y	N	A	14	AD					Trs to York 1465. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/19934">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/19934</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , ii, 1347-9.
	Booth, L.	Durham	1457	Y	G	L	15	AD		1457			Trs to York 1476. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/2888">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/2888</a> . <i>BRUC</i> , 78-9.
	Anundell	Chichester	1459		G	Med	29	AD		1457			Royal doctor. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/719">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/719</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , i, 49-50.
	Hales	C & L	1459		G		19	AD		1452			Queen's chancellor. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/95155">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/95155</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , ii, 856-7.
	Kingscote	Carlisle	1462		M	L	16	AD					<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/95128">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/95128</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , ii, 1073-4.
	Scrope	Carlisle	1464		N	Th	20						<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/95129">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/95129</a> . <i>BRUC</i> , 514-5.
	Booth, J.	Exeter	1465		G		12	AD		1464			<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/95145">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/95145</a> . <i>BRUC</i> , 77-8.

## Appendix 1 - The English bishops from 1399 to 1520.

See the end of the sheet for notes on abbreviations.

		Royal service		Diplomatic		At home						
Bishop	Diocese	Date	Translate d later	Social origin	University education	Career length	Ecclesiastical administration					
	Stillington	B & W	1465	G	L	23	AD	1449	1448			Miscellaneous Keeper of the Privy Seal, councillor. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/26528">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/26528</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , iii, 1777-79.
	Rotherham	Rochester	1468	G	Th	7	AD	1466				Keeper of the Privy Seal. Trs to Lincoln 1472 then to York 1480. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/24155">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/24155</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , iii, 1893-6.
	Story	Carlisle	1468	G	Th	8						Queen's confessor. Trs to Chichester 1478. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/26596">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/26596</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , 560-1.
	Alcock	Rochester	1472	M	L	11	D	1469	1471			Council of Prince of Wales. Trs to Worcester 1476 then Ely 1486. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/289">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/289</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , 5-6.
	Goldwell	Norwich	1472	G	L	22	AD,D	1460	1465	1468		Secretary. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/10926">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/10926</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , ii, 783-6.
R	Milling	Hereford	1474	M	Th							Council of Prince of Wales. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/18776">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/18776</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , ii, 1282-3.
	Russell	Rochester	1476	M	L	15	AD	1470	1467			Keeper of the Privy Seal. Trs to Lincoln 1480. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/24318">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/24318</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , iii, 1609-11.
	Dudley	Durham	1476	N	A	19	AD	1472	1475			Yorkist. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/8163">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/8163</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , i, 599-600.
R	Bell	Carlisle	1478	M	Th			1476				<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/50266">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/50266</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , i, 161-2.
	Courtenay	Exeter	1478	N	L	30	AD,D	1470	1460s	1463		Trs to Winchester 1487. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/6454">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/6454</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , i, 499-500.
	Morton	Ely	1478	G	L	21	AD	1455	1474			Lancastrian adherent. Trs to Canterbury 1486. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/19363">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/19363</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , ii, 1318-20.
	Audley	Rochester	1480	N	A	16	AD	1471				Trs to Hereford 1492 then Salisbury 1502. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/891">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/891</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , i, 75-6.
	Woodville	Salisbury	1482	N	L	16	AD,D	1477				<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/29938">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/29938</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , iii, 2083-4.
	Langton	St Davids	1483	G	Th	10	Treas	1476	1467	1484		Trs to Salisbury 1485 then Winchester 1493 then Canterbury 1501. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/16045">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/16045</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , 352-3.

## Appendix 1 - The English bishops from 1399 to 1520.

See the end of the sheet for notes on abbreviations.

											Royal service		At home		Diplomatic			
Bishop	Diocese	Date	Translate d later	Social origin	University education	Career length	Ecclesiastical administration			Sec.	Rome	Council	Miscellaneous					
Shirwood	Durham	1484		G	Th	29	AD				1477		<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/25447">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/25447</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , iii, 1692-3.					
Fox	Exeter	1487	Y	G	L	41							Trs to B & W 1492 then Durham 1494 then Winchester 1501. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/10051">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/10051</a> . <i>BRUO</i> , ii, 715-19.					
Morton, R.	Worcester	1487		G	L	10	AD						Succeeded by several Italian churchmen. <i>BRUO</i> , ii, 1320-1. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/19371">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/19371</a> .					
Hill	London	1489		M	L	7	D, AD						<i>BRUO</i> , ii, 934. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/47267">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/47267</a> .					
King	Exeter	1492	Y	M	L	11	AD, D						<i>BRUC</i> 343-4. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/15580">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/15580</a> .					
Smith	C & L	1492	Y	G	L	22	AD						Trs to Lincoln 1496. <i>BRUO</i> , iii, 1721-3. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/25920">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/25920</a> .					
Savage	Rochester	1492	Y	G	L	15							Trs to London 1496 then York 1501. <i>BRUO</i> , iii, 1646-7. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/24727">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/24727</a> .					
Bythre	Salisbury	1493		G	L	6	AD						<i>BRUC</i> 68. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/2728">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/2728</a> .					
Dean	Bangor	1494	Y	M		9							Trs to Salisbury 1500 then Canterbury 1501. <i>BRUO</i> , i, 554. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/7387">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/7387</a> .					
R	Sever	1495	Y	G		10							Trs to Durham 1502. <i>BRUO</i> , iii, 1669. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/25089">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/25089</a> .					
R	Redman	1495	Y	G		34							Trs from St Asaph (cons. 1471) and then to Ely 1501. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/23260">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/23260</a> .					
	Arundel	C & L	1496	Y	G	8	Treas. D						Trs to Exeter 1502. <i>BRUO</i> , i, 50-1. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/720">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/720</a> .					
	FitzJames	Rochester	1497	Y	G	25	Treas						Trs to Chichester 1503 then London 1506. <i>BRUO</i> , ii, 691- 2. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/9612">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/9612</a> .					
	Jane	Norwich	1499		M	1							<i>BRUO</i> , ii, 1013-4. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/14649">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/14649</a> .					
	Warham	London	1501	Y	M	31	Prec						Trs to Canterbury 1503. <i>BRUO</i> , iii, 1988-92. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/28741">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/28741</a> .					
	Nykke	Norwich	1501		G	35	AD, D, VGen						<i>BRUC</i> 430-1. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/20205">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/20205</a> .					
	de Castellj	Hereford	1502	Y	M								Trs to B & W 1504. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/174">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/174</a> .					
	Layburne	Carlisle	1503		M	5	AD, VGen						<i>BRUC</i> 367. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/95130">https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/95130</a> .					

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See the end of the sheet for notes on abbreviations.

											Royal service		
											At home		
											Diplomatic		
	Bishop	Diocese	Date	Translate d/ater	Social origin	University education	Career length	Ecclesiastical administration		Sec.	Rome	Council	Miscellaneous
	Blyth	C & L	1503		G	Th	27 AD, Treas. D			1502			BRUC. 67-8. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/2726">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/2726</a> .
	Oldham	Exeter	1504		G	L	15 AD			1503			BRUC. ii, 1396-7. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/20685">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/20685</a> .
	Mayeu	Hereford	1504		M	Th	12 AD			1484	1490		BRUC. ii, 1247-9. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/68880">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/68880</a> .
	Barons	London	1504		G	L	1			1500			BRUC. i, 115-6. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/1501">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/1501</a> .
	Fisher	Rochester	1504		M	Th	31				1520		BRUC. 229-30. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/9498">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/9498</a> .
R	Penny	Bangor	1505	Y	G		15						Trs to Carlisle 1508. <i>BRUC.</i> iii, 1458. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/21880">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/21880</a> .
	Sheddom	St David's	1505	Y	M	Med	31	Treas. AD, D		1496	1503	1496	Trs to Chichester 1508. <i>BRUC.</i> iii, 1685-7. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/25357">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/25357</a> .
	Stanley	Ely	1506		N	L	9	Prec. AD					<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/26273">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/26273</a> . <i>BRUC.</i> iii, 1761.
	Bainbridge	Durham	1507	Y	G	L	7	Treas. AD, D		1504		1509	Trs to York 1508. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/1081">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/1081</a> .
	Ruthall	Durham	1509		M	L	14	D, AD		1500	1496	1498	<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/24359">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/24359</a> . <i>BRUC.</i> iii, 1612-13.
	Wolsey	Lincoln	1514	Y	M	Th	16	Prec		1507	1514		Trs to York 1514 etc. <i>BRUC.</i> iii, 2077-80. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/29854">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/29854</a> .
	Atwater	Lincoln	1514		M	A	7	DAD					<i>BRUC.</i> i, 73-4. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/879">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/879</a> .
	West	Ely	1515		M	L	18	AD, Treas. D, VGen		1504	1502		<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/29091">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/29091</a> . <i>BRUC.</i> 629.
	Booth, C.	Hereford	1516		G	L	19	Treas. AD, Chanc		1501	1520		<i>BRUC.</i> 77. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/42092">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/42092</a> .
	Veysey	Exeter	1519		G	L	35	AD, D, Chan, Vgen		1514			<i>BRUC.</i> iii, 1947-8. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/28262">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref/odnb/28262</a> .

### NOTES:

Under **Social origin**, the abbreviations used are: N=noble birth, G=gentry origins, M=minor or unknown origins.

Under **Social education**, the abbreviations used are: A=Arts, L=Law, Th=Theology, Med=Medicine

Under **Ecclesiastical administration**, the abbreviations used are: AD=archdeacon, D=dean, Treas=treasurer, Vgen=vicar general, Chanc=chancellor, Prec=precentor

Where a letter 'R' is shown to the left of the prelate's name, this indicates he is a regular cleric



## Appendix 2 - The list of law students who were near-contemporaries of John Morton at Oxford

Most of the names listed studied law. A small proportion studied other subjects and are included where they are of particular interest.

Surname	First Name	College/Hall/Inn	Diocese	Date	Qualification/Item	BRUO Reference	Notes	Parochial (P), High-Flyer (H), Regular (R) or ?	ODNB Ref.
Aberford	Robert		York	1449	Supplicated for B.Cn.L.	V1 p.3	Rector of Ryther, Yorks (lay patron) till death. Died Jan. 1472.	P	
Babington	William	Gloucester	Norwich	1444	D.Cn.L.	V1 p.86	Benedictine monk. Bury, by 1429. President of the Provincial Chapter of the Black Monks in 1447.	R	<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/54429">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/54429</a>
				1442	Chancellor's Commissary				
				1446	Principal canon law school				
				1446	Abbot Bury St E.				
				1449	King's proctor at the Roman curia		Died 1453		
Ballard	William	Great White Hall		1448	B.Cn.L. by this date	V1 p. 99	Principal of Great White Hall, adm. 1450.	?	
				1452	Supplicated for D.Cn.L.				
Bene	Thomas		Bath & Wells	1449	Supplicated for B.Cn.L. Admitted next year	V1 p. 165	Notary public by 1450. Priest vicar of Wells, 1446 and rector of Winterbourne Steepleton (lay patron) adm. 1447.	H	
Bird	Thomas			1450	Bishop of St Asaph	V1 p. 191	Dominican friar. Possible provincial prior of the order in England, 1448. Deprived of his bishopric in 1463.	R	
				1464	Followed Queen Margaret to Saint-Michael-in-Bar				
Bland	Thomas			1450	Supplicated for B.C.L.	V1 p. 199	In priest's orders by 1450. Rector of Easthampstead, Berks (patron Hurley Priory), adm. 1458 until death in 1477. For patronage thereof see VCHBerks3 79	P	
				1458	B.Cn.L. by this date				
Bonefaunt	Thomas	Queens		1444	B.A. by this date	V1 pp. 217-8	Alias Twynge. Ordained priest March 1445.	H	
				1451	M.A. by this date		Rector of Blechingdon, Oxon, adm. 1454 (lay patron). Held many benefices.		

Surname	First Name	College/Hall/Inn	Diocese	Date	Qualification/Item	BRUO Reference	Notes	Parochial (P), High-Flyer (H), Regular (R) or ?	ODNB Ref.
				1454	D.Th. Dispensed 11 Dec.				
				1451	University preacher during Lent		Chancellor's commissary in 1456 and 1458. Died 1470.		
							Employed on legal business in the Chancellor's court and elsewhere. 1443-57. No ordination details.		
Boteler	John	St. Mildred Hall		1443	B.Cn.L. by this date	V1 p. 226		H	
				1449	D.Cn.L. by this date		Rector of Essendon, Herts adm. 1449. The king was patron. Then Maulden, Beds (patron Elstow Abbey nunnery)		
				1469	Dean of the Arches and commissary general of Archbishop of Canterbury				
				1472	Died in Oxford				
Brampton	John			1448	Supplicated for B.Cn.L.	V1 p.248	Also M.Gram and B.A.	?	
Browne	Richard			1451	Supplicated for B.Cn.L.	V1 p. 285		?	
							After 2 yrs and 2 terms of study of civil law, 1 yr of arts and 2 yrs of canon law, suppl for B.Cn.L. Jan 1449. Possibly vicar Steeple Ashton, Wilts (patron Tewkesbury Abbey) who died 1468.		
Burdet	John			1449	Admitted as B.Cn.L.	V1 p. 306		P	
							In priest's orders by 1451. Principal at Trillock's Inn and Beke's Inn. Lectured in canon law at Hincksey Hall.		
Burgeveny	Philip	Trillock's Inn		1451	Supplicated for B.Cn.L.	V1 p. 309		?	
Carant	Nicholas	Vine Hall	Bath & Wells	1437	B.C.L. by this date	V1 p. 353			
				1442	Ordained priest		Already held prebendary of Iweme Minster, Dorset (patron Shaftesbury Abbey) by 1431 and many more benefices thereafter.	H	
				1448	Secretary to Queen Margaret; still in 1458				
				1467	Dies				

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Camathur	Ralph			1450	Supplicated for B.Cn.L.	V1 p. 359	In priest's orders by 1450. Rector of Poyrntington, Somt (lay patron), adm. 1451	P	
Caranell	Michael	Beke's Inn	Exeter	1444	B.C.L by this date	V1 p. 365	Ordained priest 1447.	H	
				1448	B.Cn & C.L by this date		Earliest benefice at St Perranzabulo, Cornwall; patron Exeter Cath.		
				1451	Supplicated for D.Cn.L		Commissioner in appeal cases from courts of Admiralty and Constable. Biog. has been noted.		
Chalk	Thomas	New College	Winchester	1448	Supplicated for D.Cn.L	V1 pp. 383-4	Alias Ewen. Ordained priest 1448.	H	
				1452	Chancellor's Commissary		Almost a generation ahead of Morton (adm scholar Winchester College 1423)		
Chandler	Thomas	New College	Bath & We	1431	Admitted aged c. 15 to Winchester College. Admitted to New College 1435	V1 pp. 398-9	Junior proctor of the University 1444-5. Chancellor of University ei. 1457. Ordained priest 1445.	H	<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/5200">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/5200</a>
				1455	Supplicated for D. Th.		Rector of Millbrook, Hants coll. 1450 (patron bishop of Winchester)		
				1472	Chaplain to the King				
				1482	Dean of Hereford				
				1490	Dies		One of the principal pioneers of early humanism in Oxford		
Cokkys	John			1449	Admitted for B.Cn.L	V1 p. 457	Also adm. B.M. in 1450. Dead by 1475? First benefice was Kinwarton, Warks (patron bishop of Worcester). Held multiple benefices.	H	<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/45761">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/45761</a>
Cole	John		Salisbury	1451	Supplicated for B.C.L.	V1 p. 461	Ordained priest 1452. Vicar of Chiltorne St Mary (patron Salisbury Cathedral) adm. 1461.	P	
Collys	Thomas			1450	Granted a grace for one year's standing in civil law	V1 p. 468	In priest's orders by 1450. A proctor in a case before the Chancellor's Commissary.	?	
Colman	William		Winchester	1450	Admitted for B.C.L	V1 p. 469	Admitted scholar Winchester Coll. 1436. Adm. New College 1441. Ordained acolyte in 1450. Died 1452	?	

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Combe	John		Exeter	1448	Supplicated for B.C.L.	V1 p. 473	Rector of Imber, Wilts (patron Romsey Abbey nunnery) adm. 1455. Many other benefices. Vicar general for bp of Exeter in 1478. Died by 1499	H	
Cooke	John	Peckwater Inn	Exeter	1454	Supplicated for B.Cn.L.	V1 pp. 480-1	Also suppl. B.C.L. 1457. Canon of Salisbury by 1479. Held many other benefices thereafter. No ordination details. Numerous diplomatic missions under successive kings.	H	
				1466	D.C.L by this date				
				1472	King's councillor				
				1494	Dies				
Comu	Vivian			1451	B.C.L by this date	V1, p.489	Vicar of Godstone, Surrey (patron Tandridge Priory) adm. 1461.	P	
				1451	Appointed to act as proctor in the Chancellor's court (also in 1448)				
				1461	D.Cn.L by this date		Canon of Salisbury by 1448 though only aged around 16. Also studied at university of Padua. No ordination details.	H	<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/6454">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/6454</a>
Courtenay	Peter		Exeter	1456	Supplicated for B.C.L.	v1 pp. 499-500	Notary public by 1463. Held many, many benefices		
				1478	Bishop of Exeter		Many other royal and curial posts		
				1483	Fled to Brittany after Buckingham rebellion				
				1487	Bishop of Winchester		Dies in 1492.		
Crese	Nicholas		Exeter	1449	Supplicated for B.Cn.L.	V1, p. 512	Vicar of Holbeton, Devon (patron Polsoe Priory nunnery) adm. 1473.	P	
Danet	Thomas	Merton College		1453	Supplicated for B.A.	V1 pp. 540-1	D.Th by 1471. Rector of Slapton (patron Barking Abbey nunnery) adm. 1469. Held many other benefices.	H	
				1475	Various diplomatic missions				

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				1483	Dies		Not the composer.		
Dayfole	William	Peckwater Inn		1450	Supplicated for B.Ch.L.	V1 pp. 553-4	Vicar of Marston, Oxon (patron St Frideswide nunnery) admn. 1460.	P	
				1451	Official of the Chancellor of the University				
				1458	Supplicated for D.Ch.L.				
				1483	Dead by this date				
Edmonds	John			1449	Admitted to B.Ch.L.	v1. p. 625	In priest's orders by 1449.	?	
Fleming	Charles			1449	Admitted to B.Ch.L.	v2 p. 696	Augustinian Canon. Notary public in 1458. Prior of Worktop in 1453.	R	<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/9714">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/9714</a>
Fleming	Robert			1417	Probable birth date	v2 pp. 699-700	Ordained priest 1440. Already canon of Lincoln in 1430 (his uncle was Richard Fleming, bp of Lincoln).	H	
				1438	M.A. by this date		Still in 1459.		
				1453	Chaplain to the King		Very prominent English humanist. Book collection possible second only to that of William Grey.		
				1483	Dead by this date				
Fox	John	Atheistan Hall	York	1450	Admitted as B.Ch.L.	v2 pp. 714-5	Ordained priest 1459. Rector of Hedsor, Bucks (patron Little Marlow Priory nunnery) admn. 1457. Held many other benefices.	H	
				1457	Admitted as D.Ch.L.		Died 1483. Commissioner to hear an appeal to king's audience. 1476.		
				1476	Canon of Lincoln		Practised as proctor in Chancellor's court in 1449-52.	H	<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/10926">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/10926</a>
Goldwell	James	All Souls		1449	Admitted as B.Ch.L.	v2 p. 783-6	Rector of St Mary Bredman, Canterbury (patron the priory), adm. July 1450.		
				1450	B.C.L. by this date		Commissary general to cardinal Kempe, 1452-4. Ordained priest 1453. Appointed King's Secretary in 1460. An envoy in 1465.		
				1452	Admitted as D.C.L. Also D.Ch.L. by 1461.				

