

THE CARE OF COUNTRY CHURCHES IN
HEREFORDSHIRE, c. 1662-1762,
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE
ARCHDEACONRY OF HEREFORD AND
THE CAPITULAR PECULIARS

Thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
at the University of Leicester

by

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ABSTRACT

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Title of thesis: The Care of Country Churches in Herefordshire, c. 1662-1762, with Special Reference to the Archdeaconry of Hereford and the Capitular Peculiars.

Historians discussing Anglican churches of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries have often claimed that churches were neglected. That claim is still made, although it has also been questioned for over fifty years. There is, therefore, a need to investigate the care of churches as a distinct issue within ecclesiastical administration.

This thesis focuses on a selection of 77 rural churches and three chapels in Herefordshire. It is based on detailed use of archives, supplemented by antiquarian notes, illustrations and the buildings themselves. Two assumptions are made. Firstly attention to detail is inescapable if the investigation is to reflect the continuing nature of care, year in and year out. Secondly full attention needs to be given to the people involved as well as the buildings.

Nine chapters are concerned with the system of oversight and with the churches. Oversight was fairly close, sometimes rigorous. Maintenance and restoration were an ordinary part of parish life and a considerable amount of rebuilding has been overlooked. Liturgical requirements, social hierarchies and practical problems all influenced the ordering and furnishing of churches. The common ideal was 'decency'.

Six chapters examine the contribution made by clergy and laity within a complex pattern of commitments. Clergy played a substantial and generally effective part through oversight, ownership of tithes and help given to congregations. Neglect by the laity was unusual. Lay impropriators and tithe farmers were, with few exceptions, conscientious. Rural communities spent almost annually on maintenance. Such communities, like prominent individuals, improved, restored and rebuilt churches and they provided many of the craftsmen. Their churchwardens undertook and fulfilled substantial responsibilities.

In country places the parish church or an Anglican chapel was the most important public building. It was cared for to the best of everyone's ability, often at heavy cost to people with very limited resources.

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Abbreviations

A.	Archdeaconry
a.	acres
Add.	Additional
B.L.	British Library
C	Century
c.	circa
cent.	century
Co.	County
Cor.	Corinthians
D.	Diocese
(D)	Dean of Hereford's Peculiar
d.	died
D.N.B.	Dictionary of National Biography
ed.(s)	editor(s)
edn(s)	edition(s)
G.	Grandison
H	Hereford
H.C.A.	Hereford Cathedral Archives
H'hold	Household
H.R.L.	Hereford Reference Library
H.R.O.	Herefordshire Record Office
L	Lower
ms.(s)	manuscript(s)
no.	number
NR	Number of Returns
N.W.	North West
(P)	Prebendal Peculiar
p., pp.	page(s)

Pop.	Population
pt	part
R.	River
R.C.H.M.	Royal Commission on Historical Monuments
Rev.	Reverend
rev.	revised
17th	seventeenth
St	Saint
S.W.	South West
T.W.N.F.C.	Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists Field Club
U	Upper
unpubl.	unpublished
V.	Very
v.	verso
vol.(s)	volume(s)
W	Woolhope (<u>Pays</u>)
WZ	Welsh Zone

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A Note on Place Names, Terminology and Dating**PLACE NAMES**

This thesis follows the spellings used by the Ordnance Survey. The following should be noted.

Abbey Dore	Also called Dore , a name frequently used in contemporary documents. It should not be confused with Dorstone .
Archenfield	The name of a deanery and a region. In contemporary documents it is usually spelt Irchingfield .
Bullingham	Also known as Bullinghope . On the south bank of the Wye opposite Hereford. It should not be confused with either Ballingham six miles south-east of Hereford or Bollingham , a chapel in the parish of Eardisley. The old and new churches at Upper Bullingham are in the civil parish of Grafton , under which they are listed by R.C.H.M. and Pevsner.
Ewyas	This name appears in the parish of Ewyas Harold, the hundred of Ewyas Lacy and the region of Ewyas. The alternative spelling Ewias remains current.
Kings Caple	The first part of this name is spelt both with and without an apostrophe. Even the Ordnance Survey is inconsistent. This thesis omits the apostrophe in line with Herefordshire usage for other place names.
Llangarron	also spelt Llangarren and, in the eighteenth century, Llangarran .
Pudleston	in Herefordshire has one 'd'.
Richards Castle	In the Herefordshire section of the parish the name is spelt without an apostrophe; in the Shropshire section it is spelt with one.
St Margarets	This is either spelt without an apostrophe or the final 's' is omitted. Writers from outside the county tend to use the final 's' with an apostrophe.

St Weonards	Spelt without an apostrophe.
Tyberton	This spelling is now adopted rather than Tibberton to distinguish the Herefordshire parish from the Gloucestershire one of the same name.
Wolphy	The name of a hundred, also spelt Wolphey .
Wormelow	The name of a hundred, also spelt Wormilow .

TERMINOLOGY

Ancient Parish

In census terminology, an area which had become an ecclesiastical parish by 1841.

Church and Chapel

The terms church and chapel had several different meanings at this time.