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				1457	Canon of St Paul's, London		Later of Hereford, Salisbury and Chichester		
				1472	Bishop of Norwich				
				1499	Dies				
					Supplicated for B.Cn.L.		Rector of Adstock, Bucks (patron Leicester Abbey) adm. June 1445.	P	
Grene	Thomas	Great White Hall		1449	Supplicated for B.Cn.L.	v2 p. 819			
				1450	Resigned principatship of Great White Hall				
Gyrfyfh	David			1450	Admitted to B.Cn.L.	v2 pp. 834-5	Vicar of Llanguennith, Gllams (patronage unclear) in 1463. Practised as proctor in	P	
Gyrfyfh	Matthew	St Edward Hall		1450	Admitted to B.C.L.	v2 p. 835	Chancellor's court in 1451-2	?	
					Supplicated for B.C.L.	v2 p. 844	Vicar of Osmotherley, Yorks (patron bp of Durham) adm. Sept. 1458. Canon of York, 1479, and Lincoln, 1483	H	
Gysbom	William		York	1454	Supplicated for B.C.L.	v2 p. 844			
Hamond	John	New College	Winchester	1445	Admitted to New College	v2 p. 863	Was admitted to Winchester College in 1439.	P	
				1454	Sch. Cn.L dispensed		Ordained priest 1453. Rector of Chawton, Hants (lay patron) adm. 1453. Still alive in 1492.		
				1452	Admitted to B.C.L and B.Cn.L.	v2 p.900	Rector of Bishop's Caundle (patron bp of Salisbury) coll. Sept. 1447. Died by 1483	P	
Hedley	Thomas			1452	B.Cn.L., supplicated for D.Cn.L.	v2 p. 900	In priest's orders by 1454	?	
Hedon	John			1454	Supplicated for B.C.L.	v2. p.918	No other details	?	
Heron	Edmund			1451	Admitted to B.C.L.	v2. p.925	Died by 1460-61	?	
Hewet	John	St Michael Hall		1450	Supplicated for B.C.L.	v2 p. 934	Rector of Wilford, Notts (lay patron) vac. 1479. Died by Nov. 1479	P	
Hill	Robert			1449	Supplicated for B.Cn.L.	v3 p. 940	Died by 1459	P	
Hodges	John			1454	Supplicated for B.Cn.L.		Ordained sub-deacon 1445. Rector of Smerden, Kent (patron archbp Cant.) adm. 1444, plus other benefices. Official of archdeacon of Canterbury to 1482. Died by Mar. 1491	H	
Hodgys	Simon	All Souls	Canterbury	1450	Admitted to B.C.L.	v2. p. 940	No other details	?	
Holme	Robert			1449	Admitted to B.C.L.	v2 p. 952			

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Hohne	William			1450	Admitted to B.C.L	v2 p. 952	No other details	?	
Hope	Thomas	Greek Hall	Worms (Ge)	1444	B.C.L by this date	v2 pp. 959-60	Canon of Constance by papal provision, 1456. Held many other benefices.	H	
				1455	D.C.L by this date		Was papal chamberlain by 1472.		
				1487	Dies		Was of German birth.		
Horsyll	Gilbert			1451	Supplicated for B.Cn.L	v2 p. 968	Rector of Itchen Abbas, Hants (patron St Mary's Abbey, Winchester nunnery) adm. 1449. Had other benefices. Died by Feb. 1464.	H	
Howseman	Richard			1449	Supplicated for B.Cn.L	v2 p. 977	No other details	?	
Husband	David		St Davids	1451	B.C.L by this date	v2 p. 989	Canon of Chichester in 1458. Notary public by papal authority, app. May 1450. By 1463 also canon of Hereford.	H	
				1462	D.Cn.L by this date		Chancellor and commissary general of bp. Waynflete. Biog. has been noted. Died by Sept. 1491.		
Ipswelle	Richard			1453	B.C.L by this date	v2 p. 1003	No other details	?	
Jacob	John			1452	Supplicated for B.C.L	v2 p. 1011	Ordnained priest December 1455.	P	
Jon	Richard			1450	Supplicated for B.C.L	v2 p. 1021	Vicar of Buckereil, Devon (patron Exeter Cathedral) vac. 1457. Died by 1478	P	
Jones	William			1450	Admitted to B.C.L	v2. p. 1021			
				1454	Supplicated for B.Cn.L				
				1465	D.Cn.L by this date		Vicar of Abergavenny, Monm, in 1470 (patron Abergavenny Priory). Had an additional benefice.		
Jordan	Robert			1450	Supplicated for B.Cn.L	v2 p. 1022	No other details	?	
				1452	B.Cn.L by this date				
Kelsey	Richard			1454	Supplicated for B.C.L	v2 p. 1030	Ordnained deacon 1460. Rector of Hambleton, Bucks (lay patron) pres. 1457. Also canon of Beverley and sub-dean of Salisbury. Died by 1490	H	

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Knyght	Thomas	All Souls	Worcester	1447	B. Cn. L. by this date	v2 p. 1061	Ordained sub-deacon June 1444. Rector of St Mary Woolchurch, London (patron Colchester Abbey) adm. 1451. Registrar of Cardinal Kempe in 1453	H	
				1452	Supplicated for D.Cn.L.				
				1455	Dead by this date				
Kyffyn	David			1453	Supplicated for D.Cn.L.	v2. p. 1066	Already B. Cn & C.L. No details of ordinations or benefices.	H	
				1461	One of the king's attorneys				
Kymer	John			1451	Supplicated for B. Cn. L.	v2 p. 1069	No other details	?	
Kyng	John			1446	B. Cn & C.L. by this date	v2 p. 1071	No other details	?	
Kyng	John	St George Hall		1452	Supplicated for B. Cn. L.	v2 p. 1071	Died by 1453	?	
					Supplicated for D.Cn.L.	v2 p. 1092-3	Rector of Chinnor, Oxon (patron Wallingford Priory) adm. 1450.	H	
				1453	Chancellor's Commissary		Also now D. Cn. L. and C.L. Ordained deacon in 1453.		
				1451	Commissioner in appeals from court of Admiralty				
				1457	Dead by this date				
Laxe	John		Durham	1449	B. C.L. by this date	v2. pp. 1113-4	alias Chestre	H	
					D. C.L. by this date, probably at a university in Italy		Rector of Street, Somt (patron Glastonbury Abbey) adm. 1449.		
				1450	Secretary to the Pope				
				1455	Pope				
				1466	Dead by this date		Not yet in holy orders by 1459.		
Lende	Henry			1455	Supplicated for B. C.L.	v2. p. 1131	No other details	?	
Leycestr	Hamond			1453	Supplicated for B. C.L.	v2 p. 1141	Ordained prest March 1463 by which time he was B. Cn. L. and B. C.L. Rector of Garsington, Oxon (patron St Frideswide Priory nunery) adm. Oct. 1456. Died by Dec. 1494.	P	
Lister	William	Broadgates Hall	Coventry &	1449	B. C.L. by this date	v2 p. 1152		P	



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				1451	Supplicated for D.C.L		Rector of Methley, Yorks (lay patron) adm. June 1451.		
				1452	Proctor in the Chancellor's Commissary		Obtained sub-deacon 1452.		
				1453	Dead by this date				
Lloyd	Owen	St Paul Hall		1449	Admitted to B.C.L	v2 p. 1153-54	Also B.Cn. & C.L	H	
				1456	Supplicated for D.C.L		Practised in Chancellor's Court in 1450; still in 1457. Ordained deacon May 1459.		
				1478	Dead by this date		Canon of Hereford, Chancellor of bp of Coventry & Lichfield, Vicar General of bp of Exeter. Bequeathed many books.		
Lowe	John	Lincoln College		1451	Supplicated for B.Cn.L	v2 p. 1169	Of noble birth	H	
				1452	Collated as Archdeacon of Rochester		Ordained priest 1456. Was granted dispensation to hold an additional benefice.		
				1449	Admitted to B.C.L	v2 p. 1177	Died 1484. Rector of Stratton-on-Fosse, Warms (lay patron) adm. Mar. 1445. Will shows he was wealthy. Held several benefices.	P	
Lumbard	William			1449	Admitted to B.C.L	v2 p. 1177		P	
Lydford	John	All Souls	Bath & We	1450	Supplicated for B.Cn.L	v2 p. 1184-85		P	
				1451	Supplicated for B.C.L				
				1458	B.Cn & C.L by this date		Ordained priest 1459. Held rectorship in Lewes (patron unknown) adm. May 1478.		
				1462	Proctor in the Chancellor's court		Still in 1467. Dead by 1487		
Mark	Thomas		Bath & We	1450	Supplicated for B.C.L	v2 p. 1222	Practised as notary public in B&W diocese, 1456, 1464.	?	
Martyn	Richard			1448	Supplicated for B.Cn.L	v2 p. 1236-37	Rector of Cheadle, Staffs (lay patron) adm. 1455. Chaplain to John Tiptoft, earl of Worcester, 1458.	H	<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/18236">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/18236</a>
				1469	Archdeacon of London		By which time he held several benefices.		

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				1472	Tutor to Edward PoMY		And various diplomatic missions. Also master in chancery from 1472-3 and 1477-8.		
				1478	Member of King's council		Also chaplain to the king.		
				1482	Possibly D.Cn. L at Cambridge				
				1482	Bishop of St Davids				
				1483	Dead by this date				
Merton	Richard			1451	Supplicated for B.Cn. L	v2 p. 1267	No other details	?	
Methwey	David	St Edward Hall		1449	B.Cn. L by this date	v2 p. 1269	Vicar of Caversfield, Bucks (patron Missenden Abbey) vac. Apr. 1454. Dead by 1480	P	
Middleton	John			1453	Supplicated for B.Cn. L	v2 p. 1277	Had studied at Cambridge for 5 years.	P	
				1455	Official of the Archdeacon of Wells		Still in 1477.		
				1459	B.Cn. L. and C.L. by this date.		Rector of Tynningham, Bucks (lay patron) adm. Mar. 1479.		
Midley	William		Lincoln	1451	Supplicated for B.Cn. L	v2 p. 1280	An Augustinian canon	R	
Monmouth	Thomas	Little Bedell Hall		1446	B.Cn. L by this date	v2 p. 1295	Alias Hower: <i>Dominus</i> in 1445. Vicar of Lymminster, Sussex (presented by Eton College) July 1462. No ordination details	P	
More	John	All Souls	St Davids	1446	B.C.L by this date	v2 pp. 1303-4	Admitted as fellow of All Souls in 1439; still in 1448.	?	
				1447	Proctor and arbitrator in Chancellor's court until 1467.		Ordained acolyte 1446. Several others he may be confused with or the same as!		
Mores	John			1452	Admitted for B.Cn.L	v2 p. 1310	No other details	?	
Morgan	John			1450	B.Cn. L by this date	v2 p. 1311	Alias Yong, D.Cn.L. incorporated at Cambridge.	H	<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref.odnb/19227">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref.odnb/19227</a>
				1450	Practised as proctor in Chancellor's court. Also in 1453, 1468 and 1469.		Rector of Great Parndon, Essex (lay patron) adm. Feb. 1453. Many other benefices. No ordination details.		
				1485	King's chaplain and councillor		Also appointed clerk of parliament		

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				1494	Heard cases in court of Requests				
				1496	Bishop of St Davids		Dead by 1504		
				1449	Admitted as B.Cn.L	v2 p. 1314	Rector of Redmarshall, Durham (patron bp of Durham) during 1453. Official of archdeacon of Richmond, 1450.	H	
				1474	D.Cn.L by this date		Died by August 1487. No ordination details. Held many benefices.		
Morresse	David			1450	Admitted as B.Cn.L	v2 p. 1314	No other details	?	
Morton	John	Peckwater Inn	Salisbury	1448	B.C.L by this date	v2, pp. 1318-20	Subsequently B.Cn & C.L. Rector of Shellingford, Berks (patron Abingdon Abbey) adm. Jan. 1453. Ordained priest March 1459.	H	<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/19363">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/19363</a>
				1452	D.C.L awarded				
				1456	Chancellor to Edward, Prince of Wales				
				1458	Canon and prebendary of Salisbury		Later canon of Lichfield, St Paul's London, Wells, York and Exeter.		
				1472	Master of the Rolls				
				1478	Bishop of Ely				
				1486	Archbishop of Canterbury		Cardinal priest in Sept. 1493		
				1486	Chancellor of England				
Myles	Thomas			1449	Admitted as B.C.L	v2 p. 1333	No other details	?	
Mywyn	William	All Souls		1449	Admitted as B.Cn.L	v2 p. 1333-34		H	
				1452	B.Cn & C.L by this date		Rector of Draycot Ceme, Wilts (secular patron) adm. Mar. 1453.		
				1452	D.C.L by this date		Also law bursar and sub-warden of All Souls. In 1457 he was principal of the Civil Law Schools. Dead by 1459.		
				1453	Law dean.				
Nedham	John			1450	Admitted as B.C.L	v2 p. 1340	No other details	?	

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Newland	John	St Andrew Hall		1450	Admitted as B.C.L	v2 p. 1355	Ordained priest 1453. Rector of Wigginton, Yorks (ecclesiastical patron) in 1453. Dead by 1465	P	
Newton	William			1453	B.Cn & C.L by this date	v2 p. 1359	Vicar of Bywell St Peter, Northumb (patron Durham Cath Priory) in 1439. Later held prebendary. No ordination details.	H	
				1450	President of Durham Consistory Court				
Norman	Geoffrey			1454	Supplicated for B.Cn.L	v2 p. 1363	No other details	?	
Norgs	John			1452	Supplicated for B.Cn.L	v2 p. 1376	Vicar of Norton, Wilts (patron Malmsbury Abbey) adm. 1463. Died by April 1473.	P	
Nulton	Lewis			1450	Admitted as B.C.L	v2 p. 1380	No other details	?	
Olney	John	Broadgates Hall		1455	B.Cn.L by this date	v2 p. 1398	In priests orders by 1446. Rector of Witley, Hants (patron Southwick Priory) adm. Aug. 1455.	P	
O'Shanahá	Thomas			1447	B.Cn.L by this date	v2 p. 1407	Alias Scolan. Official of the court of Cashel before 1440. By 1453 canon of Cork.	H	
				1445	Dean of Lismore, then of Limerick				
				1458	Archdeacon of Lismore				
Pakenham	John	Atheistan Hall		1445	B.C.L by this date	v3 pp. 1419-20	Canon of Southwell by 1442. Canon of York by 1445 and Treasurer by 1459.	H	
				1450	B.Cn & C.L by this date		Official of the court of York, app. Oct 1455.		
				1459	D.Cn. & C.L by this date		No ordination details.		
				1454	Chancellor of the Bishop of London		Died in 1477		
Palmer	Thomas			1453	Supplicated for B.C.L	v3 p. 1422	Very few other details.	?	
				1456	Admitted as B.Cn.L				
Pantny	Henry			1450	Admitted as B.Cn.L	v3 p. 1423	Rector of Stow-on-the-Wold (patron Evesham Abbey) adm. Aug. 1452.	H	

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				1456	Supplicated for D.Ch.L.		No ordination details.		
				1467	Appointed registrar of the bishop of Winchester		Dead by 1475		
Parker	William			1452	Supplicated for B.Ch.L.	v3 p. 1427	Rector of Wytham, Berks (patron Abingdon Abbey) adm Dec. 1452. Several other benefices. Died in 1495	P	
Paslew	Thomas		Norwich	1451	Supplicated for B.Ch.L.	v3 p. 1433	D.Ch.L. at Ferrara in 1452. Rector of East Tisted, Hants (lay patron) adm. Apr. 1452. No ordination details. Died by January 1471.	P	
Pede	Richard			1445	B.Ch.L. by this date	v3 pp. 1449-50	Rector of Staunton on Wye (lay patron) adm. 1444.	H	
				1448	D.Ch.L. by this date		Vicar general in spirituals for bishops of Hereford and Cov & Lichfield.		
				1450	Principal of the Great School of Canon Law		Canon of Hereford in 1452. Treasurer in 1460; dean in 1463. Died 1480. No ordination details.		
Pedryngton	John			1450	Admitted as B.C.L.	v3 p. 1451	No ordination details.	?	
Peterson	Nicholas			1449	Admitted to B.Ch.L.	v3 p. 1464	Rector of Beckington, Somt (lay patron) adm. May 1448. Held several other benefices. No ordination details.	P	
Phillip	Luke			1455	Admitted as B.Ch.L.	v3 p. 1476	No other details	?	
Potman	William	All Souls		1452	Admitted as B.C.L.	v3 pp. 1506-7	Dean of Risborough, Bucks (patron archbp of Canterbury) app. 1452.	H	
				1456	Supplicated for D.C.L.		Law dean of All Souls 1453-4 and law bursar 1454-5. Official of the court of York, 1464.		
				1466	Canon of St Paul's, London		Subsequently canon of York, Beverley and Ripon.		
				1480	Commissary general of Archbishop Rotherham		Died in 1493		
Powell	John			1449	Admitted as B.Ch.L.	v3 p. 1511	Proctor at law in 1450. Few other details	?	

Surname	First Name	College/Hall/Inn	Diocese	Date	Qualification/Item	BRUO Reference	Notes	Parochial (P), High-Flyer (H), Regular (R) or ?	ODNB Ref.
Preston	John			1452	Admitted as B. Cn. L.	v3 p. 1519	Vicar of Wakefield (patron Lewes Priory) adm. Feb. 1444. Died by 1485. Possibly related to Justice John Preston who died in 1434 (see ODNB entry). No ordination details.	?	
Preston	William			1449	C.L.	v3 p. 1520	Dead by 1477. Few other details.	?	
Pyttes	Laurence			1451	Supplicated for B. Cn. L.	v3 p. 1536	Chaplain of Merton College in 1448. Few other details.	?	
Rawlyns	William			1456	B. Cn. & C. L. by this date (was B. C. L. in 1443)	v3 p. 1552	Rector of Claybrooke, Leics (patron Monks Kirkby Priory) adm. Aug. 1443. Dead by 1486. Held several other benefices. Canon of Newark Hospital and dean of Irlinghamborough, Northants.	H	
Rivett	John	All Souls		1448	D. C. L. by this date	v3 p. 1578	Ordained prest Apr. 1449. Rector of Upton-on-Severn (patron bp of Worcester) coll. Jan. 1449. Canon of Lichfield in 1461. Died by 1465	H	
Rowe	Richard			1451	Supplicated for B. Cn. L.	v3 p. 1599	Rector of Hartlebury, Worcs (patron bp of Worcester) adm. July 1447. No ordination details.	H	
				1450	Commissary and sequestrator general of the bishop of Worcester (John Carpenter)		Died by 1454		
Rudyrng	John			1452	B. C. L. by this date	v3 pp. 1603-4	Rector of St Michael's Gloucester (patron Gloucester Abbey) adm. Mar. 1453.	H	
				1457	Canon of Lincoln		In 1466 became canon of St Stephen's chapel, Westminster. In 1471 coll as archdcon of Lincoln. No ordination details. Died by 1481.		



Surname	First Name	College/Hall/Inn	Diocese	Date	Qualification/Item	BRUO Reference	Notes	Parochial (P), High-Flyer (H), Regular (R) or ?	ODNB Ref.
				1467	B. Cn & C.L by this date		Canon of Tamworth collegiate church (lay patron) adm. July 1463. Canon of St Asaph by 1467. Many other benefices		
				1474	Admitted to D. Cn. L. at Bologna				
				1488	Precentor of Lichfield		Died by 1505		
							Rector (portion) of Stoke Rochford, Lincs (patron bp of Salisbury) exch. Nov. 1443. Held several benefices. No ordination details. Died by 1460	?	
Sothwell	John	Peckwater Inn		1446	B. Cn. L. by this date	v3 pp. 1730-1		?	
Spargar	Geoffrey			1452	Supplicated for B. C.L	v3 p. 1743	Few other details	?	
Sprigge	William	Broadgates Hall		1448	B. C.L by this date	v3 p. 1746			
				1451	Supplicated for D.C.L.		Rector of Exeter Holy Trinity (patron Exeter Cathedral) adm. Oct. 1451. In 1452 was canon of Crediton. Had some other benefices. No ordination details. Died by June 1478.	P	
Stokes	John		Bath & Wells	1446	B. Cn & C.L by this date	v3 pp. 1782-3	Vicar of Ilminster. Somt (patron Michelney Abbey) in 1446.	H	
				1449	Canon of Wells and prebendary of Milverton				
				1457	President of Bath & Wells Consistory Court		Died by 1479		
Stokys	Robert			1454	Supplicated for B. Cn. L.	v3 p. 1787	Augustinian Canon. Few other details.	R	
Stretton	John	Hawk Hall		1445	B. Cn & C.L by this date	v3 p. 1805	Alias Wode	H	
				1448	D. C.L. by this date		Ordained priest May 1449. Rector of Norton-sub-Hamdon, Somt. (patron Chichester Cathedral) adm. Dec. 1447.		
				1460	Chancellor of the Bishop of Salisbury		Papal sub-collector in the Salisbury diocese. Died by 1475		



Surname	First Name	College/Hall/Inn	Diocese	Date	Qualification/Item	BRUO Reference	Notes	Parochial (P), High-Flyer (H), Regular (R) or ?	ODNB Ref.
Strong	John			1449	Admitted as B. Ch. L	v3 p. 1808	Irish man. Rector of Callan, co. Kilkenny, by 1455. Canon of Ossory by 1462. No ordination records.	H	
Sugar	Hugh	New College		1443	B. C. L by this date	v3 p. 1814	Alias Norris. Admitted aged 13 as scholar at Winchester College in 1428. Admitted as scholar to New College in 1433.	H	
				1446	D. C. L by this date		Ordained priest May 1448. Rector of Lymsham, Somt (patron Glastonbury Abbey) adm. Feb. 1452.		
				1450	Advocate of Court of Arches				
				1454	Canon of Wells.		In 1460 became treasurer of Wells (leading to animosity with the chapter)		
				1461	Vicar general in spirituals to bishop of B & W		Died by 1489		
Sugdun	Thomas			1450	Supplicated for B. C. L	v3 p. 1815	No other details	?	
Swancote	John			1450	Supplicated for B. Ch. L	v3 p. 1830	No other details	?	
Swyft	Thomas		Salisbury	1439	B. C. L by this date	v3 p. 1834	Ordained priest Mar. 1439.	H	
				1445	B. Ch & C. L by this date		Rector of Yatesbury. Willis (lay patron) adm. Mar. 1433.		
				1452	Canon of Wells and prebendary of Dinder				
				1453	Supplicated for D. Ch. L				
				1453	Admitted as r. of Shellingford, Berks (patron Abingdon Abbey) in December; Morton had been admitted here in January 1453				
Syford	Thomas			1451	Supplicated for B. Ch. L	v3 p. 1837	Holder of many benefices. In priest's orders by 1451. Few other details.	?	

Surname	First Name	College/Hall/Inn	Diocese	Date	Qualification/Item	BRUO Reference	Notes	Parochial (P), High-Flyer (H), Regular (R) or ?	ODNB Ref.
Tawer	Simon	Coventry Hall		1451	Supplicated for B. Ch. L.	v3 p. 1850	Vicar of Cassington, Oxon (patron Eynsham Abbey) adm. July 1448.	H	
				1461	Canon of Hereford				
				1472	Chancellor of Hereford College		Died by 1476		
Thomas	Hugh	Grove Hall		1449	Supplicated for B. Ch. L.	v3 p. 1860	Also B. C. L. Was at Oxford by 1430. Rector of Hazlebury, Wills (lay patron) adm. 1435. Died by 1462	P	
Thornton	William			1451	Supplicated for B. Ch. L.	v3 pp. 1868-9	Rector of Enville, Staffs (lay patron) adm. Feb. 1463. Few other details	?	
Thuine	William			1450	Supplicated for B. Ch. L. and B. C. L.	v3 p. 1871	No other details	?	
Thwaytes	John			1451	Supplicated for B. C. L.	v3 p. 1873	Few other details	?	
Topcliffe	John			1451	Supplicated for B. Ch. L.	v3 p. 1886	Vicar of Crowle, Worcs (patron Hospital of St Wulstan, Worcester) adm. 1454. Held several other benefices. No ordination details. Died in 1505	P	
Topcliffe	Robert	Broadgates Hall		1450	Supplicated for B. Ch. L.	v3 p. 1887	Alias Tylour. Died by Aug. 1455.	P	
Tyler	William			1451	Supplicated for B. Ch. L.	v3 p. 1922	Rector of Charfield, Gloucs (lay patron) vac by Mar. 1457. Few other details.	?	
Uske	Phillip	St Edward Hall		1443	B. C. L. by this date	v3 p. 1938	Alias Ros	H	
				1448	D. C. L. by this date		Ordained priest June 1447.		
				1449	Canon of York		Vicar of Wye, Kent (patron Wye Abbey) adm. Mar. 1447.		
				1452	Civil Law School				
Vanne	John			1443	B. Ch. L. by this date	v3 p. 1941	Died by 1477	R	
				1450	D. Ch. L. by this date				
				1458	Elected Abbot of Ceme		Died by 1471		
Vaws	William		Worcester	1451	Supplicated for D. Ch. L.	v3 pp. 1943-4	Rector of Hill Croome, Worcs (patron Pershore Abbey) adm. Aug. 1440. Ordained priest Dec. 1441.	H	

Surname	First Name	College/Hall/Inn	Diocese	Date	Qualification/Item	BRUO Reference	Notes	Parochial (P), High-Flyer (H), Regular (R) or ?	ODNB Ref.
				1462	Chancellor of bishop of Worcester		Also vicar general in 1448.		
				1476	Canon of Hereford		Died by 1479		
							Vicar of Much Marcle, Heref (ecclesiastical patron) adm. July 1440. B.C.L. by 1457. In 1457 also Treasurer of Westbury-on-Tym, Gloucs.		
Verne	James			1449	Supplicated for B.Ch.L.	v3 p. 1946		H	
							Ordained deacon Feb. 1439. Rector of Burton, Chesh (patron St Andrew's Hospital, Denhall) in 1436. Canon of Lichfield, Sept. 1440. Owned many books and held many benefices. Died in 1488		
Walle	Roger	Little White Hall	Coventry &	1449	B.Ch.L. by this date	v3 p. 1966	Ordained sub-deacon 1452. Rector of Calverton, Bucks (lay patron) adm. Apr. 1452.	H	
Walter	John	Deep Hall		1449	B.C.L. by this date	v3 p. 1972	Rector of Calverton, Bucks (lay patron) adm. Apr. 1452.	H	
				1465	Canon of St Paul's, London		Died by 1475		
Walton	Thomas	Broadgates Hall	Carlisle	1453	B.C.L. by this date	v3 p. 1976		P	
				1459	B.Ch. & C.L. by this date				
				1463	D.C.L.		Rector of Bucknell, Oxon (lay patron) adm. May 1469.		
				1451	Practised as proctor in Chancellor's court. Still in 1468.		Notary public in 1473. Dead by 1496		
Ward	John	Vine Hall	Exeter	1450	Supplicated for B.Ch.L.	v3 p. 1980	Vicar of Colyton, Devon (patron Exeter Cathedral) adm. Mar. 1439. No ordination record.	H	
				1458	Supplicated for D.Ch.L.		Died in 1476		
				1460	Canon of Exeter				
Wardale	John	Greek Hall	Lincoln	1439	B.Ch. & C.L. by this date	v3 p. 1981	Was already notary public in 1429. Rector of Keyston, Hunts (lay patron) in 1439. No ordination details.	H	
				1448	D.C.L. by this date. Also became Canon of Lincoln		Royal commissioner in appeals from the court of Admiralty from 1447 onwards.		
				1461	Advocate of Court of Canterbury				

Surname	First Name	College/Hall/Inn	Diocese	Date	Qualification/Item	BRUO Reference	Notes	Parochial (P), High-Flyer (H), Regular (R) or ?	ODNB Ref.
				1464	Canon of St Paul's, London				
				1467	Canon of Exeter		Died in 1472 and bequeathed many books.		
Water	Thomas	Little White Hall		1453	Supplicated for B.Cn.L.	v3 p. 1997-98	Rector of Stanford Dingley (lay patron) vac. 1458.	H	
				1458	Canon of Lichfield		Dead by 1461		
Went	Philip			1454	Supplicated for B.Cn.L.	v3 p. 2015	No additional details	?	
Westhall	Christopher			1452	Supplicated for B.Cn.L.	v3 p. 2022	No additional details	?	
Wetton	Richard			1449	D.C.L. by this date	v3 pp. 2027-8	Shown as dominus in 1439. Pincipal of the Civil Law School, adm. 1446. Prebendary of Bathwick in 1452 (patron Wherwell Abbey, Hants, nunnery)	H	
				1448	Master in chancery				
				1453	Canon of Salisbury		Canon of Wells. 1464		
				1454	Baron of the exchequer		Died in 1465		
							Premonstratensian canon. Already B. Cn. L. Vicar of Woking (patron Newark Priory, Surrey).	R	
Whalley	Roger			1450	Supplicated for D.Cn.L.	v3 p. 2029			
				1458	Died				
Whyte	John			1450	Admitted as B.C.L.	v3 p. 2042	No additional details	?	
William	Richard			1453	B.Cn.L. by this date	v3 p. 2050	Alias Pulley. Dead by 1492. Rector of Ardley, Oxon (lay patron) exch. 1425.	P	
							Fellow of All Souls, adm. 1437. Ordained deacon Apr. 1446. Rector of Weston-sub-Edge, Gloucs (lay patron) adm. Dec. 1450.		<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/29773">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/29773</a>
Winterborn	Thomas	All Souls	Salisbury	1449	Admitted as B.C.L.	v3 pp. 2060-1		H	
				1451	Supplicated for D.C.L.				
				1459	Canon of Salisbury				
				1468	Archdeacon of Canterbury		Also Chancellor of the archbp.		
				1469	King's councillor		Diplomatic envoy. Also auditor of causes, court of Canterbury		
				1471	Dean of St Paul's, London		Died 1478		

Surname	First Name	College/Hall/Inn	Diocese	Date	Qualification/Item	BRUO Reference	Notes	Parochial (P), High-Flyer (H), Regular (R) or ?	ODNB Ref.
Worsley	John	St Michael Hall	York	1455	B. Cn & C.L by this date	v3 p. 2089	Magister by 1452. Rector of Bolton-le-Moors. Lances (patron bp. Of C&L) in 1455.	H	
				1461	Commissary general of Archbishop of York		Dead by 1480		
Wyxton	William			1450	Supplicated for B. Cn.L	v3 p. 2097	Augustinian Canon. No additional details.	R	
Wykam	Thomas			1449	Supplicated for B. Cn. L	v3 p. 2108	In priest's orders by 1449. No other details.	?	
					M.A. by 1438. Rector of St Andrews Worcester (patron Worcester Cath. Priory) admn. Feb. 1437. Junior Proctor of the University. 1439-40.			H	
Wyley	John			1449	D. Cn. L by this date	v3 p. 2116	Died by 1461		
				1449	Chancellor's Commissary				
Wytkon	John	All Souls	Salisbury	1451	B. C.L by this date	v3 p. 2118	Admitted as fellow of All Souls in 1441. Ordained priest Sep. 1451. Granted office of notary public by papal authority, July 1460.	H	
Wyndeyate	John			1451	Supplicated for B. Cn. L	v3 p. 2123	In priest's orders by 1451. Rector of Hemnyock, Devon (lay patron) admn. Apr. 1449. Dies by 1458	P	
Wyne	John			1448	B. Cn & C.L by this date	v3 p. 2123			
				1458	King's clerk				
Yonys	David			1454	Supplicated for B. Cn. L	v3 p. 2138	No additional details	?	
<b>PROBABLES:</b>									
Candour	Thomas			1447	D. Cn. L by this date	v3 pp. 2158-9	Alias Con Dover. B. Cn. & C.L. by 1442. Vicar of Baschurch, Shrops (patron Shrewsbury Abbey) admn. Oct. 1441.	H	
				1450	Proctor of Richard, Duke of York		Died by 1477		

Surname	First Name	College/Hall/Inn	Diocese	Date	Qualification/Item	BRUO Reference	Notes	Parochial (P), High-Flyer (H), Regular (R) or ?	ODNB Ref.
				1467	Canon of Lincoln		Royal commissioner in appeals from court of archdeacon of Westminster, 1471.		
				1476	Papal sub-deacon. Also papal chamberlain		No ordination details.		
Liford	John			1455	D.C.L. by this date	v3 p. 2190	Magister by 1448. Rector of Upton, Hursts (lay patron) vac. Oct. 1448.	H	
				1465	Canon of Lincoln		Commissioner to treat with the Scots, 1459.		
				1471	Commissary general of Archbishop of Canterbury		Died by 1477		
				1458	Admitted as D. Ch. L at Bologna. Also D.Ch & C.L.	v3 p. 2194	"Of noble family". Rector of Risby, Suff (patron Bury Abbey) adm. Oct. 1458.	H	
Makerell	Ralph		York	1461	Chancellor of Queen Margaret				
				1471	Canon and prebendary of St Stephen's Chapel, Westminster.				
				1475	Royal commissioner in appeal from court of admiralty		Dead by 1477		

### Appendix 3 – A short note on William Warham

There seems to be much confusion over the birth date of William Warham. Emden gives the year as 1456, and this would relate well to the date recorded for Warham's entry to Winchester College of 1469 (other boys are shown as having gone there at the age of thirteen).<sup>1</sup> J. J. Scarisbrick in his *ODNB* entry gives a date of '1450?', although he offers no explanation for that statement.<sup>2</sup> R. L. Storey states that Warham only reached the diaconate when he was forty-five years of age.<sup>3</sup> As the entry in Emden shows the date of that ordination to be 1493, Storey is therefore implying that Warham was born around 1448. W. F. Hook states that Warham was born 'about the year 1450' and gives as his reason for that a letter described in Jortin's biography of Erasmus which was written in 1530 and describes Warham as being 'fourscore years old'.<sup>4</sup> Ralph Evans states that Warham entered the subdiaconate at the age of forty-one: this would place the birth date around 1452.<sup>5</sup> Britannica adds to the confusion by stating that Warham's ordination in 1493 was to the priesthood.<sup>6</sup> What conclusion can be drawn from this proliferation of dates? If the date for Warham's admission to Winchester is taken as a benchmark (1469) then it seems likely that Emden's calculation of 1456 is probably closer to the truth than some of the other estimates. By that reasoning we would need to assume that the use of the term 'fourscore' in other documents is a general statement to indicate advanced years beyond the biblical three score and ten, not an exact description of chronological age.

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1 *BRUO*, iii, pp. 1988-92.

2 <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/28741>.

3 R. L. Storey, 'The Foundation and the Medieval College, 1379-1530', in *New College, Oxford, 1379-1979*, ed. by Edward John Mawley Buxton and Penry Williams (Oxford: The Warden and Fellows of New College, Oxford, 1979), pp. 1-43, (p. 32).

4 Walter Farquhar Hook, *Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury*, ed. by C. E. Woodruff, 12 vols (London: Richard Bentley, 1867), v, p. 156; John Jortin, *The Life of Erasmus*, 3 vols (London: John White [etc.], 1808), I, p. 492. Hook (pp. 160-61) notes the entry in the Register of William Smith at Coventry and Lichfield for the ordination of a William Warham as subdeacon in September 1493, but is uncertain as to whether that refers to the future archbishop.

5 Ralph Evans, 'The Number, Origins and Careers of Scholars', in *The History of the University of Oxford, Vol. 2, Late Medieval Oxford*, ed. by J. I. Catto and Ralph Evans (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992), II, pp. 485-538, (p. 520).

6 <https://www.britannica.com/biography/William-Warham> [accessed 30 April 2020]. This article (author unknown) says that Warham was born 'c. 1450'.

**Appendix 4.** All proctors known to be active in the *curia Ebor* during the period 1400 to 1499 as listed in the York cause papers.

<b>Surname, first name</b>	<b>First year shown</b>	<b>Last year shown</b>	<b>Emden entry</b>	<b>Other notes (number of cases as proctor, career details, other items)</b>
Allain, Henry	1469	1469		1, clerk
Appleby, Thomas	1409	1432		9, clerk
Biller, William	1476	1476		2, clerk. Notary public
Bispham, William	1421	1461		27, clerk. A witness in CP.F.89 (abduction of nun)
Bynbrok, John	1404	1404		1, clerk and priest of Lincoln diocese (see CP.F.31/2)
Chesterton, Robert	1484	1495		10, clerk
				37, clerk. Very brief <i>BRUO</i> entry suggests he was probably an Oxford graduate. It mentions his employment as a proctor in the Court of York in 1423 (see Durham College Accounts).
Driffeld, William	1402	1449	594	
Easingwold, John	1403	1403		1, clerk
Easingwold, Nicholas	1400	1406		2, clerk
				16, clerk, proctor general of Court of York (CP.F.162). See also CP.F.201 re possible marriage.
Easingwold, Robert	1401	1427		
Evers, George	1497	1497		1, clerk
Farleton, Thomas	1441	1457		7, clerk
Hardwick, Henry	1420	1420		1, Nil
Latimer, Richard	1476	1493		4, clerk
Latom, Richard	1474	1497		5, clerk. Notary public
Leppington, John	1429	1440		3, clerk. Also possibly (but unlikely) CP.F.69 dated 1415 where a JL



				is shown as a witness, aged 40, and is described as a notary public and clerk in the exchequer of the abp of York. There is no entry in Emden for him.
Ragenhill, John	1400	1419		17, clerk
Rotherham,				
Thomas	1402	1402		1, clerk. Not to be confused with the future archbishop.
Rudby, Robert	1455	1465		2, clerk
Saxton, John	1452	1453		3, clerk
Scruton, Robert	1416	1424		4, clerk
				1, clerk. B.C.L.; attended convocation in 1426. The <i>BRUC</i> includes the following details: <b>Selby, John</b> (p. 517). B.C.L.; Sch.Cn.L. by 1399. in pr.'s orders by 1399. V. of Rudstone, Yorks, vac. 1425. Advocate of the ct of York. Died 1427. [See also YCP CP.F.72 dated 1416 where it may be him shown as the defence proctor.]
Selby, John	1416	1416	<i>BRUC</i> , 517	
Smart, William	1443	1454		7, clerk
Stanton, John	1401	1419		23, clerk
Topcliffe	1407	1407		1, proctor in <i>curia Ebor</i>
				1, clerk. Almost certainly not the official of the bishop of Carlisle and advocate of the Court of York who attended convocation in 1426 (see below).
Uldale, Thomas	1465	1465		
Water, Thomas	1497	1497		1, clerk
Williamson,				
Thomas	1484	1484		1, Nil
Willingham, John	1402	1432		20, clerk

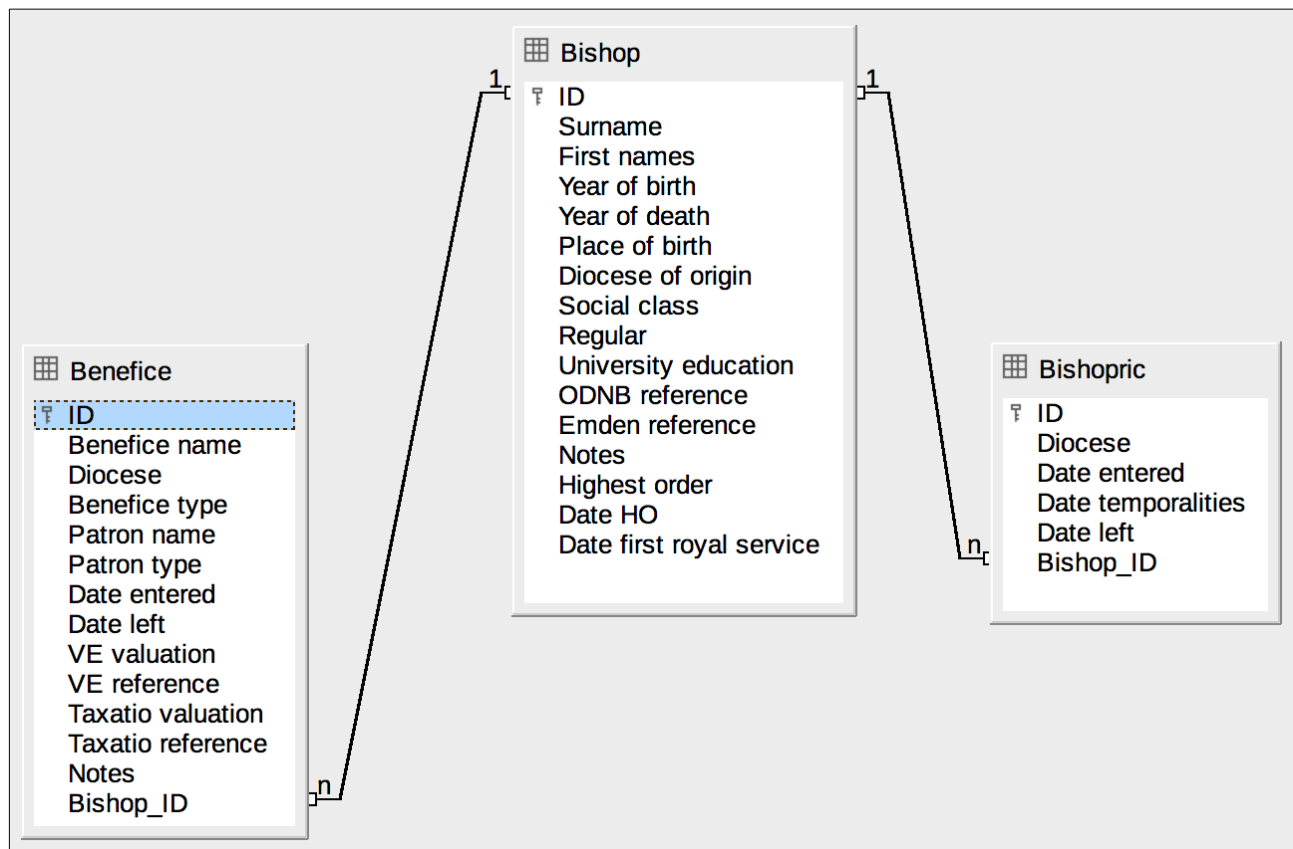
Wright, William	1490	1497	<i>BRUC</i> , 653 (?)	7, clerk. Notary public. Only the surname is shown in <i>BRUC</i> , so this is a possible, not a probable. The <i>BRUC</i> summary includes: <b>Wright [no first name]</b> (p. 653). <i>B.Cn.L.</i> , adm. 1490-1.	
Cleveland, Thomas				0, clerk. Not shown as a proctor, but is listed in CP.F.63 dated 1413-14 as an advocate of the Court of York. He is also shown as a defendant in that case.	
Deyre, John				0, clerk. Not shown as a proctor, but is listed as a notary public in CP.F.301 in 1490-93 where he is a witness	
				0, clerk and master. Not shown as a proctor, but is listed in CP.F.283 dated 1493-5 as a witness where he is described as a clerk, bachelor in law and advocate of the Court of York. The brief <i>BRUC</i> summary includes the following details: <b>Metcalf, John</b> (p. 403). <i>B.C.L.</i> , adm. 1484-5. Inception in <i>C.L.</i> gr. 1500-1. In Durham dio. 1477.	
Metcalf, John			403	0, master and witness. This is possibly the Thomas Uldale who attended convocation in 1426. He appears in case CP.F.180 dated 1435 where he is described as advocate of the Court of York.	
Uldale, Thomas (distinct from his namesake above)					

**Appendix 5.** Details for six fifteenth-century advocates of the Court of Arches not listed in Logan, *The Medieval Court of Arches*, pp. 213-15.

Name	First date as advocate	Emden ref	ODNB ref	Notes (including first benefice as listed by Emden)
Simon Sydenham	1400	<i>BRUO</i> , iii, 1838	<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/95137">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/95137</a>	Rector of Fairstead, Essex, in 1391. D.C.L. by March 1399 when ordained as priest. Active on legal and diplomatic work, including the Court of Canterbury where he was an advocate in 1400 (see his <i>ODNB</i> entry). 'King's clerk' by 1405. Dean of Salisbury in 1418. Bp of Chichester, 1439.
Richard Nix	1488	<i>BRUC</i> , 430-1	<a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/20205">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/20205</a>	Rector of Ashbury, Berks, adm. 1473. D.C.L. & Cn.L. by 1483 at Bologna. Named as an advocate in the Court of Arches in 1488 (CCA-Dcc/Chant/S/298). Dean of the Chapel Royal, 1497. Bp of Norwich, 1501. Died 1535, aged around 90.
Robert Middleton	1488	<i>BRUO</i> , ii, 1277-78		Named as an advocate in the Court of Arches in 1488 (CCA-Dcc/Chant/S/298). D.C.L. by 1483. 'Probably' a graduate of Oxford. Died by November 1499.

Name	First date as advocate	Emden ref	ODNB ref	Notes (including first benefice as listed by Emden)
Thomas Shenkwyn	1488	BRUC, 511		B.C.L. Oct. 1472. D.C.L. c.1481. Ordained priest, Sept. 1480. R. of Battlesden, Beds, May 1481. Named as an advocate in the Court of Arches in 1488 (CCA-Dcc/Chant/S/298). Official and chancellor of the bp. of Norwich, 1491-95. Master of St Giles Hospital, Norwich, 1495. Died Dec. 1497.
John Totoft	1488	BRUC, 592		Fellow of King's Hall, Cambridge, 1483. B.C.L. 1486. Ordained priest 1484. Canon and prebendary of Lincoln, 1486. Named as an advocate in the Court of Arches in 1488 (CCA-Dcc/Chant/S/298). Died by Dec. 1492.
John Harryngton	1493	BRUC, 291		Adm. B.C.L. in 1481 at Cambridge. D.C.L. by 1485 of a foreign university. Named as doctor of law and an advocate in the Court of Arches in the period 1493 to 1500 (TNA C1/205/42).

## Appendix 6. The structure of the bishops database created for this study



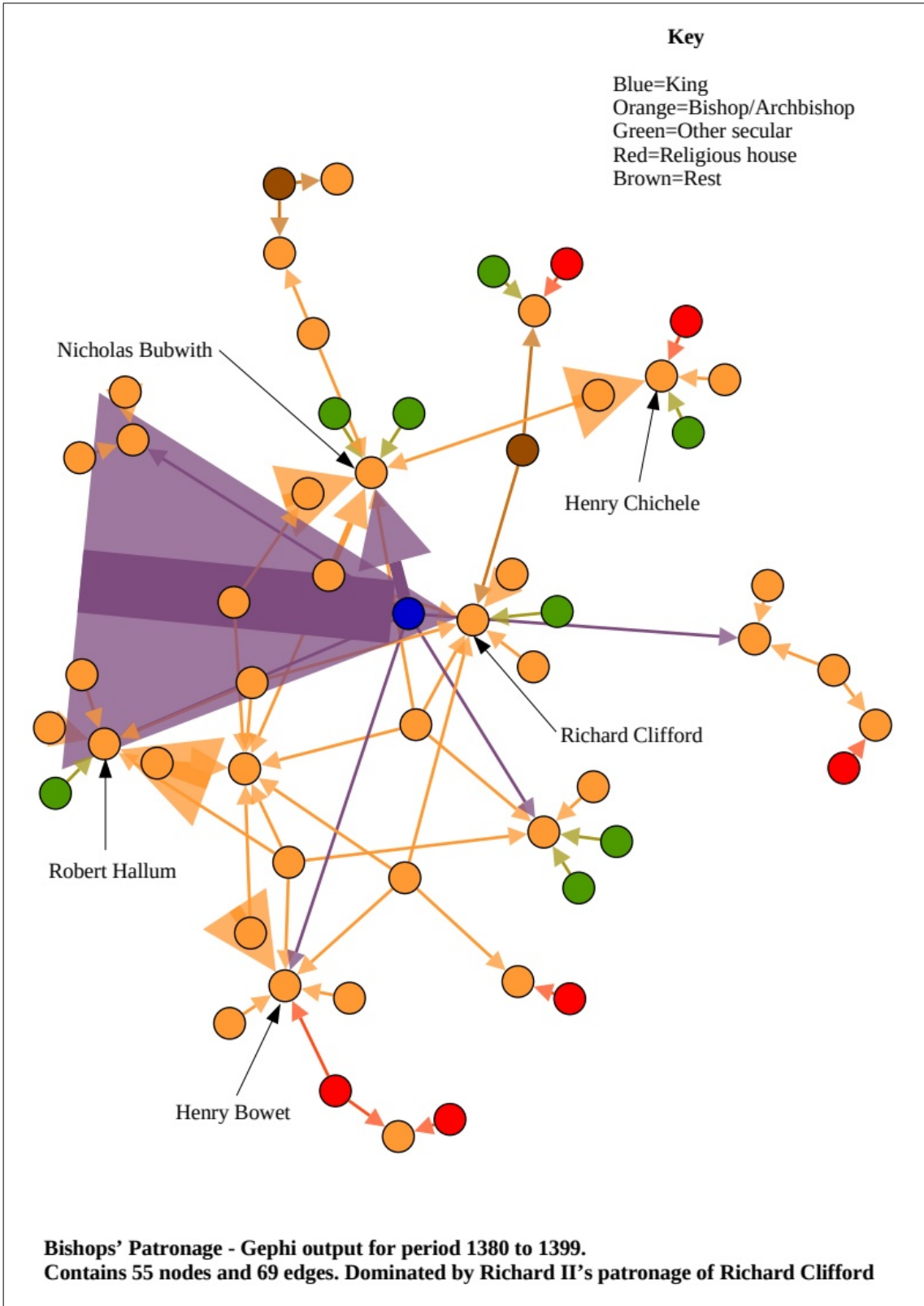
The database comprises three main tables. The *Bishop* table provides the key biographical information for each member of our cohort. Associated with that table is the *Benefice* table which contains the list of benefices provided to each man. Also associated with the *Bishop* table is the *Bishopric* table; this lists all the ecclesiastical sees occupied by him.

## Appendix 7. Some initial findings using the Gephi tool

The following set of images use the patronage information as discussed in Chapter 4 and contained within the patronage database. They summarise it for time periods of twenty years, beginning with the period 1380-1399. The output from Gephi contains two main entities, nodes and edges. In our context, nodes represent patrons of different types such as the king, bishops, religious houses etc. The edges (displayed as connecting arrows) represent acts of patronage, i.e. the granting of a benefice. Thus if a patron such as the king grants several benefices to one individual, then the resulting 'edge' is broad and strong. Because each image covers a period of twenty years, an individual who was once the beneficiary of patronage may himself become a bishop and start dispensing it to others.

At various times the king dominates the picture. Richard II's patronage of Richard Clifford is overwhelmingly prominent in the period 1380-99. In contrast, the early Lancastrian period (1400-1419) is characterised by the patronage of bishops. During the early reign of Henry VI, (see 1420-1439) his patronage of Adam Moleyns and, to a lesser degree, William Aiscough, show up very clearly. The patronage granted to Thomas Kemp by his uncle, John Kemp, is also very prominent. In the period 1440-1459 the patronage by Henry VI remains significant, e.g. his generosity to John Arundel. However there is also a set of wide 'edges' reflecting patronage by Thomas Becketon, William Booth and Thomas Kemp. In the period 1460 to 1479, the patronage of Edward IV dominates, and much of this took place in his second reign from 1471 onwards. The node representing John Morton is interesting for the level of support he received from many different churchmen. He received no benefice directly from the king, but Edward was clearly fully supportive of Morton's elevation to the see of Ely in 1478. In the period 1480 to 1499, Henry VII continued the patronage of Oliver King that had been provided so generously by Edward IV. Henry's biggest beneficiary was William Smith. Prominent among the bishops is Richard Fox with his generosity towards Roger Leyburne and Richard Nykke. Finally in the period 1500 to 1519, Henry VII spreads his patronage relatively evenly. By contrast his son focuses great generosity on two men, Thomas Wolsey and John Veysey. The latter also receives strong patronage from both John Arundel and Hugh Oldham. Another man who focuses his patronage with repeated benefaction to three other prelates-to-be is William Smith. The beneficiaries in the period 1500 to 1519 were Thomas Wolsey, William

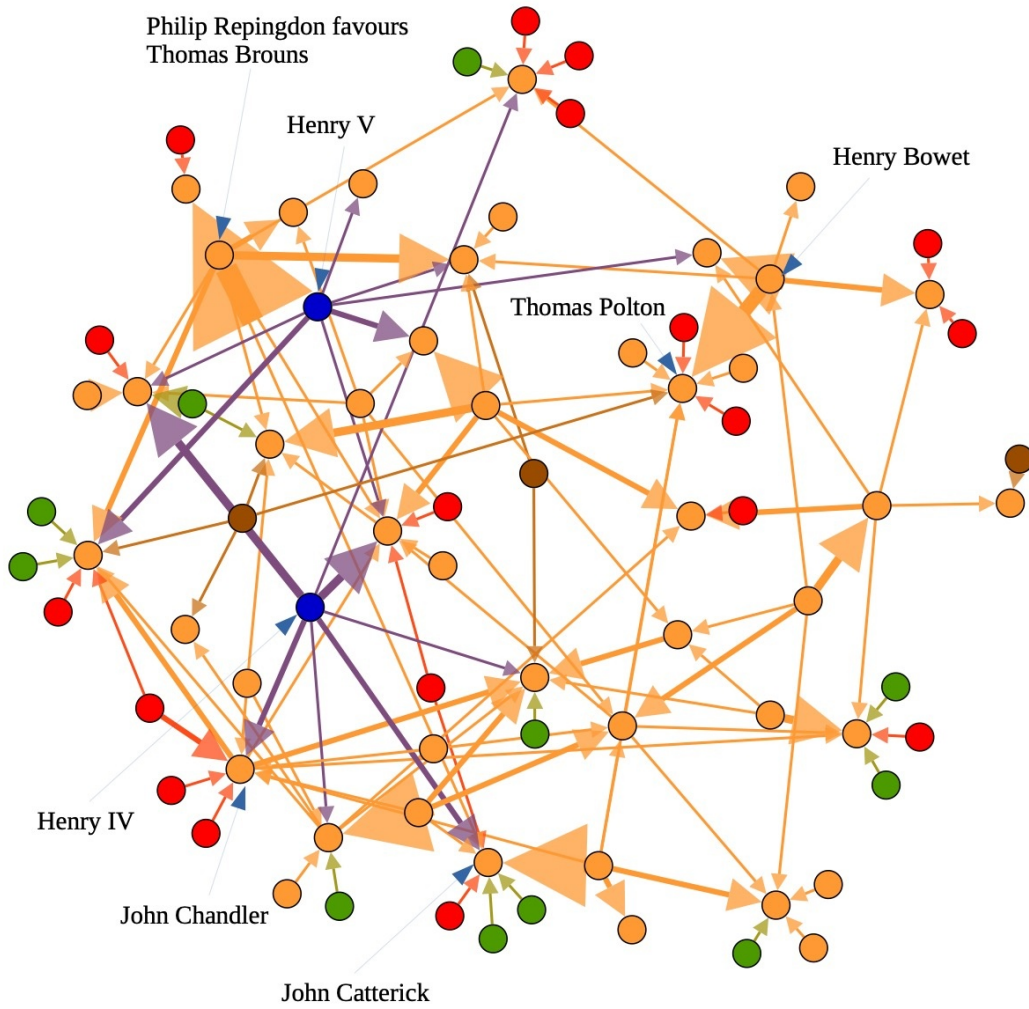
Atwater and Charles Booth. In the previous period, Smith had shown particular generosity to Hugh Oldham.





**Key**

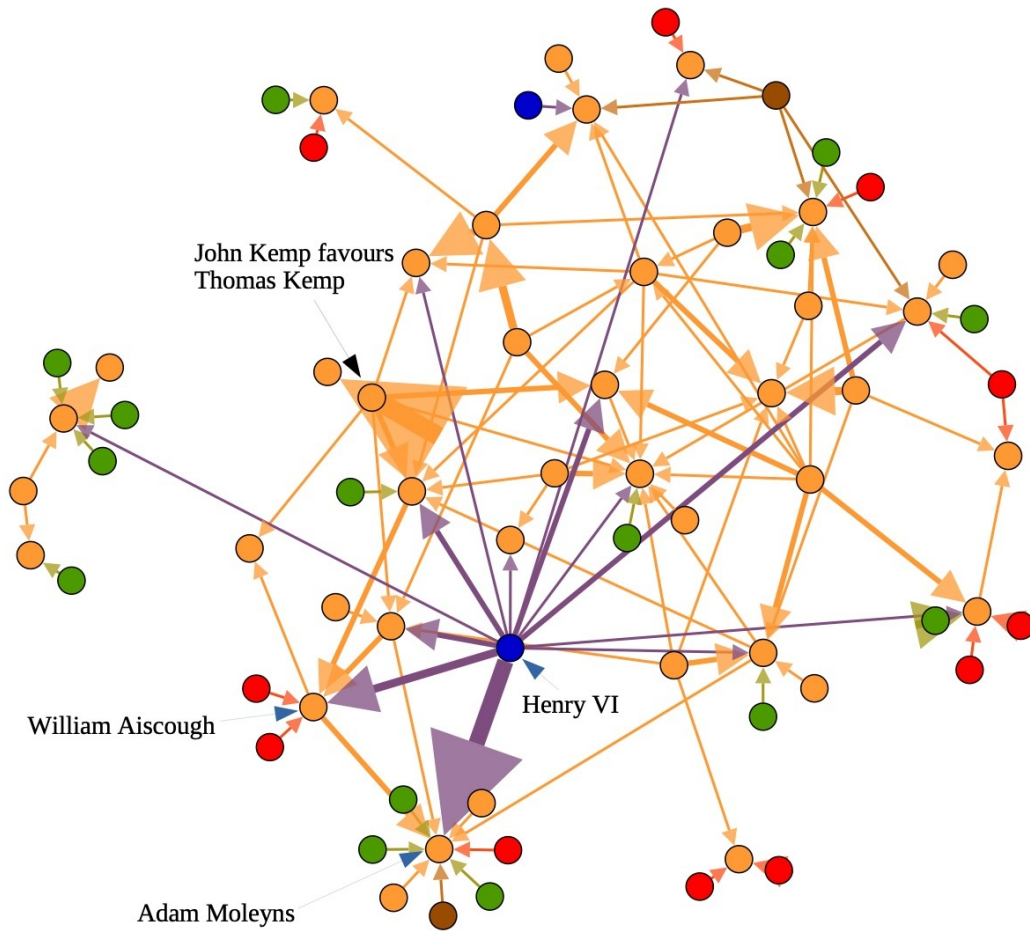
- Blue=King
- Orange=Bishop/Archbishop
- Green=Other secular
- Red=Religious house
- Brown=Rest



**Bishops' Patronage - Gephi output for period 1400 to 1419**  
Contains 79 nodes and 131 edges. Philip Repingdon's patronage of Thomas Brouns stands out

**Key**

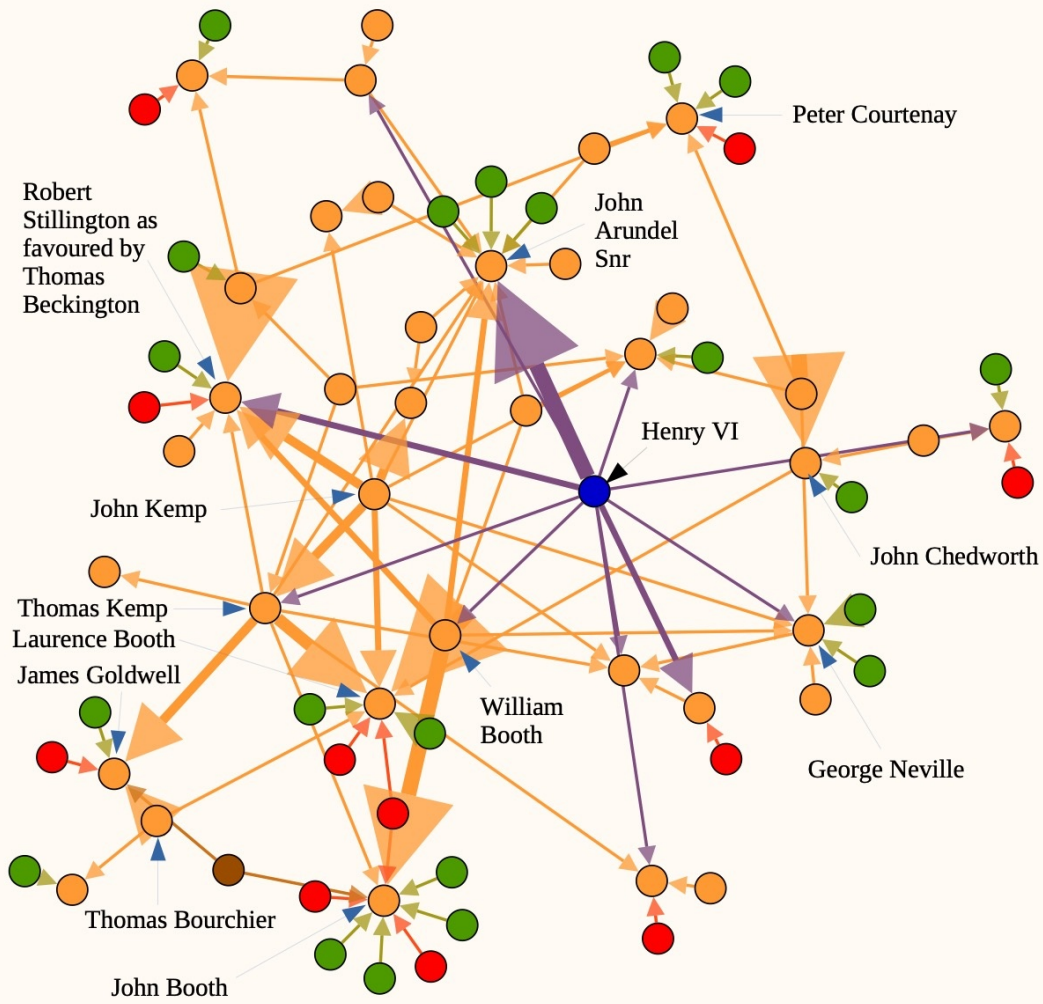
- Blue=King
- Orange=Bishop/Archbishop
- Green=Other secular
- Red=Religious house
- Brown=Rest



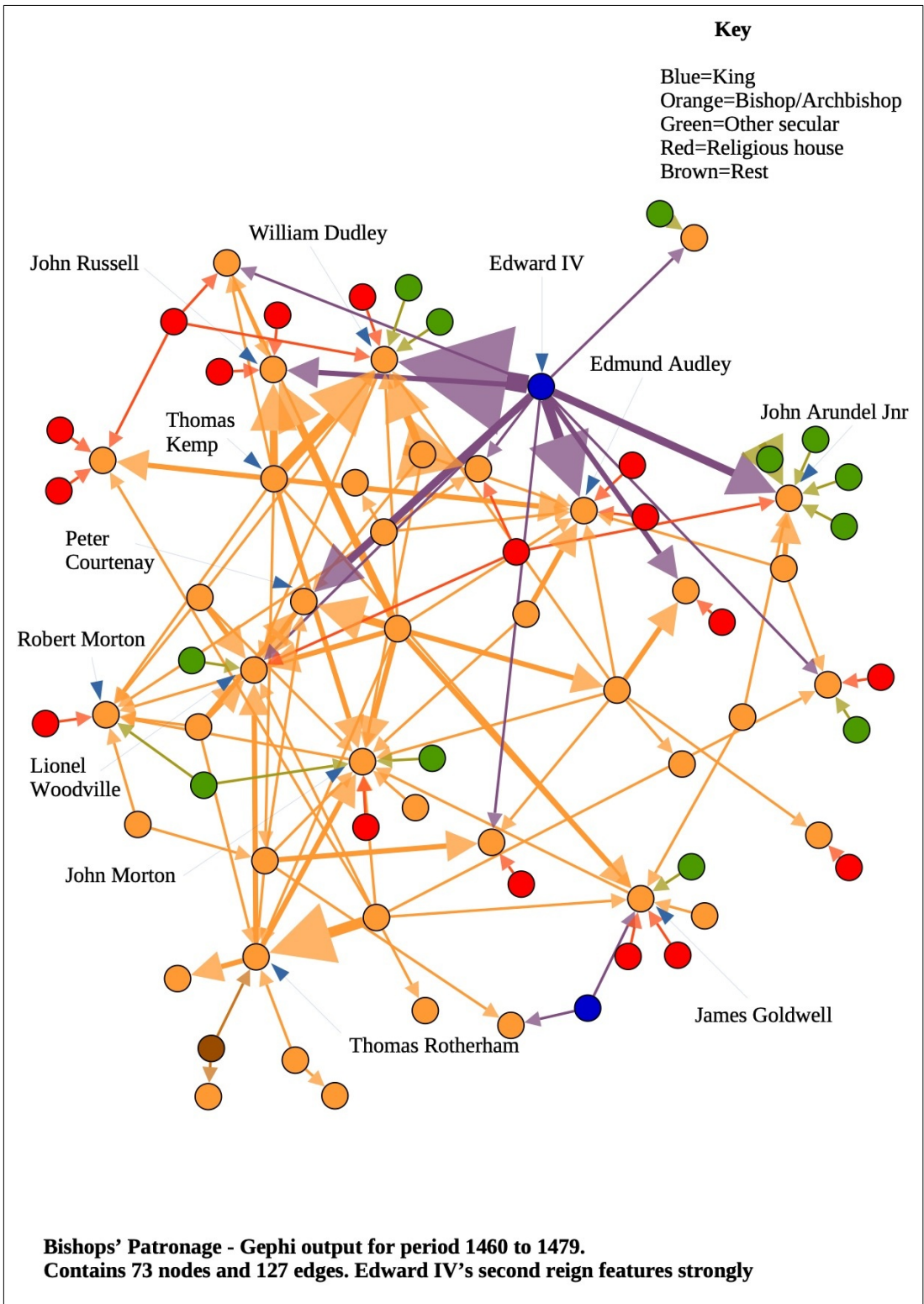
**Bishops' Patronage - Gephi output for period 1420 to 1439**  
**Contains 71 nodes and 115 edges. Dominated by Henry VI and John Kemp**

**Key**

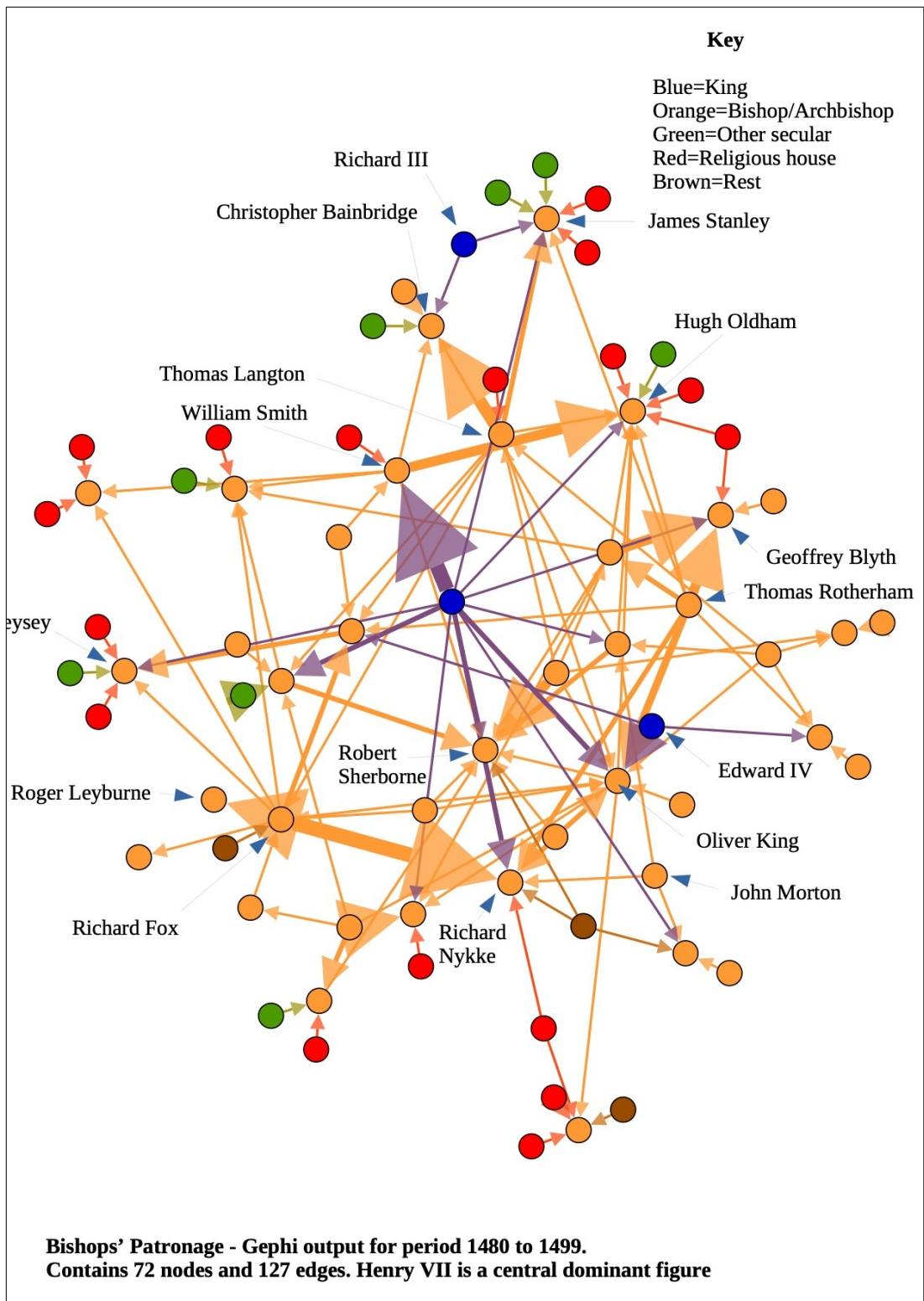
- Blue=King
- Orange=Bishop/Archbishop
- Green=Other secular
- Red=Religious house
- Brown=Rest



**Bishops' Patronage - Gephi output for period 1440 to 1459.  
Contains 71 nodes and 108 edges. Henry VI and several bishops dominate**

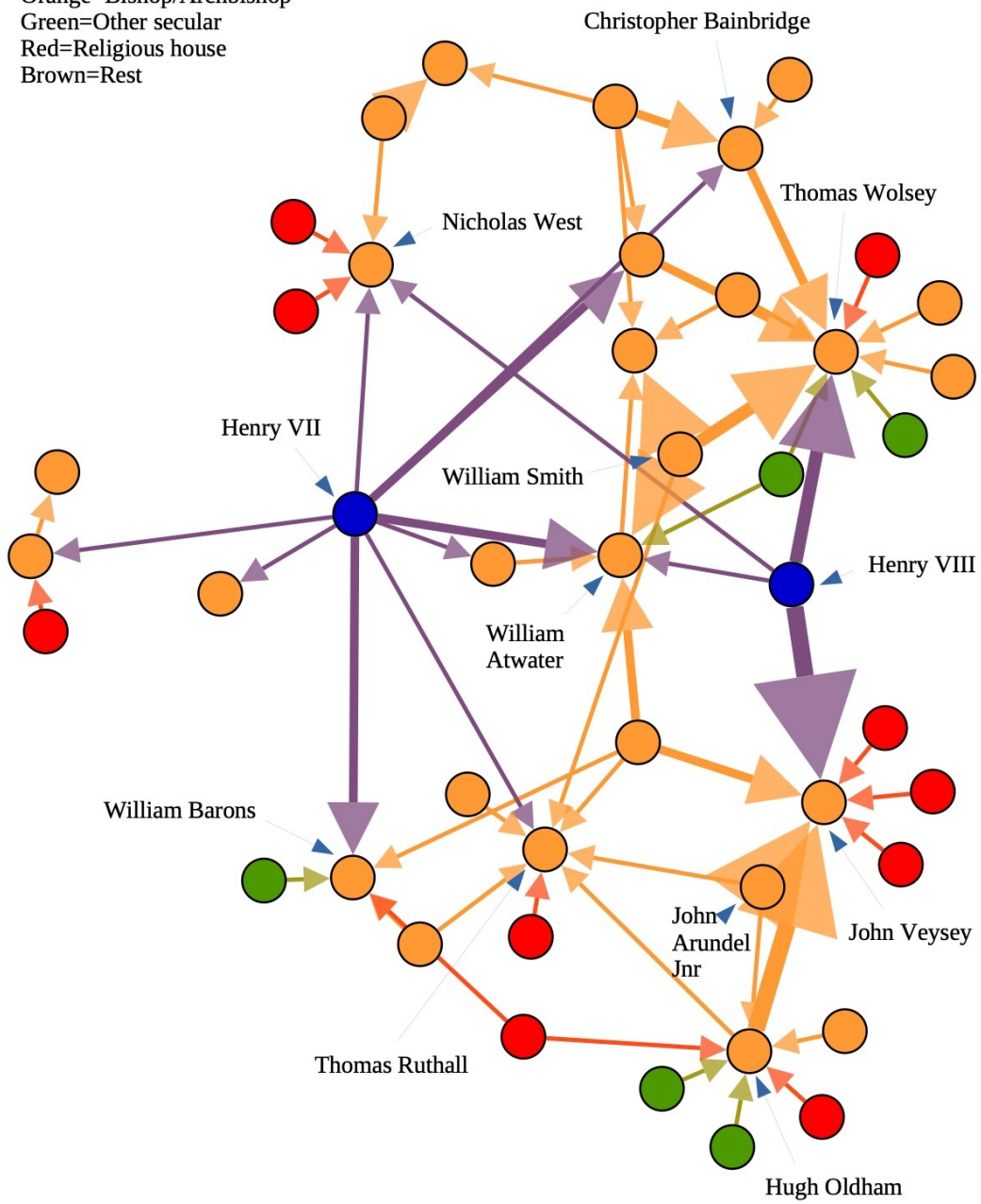






**Key**

Blue=King  
Orange=Bishop/Archbishop  
Green=Other secular  
Red=Religious house  
Brown=Rest



**Bishops' Patronage - Gephi output for period 1500 to 1519.**  
Contains 44 nodes and 63 edges. Thomas Wolsey and John Veysey feature strongly

## Appendix 8. Italian clerics who were granted 'high' benefices within the English Church

The Notes are provided to give some general background information.

Start date	End date	Who	Position	Diocese	<i>Fasti</i> reference	<i>DBD</i> reference	Notes
1380	1386	Pileus de Prata	Chancellor of Lichfield	Coventry & Lichfield	<i>Fasti</i> , x, pp. 9-10	None – go to: <a href="http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/pileo-da-prata_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/">http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/pileo-da-prata_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/</a>	Cardinal priest of S. Praxedis. Italian name Pietro Pileo di Prata. Previously bishop of Padua then Ravenna. Seems he was known as Tricapella (de tribus capellis se pileis) for the three red hats that he received
1380	1380	Ranulf de Gorce de Monterac	Archdeacon of Bath	Bath & Wells	<i>Fasti</i> , viii, pp. 14-15		Cardinal priest of S. Prudentiana. Italian name Renoul de Monteruc. Grand-nephew of pope Innocent VI.

Start date	End date	Who	Position	Diocese	<i>Fasti</i> reference	<i>DBD</i> reference	Notes
							Previously bishop of Sisteron. Aka Ranulphe de Selve; Renoul de Monteruc; Ranulphe de Gorze. Died aged 31.
1383	1389	Piero Tomacelli of Naples	Archdeacon of Taunton	Bath & Wells	<i>Fasti</i> , viii, pp. 16-17	xii, 170-83	Cardinal deacon of S. Georgius ad velum aureum. Italian name Pietro Tomacelli. Elected Pope Boniface IX, 1389.
1387	1405	Francis Carboni	Archdeacon of York	York	<i>Fasti</i> , vi, pp. 17-19	xix, 691-2	Cardinal priest of S. Susanna. Italian name Francesco Carbone. Previously bishop of Monopoli. Seems to clash with Richard Conyngston (see <i>Fasti</i> )



Start date	End date	Who	Position	Diocese	<i>Fasti</i> reference	<i>DBD</i> reference	Notes
1387	1394	Marius Bulcano	Archdeacon of Durham	Durham	<i>Fasti</i> , vi, pp. 111-3	xv, 36-7	Contested. Cardinal priest of S. Maria Nova. Italian name Marino Bulcano. Camerlengo of the Holy Roman Church in 1385.
1390	1390	Andrew Bontempi	Archdeacon of Berkshire	Salisbury	<i>Fasti</i> , iii, pp. 9-11	xii, 427-33	Cardinal priest of SS. Marcellinus et Petrus. Italian name is Andrea Bontempi (sometimes with suffix of Martini).
1390	1395	Christopher Marini	Archdeacon of Berkshire	Salisbury	<i>Fasti</i> , iii, pp. 9-11	See <a href="http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/cristoforo-marroni_(Dizionario-Biografico)">http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/cristoforo-marroni_(Dizionario-Biografico)</a>	Cardinal priest of S. Cyriacus. Italian name Cristoforo Marroni. Previously bishop of Isermia e Venafro. See <a href="https://webdept.fiu.edu">https://webdept.fiu.edu</a>

Start date	End date	Who	Position	Diocese	<i>Fasti</i> reference	<i>DBD/</i> reference	Notes
							u/~mirandas/bios1389.htm#Maroni
1393	1393	Raynald de Brancacio	Treasurer	Bath & Wells	<i>Fasti</i> , viii, pp. 10-11	xiii, 797-9	Contested. Cardinal deacon of SS. Vitus et Modestus. Italian name was Rinaldo Brancaccio. Previously administrator of several dioceses.
1396	1400	Christopher de Maronibus	Archdeacon of East Riding	York	<i>Fasti</i> , vi, pp. 22-3	See <a href="http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/cristoforo-marroni_(Dizionario-Biografico)">http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/cristoforo-marroni_(Dizionario-Biografico)</a>	Cardinal priest of S. Cyriacus. Italian name Cristoforo Marroni. Previously bishop of Isernia e Venafro. See <a href="https://webdept.fiu.edu/u/~mirandas/bios1389.htm#Maroni">https://webdept.fiu.edu/u/~mirandas/bios1389.htm#Maroni</a>
1396	1399	Christopher	Dean of	Chichester	<i>Fasti</i> , vii,	See	Contested. Cardinal

Start date	End date	Who	Position	Diocese	<i>Fasti</i> reference	<i>DBD/</i> reference	Notes
		Marini	Chichester		pp.4-6	<a href="http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/cristoforo-marroni_(Dizionario-Biografico)">http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/cristoforo-marroni_(Dizionario-Biografico)</a>	priest of S. Cyriacus. Italian name Cristoforo Marroni. Previously bishop of Isernia e Venafro. See <a href="https://webdept.fiu.edu/~mirandas/bios1389.htm#Maroni">https://webdept.fiu.edu/~mirandas/bios1389.htm#Maroni</a>
1398	1398	Henry de Minutulis	Dean of Bath & Wells	Bath & Wells	<i>Fasti</i> , viii, pp. 3-6	lxxiv, 728-33	Cardinal priest of S. Anastasia. Italian name Enrico Minutolo. Previously bishop of Bitonto, then Trani, then Naples. Chamberlain to the College of Cardinals, then Dean.
1400	1408	Angelo Acciaiuoli	Archdeacon of	Canterbury	<i>Fasti</i> , iv, pp. 6-9	i, 76-7	Cardinal bishop of Ostia. Also Dean of

Start date	End date	Who	Position	Diocese	<i>Fasti</i> reference	<i>DBD</i> reference	Notes
			Canterbury				the College of Cardinals. Italian name the same. Previously archbishop of Florence. Not clear how he and Robert Hallum held same post
1400	1400	Angelo Acciaioili	Dean of York	York	<i>Fasti</i> , vi, pp. 6-9	i, 76-7	Cardinal bishop of Ostia. Also Dean of the College of Cardinals. Italian name the same. Previously archbishop of Florence.
1403	1408	Angelo Acciaioili	Archdeacon of Exeter	Exeter	<i>Fasti</i> , ix, pp. 12-15	i, 76-7	Cardinal bishop of Ostia. Also Dean of the College of Cardinals. Italian name the same.

Start date	End date	Who	Position	Diocese	<i>Fasti</i> reference	<i>DBD</i> reference	Notes
							Previously archbishop of Florence.
1405	1412	Francis Ugucioni	Archdeacon of York	York	<i>Fasti</i> , vi, pp. 17-19	To be created	Contested. Cardinal priest of SS. Quattor Coronati. Italian name Francesco Ugucione. Previously bishop of Benevento then of Bordeaux.
1410	1410	Anthony de Calvis	Archdeacon of Exeter	Exeter	<i>Fasti</i> , ix, pp. 12-15	xvii, 9-10	Failed to take possession. Italian name Antonio Calvi. Cardinal priest of S. Marcus. Previously bishop of Imola then Todi.
1412	1414	Francis Zarabella	Archdeacon of York	York	<i>Fasti</i> , vi, pp. 17-19	<a href="http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/">http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/</a>	Contested. Cardinal deacon of SS. Cosmas et

Start date	End date	Who	Position	Diocese	<i>Fasti</i> reference	<i>DBD</i> reference	Notes
1412	1414	Raynald de Brancatiis	Archdeacon of York	York	<i>Fasti</i> , vi, pp. 17-19	francesco-zabarella	Contested. Italian name was Rinaldo Brancaccio (see <a href="http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/bbrancr.html">http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/bbrancr.html</a> and <a href="https://webdept.fiu.edu/~mirandas/bios1384.htm#Brancaccio">https://webdept.fiu.edu/~mirandas/bios1384.htm#Brancaccio</a> )
1415	1415	Arnold de Monte	Precentor	Salisbury	<i>Fasti</i> , iii, p. 15		

Start date	End date	Who	Position	Diocese	<i>Fasti</i> reference	<i>DBD</i> reference	Notes
		S. Silvestri	of Salisbury				
1419	1419	Gabriel Condulmier	Archdeacon of Durham	Durham	<i>Fasti</i> , vi, pp. 111-3	xliii, 496-502	Contested. Cardinal priest of S. Clemens. Italian name Gabriele Condulmer.
							Previously bishop of Siena. Future Pope Eugenius IV.
1423	1434	Prosper de Colonna	Archdeacon of Canterbury	Canterbury	<i>Fasti</i> , iv, pp. 6-9	xxvii, 416-418	Cardinal deacon of S. Georgius ad velum aureum. Italian name Prospero Colonna. Nephew of Oddone Colonna, pope Martin V. Uncle to other cardinals. Protector of humanists and amassed a great library.
1444	1446	Peter Barbo	Archdeacon	Salisbury	<i>Fasti</i> , iii, pp.	lxxxi, 93-8	Cardinal deacon of S.

Start date	End date	Who	Position	Diocese	<i>Fasti</i> reference	<i>DBD</i> reference	Notes
			of Salisbury		11-13		Maria Nova. Italian name Pietro Barbo. Future Pope Paul II. Maternal uncle was Pope Eugenius IV. Chamberlain to the College of Cardinals.
1452	1454	Marinus Ursinus	Archdeacon of Wiltshire	Salisbury	<i>Fasti</i> , iii, pp. 13-14	To be found	Archbishop of Taranto, 1445-72. Son of the Duke of Gravina. Italian name Marino Orsini. There were several Orsini cardinals and popes at various times. <i>Fasti</i> says he last occurs at Wiltshire in 1454, but his successor was only collated in March



Start date	End date	Who	Position	Diocese	<i>Fasti</i> reference	<i>DBD</i> reference	Notes
1473	1473	Stephen Nardini	Dean of Salisbury	Salisbury	<i>Fasti</i> , iii, pp. 3-5	lxxvii, 787-91	Cardinal deacon of S. Adrianus. Italian name Stefano Nardini. Previously abp of Milan. Also papal chamberlain. Provided to Salisbury, but ineffective.
1482	1490	John de Gigliis	Archdeacon of London	London	<i>Fasti</i> , v, pp. 7-9	liv, 674-6	Bishop of Worcester in 1497. Italian name Giovanni Gigli. Papal collector to England. For <i>ODNB</i> entry see <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/10670">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/10670</a>
1489	1497	John de Gigliis	Archdeacon of Gloucester	Worcester	<i>Fasti</i> , iv, pp. 60-2	liv, 674-6	Bishop of Worcester in 1497. Italian name Giovanni Gigli. Papal collector to England.

Start date	End date	Who	Position	Diocese	<i>Fasti</i> reference	<i>DBD</i> / reference	Notes
							For <i>ODNB</i> entry see <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref.odnb/10670">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref.odnb/10670</a>
1508	1546	Polydore Vergil	Archdeacon of Wells	Bath & Wells	<i>Fasti</i> , viii, pp. 12-14	To be created	See <i>ODNB</i> entry at <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref.odnb/28224">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref.odnb/28224</a> . Italian name Polidoro Virgili.

Appendix 9. Timeline of appointments of Italian clerks to 'high' English benefices

Name	Position	1380	1381	1382	1383	1384	1385	1386	1387	1388	1389	1390	1391	1392	1393	1394	1395	1396	1397	1398	1399	1400	1401	1402	1403	1404	1405	1406	1407
Pileus de Prata	Chancellor of Lichfield																												
Ranulf de Gorce de Montereac	Archdeacon of Bath																												
Piero Tomacelli of Naples	Archdeacon of Taunton																												
Francis Carboni	Archdeacon of York																												
Marius Bulcano	Archdeacon of Durham																												
Andrew Bontempi	Archdeacon of Berkshire																												
Christopher Marini	Archdeacon of Berkshire																												
Raynald de Brancacio	Treasurer of Bath & Wells																												
Christopher de Maronibus	Archdeacon of East Riding																												
Christopher Marini	Dean of Chichester																												
Henry de Minutulis	Dean of Bath & Wells																												
Angelo Acciaioli	Archdeacon of Canterbury																												
Angelo Acciaioli	Dean of York																												
Angelo Acciaioli	Archdeacon of Exeter																												
Francis Uguccioni	Archdeacon of York																												
Anthony de Calvis	Archdeacon of Exeter																												
Francis Zarabella	Archdeacon of York																												
Raynald de Brancatis	Archdeacon of York																												
Arnold de Monte S. Silvestri	Precentor of Salisbury																												
Gabriel Conduimier	Archdeacon of Durham																												
Prosper de Colonna	Archdeacon of Canterbury																												
Peter Barbo	Archdeacon of Salisbury																												
Marinus Ursinus	Archdeacon of Wiltshire																												
Stephen Nardini	Dean of Salisbury																												
John de Gigliis	Archdeacon of London																												
John de Gigliis	Archdeacon of Gloucester																												

**Appendix 9.** Timeline of appointments of Italian clerks to 'high' English benefices

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	1408	1409	1410	1411	1412	1413	1414	1415	1416	1417	1418	1419	1420	1421	1422	1423	1424	1425	1426	1427	1428	1429	1430	1431	1432	1433	1434	1435	
Pileus de Prata	Chancellor of Lichfield																													
Ranulf de Gorce de Montereac	Archdeacon of Bath																													
Piero Tomacelli of Naples	Archdeacon of Taunton																													
Francis Carboni	Archdeacon of York																													
Marius Bulcano	Archdeacon of Durham																													
Andrew Bontempi	Archdeacon of Berkshire																													
Christopher Marini	Archdeacon of Berkshire																													
Raynald de Brancacio	Treasurer of Bath & Wells																													
Christopher de Maronibus	Archdeacon of East Riding																													
Christopher Marini	Dean of Chichester																													
Henry de Minutulis	Dean of Bath & Wells																													
Angelo Acciaioli	Archdeacon of Canterbury																													
Angelo Acciaioli	Dean of York																													
Angelo Acciaioli	Archdeacon of Exeter																													
Francis Uguccioni	Archdeacon of York																													
Anthony de Calvis	Archdeacon of Exeter																													
Francis Zarabella	Archdeacon of York																													
Raynald de Brancatis	Archdeacon of York																													
Arnold de Monte S. Silvestri	Precentor of Salisbury																													
Gabriel Conduimier	Archdeacon of Durham																													
Prosper de Colonna	Archdeacon of Canterbury																													
Peter Barbo	Archdeacon of Salisbury																													
Marinus Ursinus	Archdeacon of Wiltshire																													
Stephen Nardini	Dean of Salisbury																													
John de Gigillis	Archdeacon of London																													
John de Gigillis	Archdeacon of Gloucester																													

Appendix 9. Timeline of appointments of Italian clerks to 'high' English benefices

Name	Position	1436	1437	1438	1439	1440	1441	1442	1443	1444	1445	1446	1447	1448	1449	1450	1451	1452	1453	1454	1455	1456	1457	1458	1459	1460	1461	1462	1463	
Pileus de Prata	Chancellor of Lichfield																													
Ranulf de Gorce de Montereac	Archdeacon of Bath																													
Piero Tomacelli of Naples	Archdeacon of Taunton																													
Francis Carboni	Archdeacon of York																													
Marius Bulcano	Archdeacon of Durham																													
Andrew Bontempi	Archdeacon of Berkshire																													
Christopher Marini	Archdeacon of Berkshire																													
Raynald de Brancacio	Treasurer of Bath & Wells																													
Christopher de Maronibus	Archdeacon of East Riding																													
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Henry de Minutulis	Dean of Bath & Wells																													
Angelo Acciaioli	Archdeacon of Canterbury																													
Angelo Acciaioli	Dean of York																													
Angelo Acciaioli	Archdeacon of Exeter																													
Francis Uguccioni	Archdeacon of York																													
Anthony de Calvis	Archdeacon of Exeter																													
Francis Zarabella	Archdeacon of York																													
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Prosper de Colonna	Archdeacon of Canterbury																													
Peter Barbo	Archdeacon of Salisbury																													
Marinus Ursinus	Archdeacon of Wiltshire																													
Stephen Nardini	Dean of Salisbury																													
John de Gigliis	Archdeacon of London																													
John de Gigliis	Archdeacon of Gloucester																													

Appendix 9. Timeline of appointments of Italian clerks to 'high' English benefices

Name	Position	1464	1465	1466	1467	1468	1469	1470	1471	1472	1473	1474	1475	1476	1477	1478	1479	1480	1481	1482	1483	1484	1485	1486	1487	1488	1489	1490	1491
Pileus de Prata	Chancellor of Lichfield																												
Ranulf de Gorce de Montereac	Archdeacon of Bath																												
Piero Tomacelli of Naples	Archdeacon of Taunton																												
Francis Carboni	Archdeacon of York																												
Marius Bulcano	Archdeacon of Durham																												
Andrew Bontempi	Archdeacon of Berkshire																												
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Raynald de Brancacio	Treasurer of Bath & Wells																												
Christopher de Maronibus	Archdeacon of East Riding																												
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Henry de Minutulis	Dean of Bath & Wells																												
Angelo Acciaioli	Archdeacon of Canterbury																												
Angelo Acciaioli	Dean of York																												
Angelo Acciaioli	Archdeacon of Exeter																												
Francis Uguccioni	Archdeacon of York																												
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Francis Zarabella	Archdeacon of York																												
Raynald de Brancatis	Archdeacon of York																												
Arnold de Monte S. Silvestri	Precentor of Salisbury																												
Gabriel Condulmier	Archdeacon of Durham																												
Prosper de Colonna	Archdeacon of Canterbury																												
Peter Barbo	Archdeacon of Salisbury																												
Marinus Ursinus	Archdeacon of Wiltshire																												
Stephen Nardini	Dean of Salisbury																												
John de Gigillis	Archdeacon of London																												
John de Gigillis	Archdeacon of Gloucester																												

**Appendix 9.** Timeline of appointments of Italian clerks to 'high' English benefices

Name	Position	1492	1493	1494	1495	1496	1497	1498
Pileus de Prata	Chancellor of Lichfield							
Ranulf de Gorce de Montereac	Archdeacon of Bath							
Piero Tomacelli of Naples	Archdeacon of Taunton							
Francis Carboni	Archdeacon of York							
Marius Bulcano	Archdeacon of Durham							
Andrew Bontempi	Archdeacon of Berkshire							
Christopher Marini	Archdeacon of Berkshire							
Raynald de Brancaccio	Treasurer of Bath & Wells							
Christopher de Maronibus	Archdeacon of East Riding							
Christopher Marini	Dean of Chichester							
Henry de Minutulis	Dean of Bath & Wells							
Angelo Acciaioli	Archdeacon of Canterbury							
Angelo Acciaioli	Dean of York							
Angelo Acciaioli	Archdeacon of Exeter							
Francis Uguccioni	Archdeacon of York							
Anthony de Calvis	Archdeacon of Exeter							
Francis Zarabella	Archdeacon of York							
Raynald de Brancatis	Archdeacon of York							
Arnold de Monte S. Silvestri	Precentor of Salisbury							
Gabriel Condulmier	Archdeacon of Durham							
Prosper de Colonna	Archdeacon of Canterbury							
Peter Barbo	Archdeacon of Salisbury							
Marinus Ursinus	Archdeacon of Wiltshire							
Stephen Nardini	Dean of Salisbury							
John de Gigliis	Archdeacon of London							
John de Gigliis	Archdeacon of Gloucester							

**Appendix 10.** List of proctors acting for the English king at the papal court after the ending of the papal schism

<b>Name</b>	<b>Started</b>	<b>Ended</b>	<b>Reference</b>	<b>Notes</b>
John Catterick	141300	141912	Harvey, p. 11	Bp of St David's (1414), then C&L (1415), then Exeter (1419).
Thomas Polton	141406	142505	Harvey, pp. 11-12	Bp of Hereford (1420), then Chichester (1421) then Worcester (1426). See also Margaret Harvey's <i>ODNB</i> article at <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/22482">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/22482</a> .
None	142505	142900	Harvey, p. 12	Gap years. Harvey says this lack of a proctor 'may help to explain the very strained relations which developed'.
Robert FitzHugh	142906	143209	Harvey, p. 13	Bp of London (1431)
Andrew Holes	143209	144412	Harvey, pp. 13-14; <i>ODNB</i>	For Jonathan Hughes' <i>ODNB</i> entry see <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/50148">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/50148</a> . Never a bishop.
Adam Moleyns?	143500	1438?	<i>ODNB</i>	See Bill Smith's <i>ODNB</i> article at <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/18918">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/18918</a> . Suggests that Moleyns followed on from the death of Polton in 1433.
William Gray	144600	145310	Harvey, pp. 14-15	Nephew of William Gray who was then bishop of Lincoln, formerly of London. The nephew left Rome on 13 October 1453 and was also Bp of Ely (1454)
William Babyngton	144900	145310	Harvey, p. 15	Died in October 1453. Active alongside Gray. Never a bishop.
Vincent Clement	145411	Unknown	Harvey, p. 15	Never a bishop
John Lax	145500	146000	Harvey, pp. 15-18	There is some doubt about both dates. Never a bishop



<b>Name</b>	<b>Started</b>	<b>Ended</b>	<b>Reference</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Peter Courtenay	146311	Unknown	Harvey, pp. 18-19	Harvey says that he presumably still acting as proctor when Pius II died (15 August 1464). Bp of Exeter (1478) then Winchester (1487)
James Goldwell	146700	147100	<i>ODNB</i>	See the entry by Rosemary C. E. Hayes at <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/10926">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/10926</a> . She says for both dates 'about'. Bp of Norwich (1472). '... on the king's service' at the court of Rome in Feb. 1473 ( <i>CPR</i> , 1467-77, p. 373).
John Sante	147400	148000	Clough, p. 204. See also <i>ODNB</i>	Abbot of Abingdon. Died January 1496. Emden ref. is <i>BRUO</i> , iii, p. 1641. No references in <i>CPRs</i> or <i>CCRs</i> to his proctorship. See Rymer v, part iii, p. 102 where he is one of several 'ambassadors, commissioners' etc. For Martin Heale's <i>ODNB</i> entry see <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/107123">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/107123</a> .
John Shirwood	147712	149301	<i>CPR</i> 1476-85, p. 60 (1477)	See also Behrens, 'Origins of the Office of English Resident Ambassador in Rome', p. 645. <i>ODNB</i> by A. J. Pollard, <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/25447">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/25447</a> where he was proctor for three kings. Bp of Durham from 148403. Died in Rome, 149301 (the year 1493 is definitely correct).
John Dunmowe	148203	148812	See notes	For 1482 see <i>CPR</i> 1476-85, p. 296. Formal appointment seems to have been in Nov. 1486 (see <i>CPR</i> 1485-94, p. 36). For 1488 see <i>CPR</i> 1485-94, p. 259. Bp of Limerick from Nov. 1486 to Apr. 1489.
Giovanni de Gigli	148601	149711	See notes	See J.B. Trapp's <i>ODNB</i> entry for the 1486 date ( <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/10670">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/10670</a> ). For 1497, see <i>CPR</i> 1494-1509, p. 139. Bp of Worcester (1497)

Name	Started	Ended	Reference	Notes
Adriano Castellesi	149406	150407	ODNB	See the entry by T.F. Mayer at <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/174">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/174</a> . He became a cardinal in May 1503, and is described as cardinal protector during the month-long reign of Pius III (September/October 1503). At the start of the reign of Julius II, Castellesi claimed to be Henry's sole representative at Rome, shouldering Silvestro Gigli aside.

**Further notes:**

Dates are given in YYYYMM format. Where 00 is used for MM, this means that only the year is known.

'Harvey' = Margaret Harvey, *England, Rome and the Papacy 1417-1464: The Study of a Relationship* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993).

The Notes are provided to give some general background information.

**Appendix 11.** The king's clerks in the calendar of patent rolls for 1446-1452

<b>Page</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Surname</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Emden reference</b>	<b>Notes</b>
527	Apr 1452	John	Arundell	King's clerk. Later bishop.	<i>BRUO</i> , i, 50-51	Prebend in St Stephen's, Westminster
52	May 1447	Robert	Ascogh	King's clerk, dean of the chapel of the household	<i>BRUC</i> , 27	Lodging in Windsor Castle
24	Nov 1446	John	Bate	King's clerk and clerk of Chancery		Tun of red Gascon wine. Sub-dean of York, 1441-1478? Prebendary of Dunnington, York, 1442-1478. Prebendary of Whitelackington, B&W, 1435-42. Canon of Exeter, 1440-78?
150	May 1448	Roland	Bere	King's clerk		Wardenship of free chapel of St Mary Magdalene, Berwick
527	Apr 1452	Laurence	Bothe	King's clerk, chancellor to Queen Margaret. Later bishop.	<i>BRUC</i> , 78-9	Archdeaconry of Stowe, Lincoln
406	Nov 1450	Richard	Bowyer	Chaplain, clerk in king's chapel		Grant of chapel of Hilbilworth
4	Nov 1446	John	Bury	Clerk and chaplain		Prebend at Windsor
204	Sep	Richard	Caunton	King's clerk, doctor of both laws	<i>BRUO</i> , i, 373-4	Grant of customs receipts

Page	Date	Name	Surname	Description	Emden reference	Notes
	1448					
75	Jul 1447	William	Cleve	King's clerk		Grant of expenses as clerk of works
76	Jun 1447	William	Cleve	King's clerk		Grant of a dwelling in Westminster Palace. Prebendary of Wisborough, Chichester, left 1448. Prebendary of Chiswick (St Paul's), 1448-69. On p. 145 described as 'clerk of the works'.
20	Nov 1446	Nicholas	Clos	King's clerk and chaplain. Later bishop.	<i>BRUC</i> , 142	Bishop of Carlisle etc. Wardenship of King's College, Cambridge
511	Dec 1451	Peter	de Tastario	King's clerk		Prebend in Lincoln (Leighton Buzzard; had briefly held South Scarle). Canon of Exeter in 1453 and 1463.
3	Oct 1446	Richard	Dutton	King's clerk, chaplain and archdeacon of Meath. <i>BRUO</i> says 'of noble birth', illegitimate	<i>BRUO</i> , i, 614	Leave of absence

Page	Date	Name	Surname	Description	Emden reference	Notes
35	May 1447	John	Faukes	King's clerk and clerk of Chancery		Clerk of parliament
332	Dec 1449	John	Faukes	King's clerk and clerk of parliament		Prebend in Lincoln (Langford Ecclesia). Prebend in C&L (Pipa Parva), 1438-1471. Died c. Feb. 1471 ( <i>Fasti</i> i, 75)
575	Mar 1452	John	Faukes	Clerk of parliament, king's clerk		Grant of money
184	Aug 1448	Richard	Fischre	King's clerk and special commissary		Revocation of protection
404	Oct 1450	William	Gray	King's clerk, S.T.P. Later bishop.	<i>BRUO</i> , ii, 809-14	Appointment as king's proctor in Rome
35	Mar 1447	John	Hamond	Chaplain, clerk of privy seal	<i>BRUC</i> 283-4 (possibly!).	Yearly income from Norwich
424	May 1451	John	Holand	King's clerk	<i>BRUC</i> 309.	Prebend in Lincoln
296	Oct 1449	Thomas	Kempe	King's clerk and chaplain of the king. Later bishop.	<i>BRUO</i> , ii, 1032-4	Current warden of St James Hospital, Westminster
332	Jul 1450	John	Ket	King's clerk		Prebend at Bridgnorth
564	Jun 1452	Roger	Keys	King's chaplain, clerk	<i>BRUO</i> , ii, 1045-6	Gift of stags
32	Mar	Thomas	Kirkeby	King's clerk		Promise to be keeper of the

Page	Date	Name	Surname	Description	Emden reference	Notes
	1446					rolls of Chancery
68	Jun 1447	Thomas	Kirkeby	King's clerk, keeper of the rolls of Chancery		Yearly wine allowance
108	Jan 1448	Thomas	Kirkeby	King's clerk. Alias John Kirkeby	No reference in Emden, nor is there a detailed entry in <i>ODNB</i> .	Appointment as keeper of the rolls of Chancery (until 1461). Appears as prebendary of Highworth (Sarum), 1464-76; prebendary of Netheravon, 1448-49; prebendary of Ramsbury, 1449-64; Warmminster, 1446-48; prebendary of Yatesbury, 1445-46. Prebendary of Ampleforth, York, 1450-1476/7 when died. Prebendary of North Kelsey, Lincoln, 1456-61 ( <i>Fasti</i> , i, 99) and of Sexaginta Solidorum ( <i>Ibid</i> , 108). Treasurer of Exeter, 1459-76 where canon since 1454; on death succeeded by John Morton. However that

Page	Date	Name	Surname	Description	Emden reference	Notes
						must be another John K, as <i>CPR</i> 1452-61, p. 531, shows that he was dead by Sept. 1459.
45	Mar 1447	Robert	Kirkham	King's clerk		Granted the estate of his parsonage
307	Feb 1450	Robert	Kyrekeham	King's clerk	No reference in Emden, nor is there a detailed entry in <i>ODNB</i>	Keeper of the hanaper in Chancery. Also became keeper of the rolls, 1461-1471. Precentor of Salisbury, 1465-71? Prebendary of Bedwyn, 1467-71; dead by 27 April 1471?
314	Mar 1450	Robert	Kyrekeham	King's clerk		Prebendary of Broudeswode in St Paul's, 1449-68. Also prebends in Lincoln (Welton Beckhall, 1448-52 and Decem Librarum, 1452-57)
332	Jul 1450	Richard	Langport	King's clerk		Living of Bradwell. A Richard Lamport held the Lincoln prebend of Nassington from

Page	Date	Name	Surname	Description	Emden reference	Notes
						1462-66. Prebendary of Holme (York), 1462-1466. Possibly archdeacon of Taunton, occ. 1481, dies June 1490?
20	Nov 1446	John	Langton	King's clerk. Later bishop.	<i>BRUC</i> 351-2.	Bishop of St David's. Cursal prebend at St David's
22	Nov 1446	John	Langton	King's clerk. Later bishop.	<i>BRUC</i> 351-2.	Bishop of St David's. Bishop's fine (hunting stuff)
82	Jul 1447	John	Launcell	King's clerk		Prebend in Abergwill
332	Jul 1450	John	Laurence	King's clerk		Living of Ludcherche
32	Mar 1447	Thomas	Levesham	King's clerk		Office of remembrancer of the Exchequer. Possibly prebend of Wellington in Hereford diocese, 1442-61. Occurs as canon of Exeter in 1434 until 1442.
19	Nov 1446	John	London	Clerk of the household chapel		Grant of the remainder of the hospital of Holy Innocents, Lincoln
243	May 1449	Thomas	Lyseux	King's clerk	<i>BRUC</i> , ii, 1197	Prebend in free chapel of Bridgnorth
471	Aug	Thomas	Mannynng	King's clerk and chaplain	<i>BRUC</i> , ii, 1216-17	Prebend in Lincoln



Page	Date	Name	Surname	Description	Emden reference	Notes
	1451					
204	Feb 1449	Roger	Mersshe	King's clerk		Prebend at Tamworth. Held Lincoln prebend of Crackpole St Mary from 1433-1459.
17	May 1447	Robert	Mouter	King's clerk		Granted office of keeper of the hanaper in Chancery
334	Aug 1450	Robert	Parker	King's clerk, chaplain		Church of St Nicholas, Calais. Prebendary of Yatesbury (Sarum), 1458-61; dead by 24 Feb. 1461.
454	May 1451	John	Pemberton	King's clerk		Prebend in Hastings Castle. Prebendary of Bishopstone (Sarum), 1468-72, then Caddinton Major, St Paul's, 1472-75 when he resigned. Prebendary of Shalford, B&W, 1462-1478 when died.
549	May 1452	George	Radelyf	King's clerk, archdeacon of Chester	<i>BRUO</i> , iii, 1538-9	Chantry licence
225	Oct 1448	William	Rede	King's clerk		Parsonage of Llangynllo
452	Jun 1451	William	Say	King's clerk	<i>BRUO</i> , iii, 1649-50	Grant of payment

Page	Date	Name	Surname	Description	Emden reference	Notes
145	Mar 1448	Henry	Sever	King's clerk and king's almoner	<i>BRUO</i> , iii, 1672-3	Grant of the goods of those who had committed suicide
401	Sep 1450	Henry	Sever	King's clerk, king's almoner	<i>BRUO</i> , iii, 1672-3	Estate as chancellor of St Paul's
32	Mar 1446	John	Stopyndon	King's clerk	See Appendix 15	Current keeper of the rolls of Chancery
304	Sep 1449	Michael	Tregorre	King's clerk, chaplain to Queen Margaret	<i>BRUO</i> , iii, 1894-5	Granted temporalities of Dublin (next became bishop thereof)
2	Sep 1446	Richard	Wellys	King's clerk		Granted a prebendary in Windsor
403	Oct 1450	John	Wylton	King's clerk, chaplain		Church of Edyngthorp

**Notes:**

Forty-two men listed, of whom six became bishops (none in Wales).

**Appendix 12.** The king's clerks in the calendar of patent rolls for 1467-1477

<b>Page</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Surname</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Emden reference</b>	<b>Notes</b>
259	Apr 1471	John	Alcok	King's clerk. Later bishop.	<i>BRUC</i> 5-6.	Deanery of the free college of chapel of St Stephen at Westminster
259	Apr 1471	John	Alcok	King's clerk. Later bishop.	<i>BRUC</i> 5-6.	Office of keeper of the rolls of Chancery
591	Jul 1476	John	Aleyn	King's clerk	<i>BRUC</i> , i, 365-6	Presentation to a moiety of the church of Gedlyng, York diocese
415	Jan 1474	Richard	Bele	Good service in the office of the signet		Grant to become king's clerk in office of the privy seal
597	Oct 1476	Robert	Bothe	King's clerk	<i>BRUC</i> 79-80.	Resignation from church of St Matthew, Ipswich
418	Dec 1473	Stephen	Close	King's clerk		Surrender of grant to hospital of St Mary, Osprenge. Prebendary of Welton Royal, Lincoln, 1458-71.
415	Feb 1474	Edmund	Conynesburg h	King's clerk and chaplain	<i>BRUC</i> 156.	Appointment as king's proctor in the court of Rome
396	Jul 1473	John	Coryngdon	King's clerk		Prebend or canony in the free chapel of St George at Windsor. Prebendary of Alton Borealis, Sarum, occ. 1486,

Page	Date	Name	Surname	Description	Emden reference	Notes
						d. by Sept. 1495.
332	Mar 1472	Peter	Courtenay	King's clerk and secretary. Later bishop.	<i>BRUO</i> , i, 499-500	Deanery of the free college of chapel of St Stephen at Westminster on demise of John Alcock, last dean
228	Nov 1470	Peter	Courteney	King's clerk and secretary. Later bishop.	<i>BRUO</i> , i, 499-500	Mastership of the king's free chapel or hospital of St Anthony, London
359	Oct 1472	Thomas	Danet	King's clerk	<i>BRUO</i> , i, 540-1	Prebend or canony in the free chapel of St George at Windsor
125	Nov 1468	John	Davyson	King's clerk	<i>BRUO</i> , i, 552	Grant of next presentation to the church of Sendirkase in Picardy
244	Dec 1470	John	Davyson	King's clerk	<i>BRUO</i> , i, 552	Ratification of estate as prebendary in free chapel of St Stephen, Westminster
245	Oct 1470	John	Davyson	Clerk	<i>BRUO</i> , i, 552	Grant of the office of keeper or clerk of the hanaper of Chancery
276	Jul 1471	William	Dudley	King's clerk and dean of the king's chapel. Later bishop.	<i>BRUO</i> , i, 599-600	Deanery of the king's free chapel of Briggennorth
363	Oct 1472	William	Dudley	King's clerk and dean of the king's chapel. Later bishop.	<i>BRUO</i> , i, 599-600	Assignment of next presentation to St Stephen's chapel, Westminster
11	Jun	John	Faukes	King's clerk.		Ratification as warden or dean of

Page	Date	Name	Surname	Description	Emden reference	Notes
	1467					king's free chapel in Windsor Castle
234	Jan 1471	John	Faukes	King's clerk		Ratification of estate as warden or dean at Windsor. Prebend in Lincoln (Langford Ecclesia). Prebend in C&L (Pipa Parva), 1438-1471. Died c. Feb. 1471 ( <i>Fasti</i> i, 75)
125	Dec 1468	James	Goldewell	King's clerk, doctor of laws, king's proctor at Rome. Later bishop.	<i>BRUO</i> , ii, 783-86	Licence to accept a bishopric
32	Sep 1467	John	Gunthorp	King's clerk, secretary of the queen	<i>BRUC</i> 275-7	Mastership of King's Hall, Cambridge
120	Dec 1468	John	Gunthorp	King's clerk and king's almoner	<i>BRUC</i> 275-7	Grant of goods and chattels of felons and all deadands
306	Feb 1472	John	Gunthorp	King's clerk and almoner	<i>BRUC</i> 275-7	Grant of prebend and canonry within the chapel of St Stephen at Westminster
260	Jun 1471	John	Gunthorpe	King's clerk	<i>BRUO</i> , ii, 837	Office of clerk of the Parliament
111	Apr 1469	Robert	Kirkeham	King's clerk and keeper of the rolls of Chancery		Execution of a mandate. Keeper of the hanaper in Chancery. Also

Page	Date	Name	Surname	Description	Emden reference	Notes
						became keeper of the rolls, 1461-1471. Precentor of Salisbury, 1465-71? Prebendary of Bedwyn, 1467-71; dead by 27 April 1471? Prebendary of Broundeswode in St Paul's, 1449-68. Also prebends in Lincoln (Welton Beckhall, 1448-52 and Decem Librarum, 1452-57)
549	Oct 1475	Oliver	Kyng	King's clerk. Later bishop.		Grant of alien priories on Channel Islands. Future archdeacon of Oxford and bishop of Exeter.
461	Jul 1474	Thomas	Lecche	King's clerk		Presentation to the church of Wyke Resynden
235	Jan 1471	Ralph	Makerell	King's clerk, chancellor to the king's consort	<i>BRUO</i> , iii, 2194	Prebend in St Stephen's, Westminster
63	Jul 1467	Roger	Malmesbury	King's clerk		Currently warden of St James's hospital, Westminster
601	Nov 1476	Richard	Marten	King's clerk and councillor. Later bishop (St David's)	<i>BRUO</i> , ii, 1236-7	Grant of income from the forest of Dene
262	Jun	Richard	Martyn	King's clerk and councillor.	<i>BRUO</i> , ii,	Chancellor of the earldom of March

Page	Date	Name	Surname	Description	Emden reference	Notes
	1471			Later bishop (St David's)	1236-7	
600	Oct 1476	Richard	Martyn	King's clerk and councillor. Later bishop (St David's)	<i>BRUO</i> , ii, 1236-7	Deanery of the king's free chapel of Briggenorth
244	Dec 1470	William	Morland	King's clerk		Ratification of estate as prebendary in free chapel of St Stephen, Westminster. Prebendary of Beminster Parva, Sarum, 1471-82.
245	Dec 1470	William	Morland	King's clerk and keeper of the rolls of Chancery		Grant of wine
245	Feb 1471	William	Morland	King's clerk		Deanery of the king's free chapel of St George at Windsor
334	Mar 1472	John	Morton	King's clerk. Later bishop.	<i>BRUO</i> , 1318-20	Office of keeper of the rolls of Chancery
366	Jul 1472	John	Morton	King's clerk and keeper of the rolls of Chancery. Later bishop.	<i>BRUO</i> , 1318-20	Grant of wine
516	May 1475	John	Morton	King's clerk. Later bishop.	<i>BRUO</i> , 1318-20	Office of keeper of the rolls of Chancery – subsequent grant
304	Nov 1471	Thomas	Neville	King's clerk	<i>BRUO</i> , ii, 1351-2	General pardon

Page	Date	Name	Surname	Description	Emden reference	Notes
274	Jul 1471	John	Pemberton	King's clerk		Ratification of estate as master or warden of the hospital of St Mary, Osprenge. Prebend in Hastings Castle. Prebendary of Bishopstone (Sarum), 1468-72, then Caddinton Major, St Paul's, 1472-75 when he resigned. Prebendary of Shalford, B&W, 1462-1478 when died.
19	Jul 1467	Thomas	Rotherham	King's clerk and keeper of the privy seal. Later bishop.	<i>BRUO</i> , iii, 1593-6	Yearly rent of 360 marks
42	Oct 1467	Thomas	Rotherham	King's clerk and keeper of the privy seal. Later bishop.	<i>BRUO</i> , iii, 1593-6	Grant of land as provost of the king's college at Whyngnham, Kent
451	Jun 1474	John	Russell	King's clerk and councillor and keeper of the privy seal. Later bishop.	<i>BRUO</i> , iii, 1609-11	Grant of recurring payments
32	Sep 1467	Thomas	Seintjuste	King's chaplain. D.Mus		Deceased as master of King's Hall. Replaced by Gunthorpe. Prebendary of Leighton Manor, Lincoln, 1465-67. Prebendary of Preston, Hereford, 1467. Precentor of Sarum, Jan. 1467,



Page	Date	Name	Surname	Description	Emden reference	Notes
						d. by Sept. 1467.
303	Nov 1471	John	Seymour	King's clerk	<i>BRUO</i> , iii, 1675-76	Prebend or canonry in the free chapel of St George at Windsor
393	Mar 1473	Robert	Slymbrige	King's clerk	<i>BRUO</i> , iii, 1712-13	Licence to sue in the court of Rome for deanery of Westbury
231	Dec 1470	William	Towne	King's clerk and almoner		Grant of goods and chattels of felons and all deodands. Precentor of Lincoln, 1471. Prebendary of Dunham & Newport, Lincoln, 1473-80. Prebendary of Stow-in-Lindsey, Lincoln, 1460-71.
544	Aug 1475	Robert	Wodelarke	King's clerk		Confirmation of the foundation of the college of St Katherine the Virgin at Cambridge
52	Jan 1468	Richard	Wodward	King's clerk		Presentation to church of Alvescote, Lincoln diocesis

**Notes:**

Thirty-two men listed, of whom nine became bishops (one in Wales).

**Appendix 13.** The benefices granted to Henry Bowet (although not all of these were effective)

<b>Benefice name</b>	<b>Benefice type</b>	<b>Patron name</b>	<b>Date entered (yyymm)</b>	<b>Date left (yyymm)</b>	<b>Valor valuation (in pence)</b>
Croft, Yorks	Rector	Edward III	137010	137600	5140
Croft, Yorks	Dean	Robert Wikeford	138300	139100	5140
Dublin, St Patrick's	Dean	John Colton, Abp of Armagh	138300	139100	16000 (CPL, iv, 383)
Lincoln	Canon	John Buckingham	138602	138703	13710
Northampton	Archdeacon	John Buckingham	138602	138603	25764
Lincoln	Archdeacon	John Buckingham	138703	140108	43188
Salisbury	Canon	John Waltham	139000	140204	28808
Leighton Buzzard	Prebendary	John Buckingham	139100	139100	13710
Bishop's Cleeve, Gloucs	Rector	Robert Tideman	139100	139100	20230
Jesmond (free chapel)	Rector	Richard II	139202		No entry
St Paul's, London	Canon	Robert Braybrooke	139910	140010	2720
York	Canon	Richard Scrope Snr	140002	140100	10305
Howden	Canon	John de Hemmingborough, Prior of Durham	139400	140000	2320

**Appendix 14.** The benefices granted to Oliver King (although not all of these were effective)

<b>Benefice name</b>	<b>Benefice type</b>	<b>Patron name</b>	<b>Date entered (yyymm)</b>	<b>Date left (yyymm)</b>	<b>Value/ valuation (in pence)</b>
Broughton, Hants	Rector	John Pakenham	146607	149000	8999
St John's Hospital, Dorchester	Warden	Edward IV	147311	147711	
Swanton Abbot, Norfolk	Rector	Thomas Pakefeld, abbot of St Benet of Hulme	147711	147811	1558
Moulton, Suffolk	Rector	Thomas Bourchier	147811	148002	
St Pierre, Calais	Rector	Edward IV	148002	148005	
York	Canon	Laurence Booth	148003	148802	4285
All Hallows the Great, London	Rector	Edward IV	148005	148207	10056
St George's Chapel, Windsor	Canon	Edward IV	148010	150308	12262
Southwell <sup>s</sup>	Canon	Thomas Rotherham	148011	149302	4029
Hereford	Canon	Thomas Millyng		148101	833
Cliffe at Hoo, Kent	Rector	Thomas Bourchier	148107		12000
Oxford	Archdeacon	John Russell	148204	149301	17112
St Paul's, London	Canon	Thomas Kemp	148705	149210	4240
Berkshire	Archdeacon	Thomas Langton	148709	149210	13180

<b>Benefice name</b>	<b>Benefice type</b>	<b>Patron name</b>	<b>Date entered (yyymm)</b>	<b>Date left (yyymm)</b>	<b>Valor valuation (in pence)</b>
Bath & Wells	Canon	Robert Stillington	148802	149007	1280
Fridaythorpe	Prebendary	Thomas Rotherham	148803	149012	9312
Taunton	Archdeacon	Robert Stillington	149007	149210	20012
Beverley	Canon	Thomas Rotherham	149011	149210	11296
Exeter	Canon	Richard Fox	149000	149207	960
Hereford	Dean	Thomas Millyng	149103	149106	9193
St Stephen's Chapel, Westminster	Canon	Henry VII		149212	
St Chad's, Shrewsbury	Dean	Henry VII		149210	1920

§ King held the Southwell prebend of Beckingham (see Reg. Rotherham, York, xxiii, f. 104Av which says that by 27 February 1493 Oliver King had freely resigned as prebendary of Beckingham).

**Appendix 15.** The benefices granted to John Stoppyndon (see also Appendix 11)

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date entered</b>	<b>Date left</b>	<b>Patron</b>	<b>Value in Taxatio (pence)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Rector of East Hended, Berks			Unknown bp of Salisbury	1920	Will of JS (see <a href="http://www.kentarchaeology.org.uk/Research/Libr/Wills/Lbth/BK21/page%20038.htm">http://www.kentarchaeology.org.uk/Research/Libr/Wills/Lbth/BK21/page%20038.htm</a> ) where he says 'where in my younger days I was Rector'. Occurs 1421.
Canon of Crediton with prebendary	142105	142211	Edmund Lacy, bp Exeter		See Jocelyn Otway-Ruthven. 1939. <i>The King's Secretary and the Signet Office in the XV Century, Thirwall Prize Essay</i> ; 1937 (Cambridge, London: Cambridge University Press), pp. 171-2.
Canon of Evreux, Rouen and Lisieux	142200		Unknown bp of Salisbury		<i>CPL</i> , vii, p. 222. Also had prebend in Rouen (Otway-Ruthven).
Rector of Wickhambreaux, Kent	142200		Henry Chichele, abp Cant. (by devolution)	8000	<i>CPL</i> , vii, p. 222. <i>Reg. Chichele</i> (ed. Jacob), i, p. 201. Also mentioned in the will of JS.
Caddington Minor, prebendary (London)	142501	143002	John Kemp	3840	<i>Fasti</i> v, 26. Ordained deacon, 24 Mar. 1425 ( <i>Reg. Chichele</i> (ed. Jacob), iv, p. 369).
Rector of St Ewe, Cornwall	142607	142707	Henry VI	1920	<i>CPR</i> 1422-29. p. 345.
Chancellor of Chichester	143005		Henry VI		<i>CPR</i> 1429-36, p. 57. In king's hands as bishopric vacant
Canon of Salisbury	143207	144211	Robert Nevill	2080	<i>Fasti</i> , iii, 101

Name	Date entered	Date left	Patron	Value in Taxatio (pence)	Notes
with preb. of Yetminster Prima					
Archdeacon of Colchester	143305	144004	Robert FitzHugh		<i>Fasti</i> v, 14
Canon and prebend in St Stephen's chapel, Westminster	143307		Henry VI		<i>CPR</i> 1429-36, p. 284. Still in June 1437 ( <i>CPR</i> 1436-41, p. 70). See also Elizabeth Biggs, <i>St Stephen's College, Westminster: A Royal Chapel and English Kingship, 1348-1548</i> , Studies in the History of Medieval Religion, 50 (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2020), pp. 111, 129.
Archdeacon of Dorset	144007	144705	William Aiscough		<i>Fasti</i> , iii, 8
Canon of Wells with preb. of Haselbere	144104	144705	John Stafford	2400	<i>Fasti</i> , viii, 48
Vicar of Minster (in Thanet)	144200		Henry Chichele, abp Cant.	4800	TNA C 270/35/19
Canon of York and prebend of South Cave	144211	144705	John Kemp	25600	<i>Fasti</i> , vi, 43
Canon and prebendary of Wimborne Minster		144705	Henry VI	9600	<i>CPL</i> , viii, p. 540.
Canon and prebendary of Wingham, Kent.		144705	Henry Chichele, abp Cant.		Prebend of Rating ( <i>Reg. Chichele, Canterbury</i> , i, p. 221); <i>CPL</i> , viii, p. 540. The value of the Rating prebend is not shown in the <i>Taxatio</i> .

Name	Date entered	Date left	Patron	Value in Taxatio (pence)	Notes
Canon and prebendary of the Chapel Royal, Westminster		144705	Henry VI		CPL, viii, p. 540. Occurs Sept. 1435.
Dean of the king's free chapel of Tettenhall, Staffs		144705	Henry VI	8000	See <a href="http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/staffs/vol3/pp315-321">http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/staffs/vol3/pp315-321</a> . Occurs 143509. See also CPL viii, 540. The valuation at 50 marks dates from 1272 (see <i>Taxatio</i> entry).
Master of the Hospital of St Thomas the Martyr, Eastbridge, Canterbury	143000		Henry Chichele, abp Cant.		
Rector of Wonsington, Winchester diocese		144705	Henry Beaufort, bp of Winchester	9600	Foss, <i>Canterbury Archiepiscopates</i> (Reg. Stafford (Canterbury) Part 1, f. 93.)
Was made keeper of the hanaper in October 1426					See CPR 1422-29, p. 379.
Master of the Rolls, 1438-11 to 1447-03					See <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/92826">https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/92826</a> .

**Note:** There is no entry in *BRUO* or *BRUC* for Stoppyndon. However, TNA C 270/35/19, dating from 1442, describes him as 'Master John Stoppyndon'. A good summary of Stoppyndon's life is given in Malcolm Richardson, 'Early Equity Judges: Keepers of the Rolls of Chancery, 1415-1447', *American Journal of Legal History*, 36.4 (1992), 441-65 (pp. 460-4).



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CCA-DCc-ChAnt/M/269	Letter from John Morton
CCA-DCc/ChAnt/N/14	Nomination from the prior of Norwich
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