The term **church**, in reference to church buildings, could mean:

- A. The whole building, as today.
- B. The body of the church, maintained by the parish, as distinct from the chancel. For example "Is the Roof both of Church and Chancel well covered?"¹
- C. A place of worship serving a chapelry.²

The term **chapel** meant for Anglicans:

- A. A parochial chapel, belonging to a specific parish, which appointed its own wardens and maintained its own church. Usually with full rights of baptism, marriage and burial, but practice varied. Effectively a parish without an endowment.³

-
- 1. P. [Bisse], *Articles of Enquiry Exhibited ... within the Diocese of Hereford ... at the Primary Visitation of ... Philip [Bisse] ...* (1716), p. 1.
 - 2. For example H.R.O. HD15/14, Visitation return for Westhide 1722.
 - 3. R. Burn, *Ecclesiastical Law*, (2 vols, 1763), 1, pp. 216-217; H.R.O. HD5/14/36, Visitation return for Westhide, a parochial chapel of Stoke Edith, 1722.

- B. A chapel of ease used for Sunday services, but not normally for sacraments. It was usually maintained out of the church rate for its parish and by the tithe owner for the chapelry.⁴
- C. A parish church, which was neither a parochial chapel nor a chapel of ease, but which ^{was} dependent on another parish for pastoral care. Examples in Herefordshire include Kings Caple, a "chapelry" of Sellack, and Llangarron, a "chapelry" of Lugwardine.

Minister

This term is regularly used in visitation articles and other contemporary documents to describe the incumbent or perpetual curate of an Anglican parish. It is not used of stipendiary curates.

DATING

Before 1752 dates follow the Old Style or Julian calendar, eleven days behind the New Style or Gregorian calendar; but the year is taken to begin on 1 January, not 25 March. In one or two instances, where there is a risk of confusion, dates are given in the double form, e.g. 16 February 1703/4.

A brief account of the change from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar is given in C.R. Cheney & M. Jones, eds, A Handbook of Dates for Students of British History, Royal Historical Society Guides and Handbooks 4 (new edn, 2000), pp. 17-19. A calendar for the transitional year, 1752, is given in the same handbook, pp. 234-235.

4. Burn, Ecclesiastical Law, 1, p. 216; H.R.O. HD7/16/482, HD7/26, HD7/30, Visitation returns for the parish of Eardisley and the chapel of Bollingham, 1673, 1688, 1695.

CHAPTER ONE. INTRODUCTION

"... the whole Church ought to be preserved in a Condition, worthy of that Being, whose it is ..."¹

The Anglican church of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries for a long time had a reputation for complacency, inadequacy and neglect of its churches which is still under debate. Where church buildings are concerned, historians writing before 1960 remained almost entirely critical and crucially the balance of evidence presented and its interpretation were negative. Older churches were frequently in disrepair and too few new ones were built. Examples of good care, usually in individual parishes, are contrasted with examples of alleged negligence throughout entire dioceses and archdeaconries; while expressions of concern in visitation charges are advanced as proof of widespread neglect.² The net of disapproval is cast wide to include plate, linen and books; and lack of these is attributed to negligence even in the aftermath of the Interregnum. Aesthetic and liturgical preferences also weight the balance. Abbey and Overton condemn the -

1. T. Secker, 'A charge delivered to the clergy of the diocese of Oxford in the year 1750', in Eight Charges delivered to the Clergy of the Dioceses of Oxford and Canterbury (1769), p. 150.
2. C.J. Abbey and J.H. Overton, The English Church in the Eighteenth Century (2 vols, 1878), 1, pp. 409-438; J.W. Legg, English Church Life from the Restoration to the Tractarian Movement Considered in Some of its Neglected or Forgotten Features (1914), pp. 119-125; N. Sykes, Church and State in England in the XVIIIth Century (1934), pp. 20, 232, 240; N. Sykes, From Sheldon to Secker. Aspects of Church History, 1660-1768 (1959), pp. 9-10.

eighteenth century church for building in the classical style.³ Legg, a high churchman, treats the lack of altar rails in the diocese of Carlisle in 1704 as a deficiency.⁴ Abbey and Overton and Sykes condemn "whitewashing", which was standard practice at the time.⁵

But by 1959 the emphasis of debate was changing. Carpenter says nothing about churches except to mention Sir Roger de Coverley's improvements and until the middle of the nineteen-eighties debate centred on other issues.⁶ None of the contributors to Bennett and Walsh or to O'Day and Heal discusses church buildings. Gilbert stresses pastoral failure, Jenkins pastoral endeavour.⁷ But in 1986 parish churches re-enter the discussion. Rupp has two pages on them, observing that

The land was covered with parish churches, great and small. Most of them were centuries old, many of them ancient, patched and reshaped many times.

He describes the interiors of the day and draws attention to efforts to remedy deficiencies as well as to disrepair and scruffiness.⁸ Since then historians have remained divided. Virgin's comments on the poor state of rural churches and the problems of accommodating a growing population relate only to the period from

-
- 3. Abbey and Overton, English Church, 1, p. 413.
 - 4. Legg, Church Life, p. 122.
 - 5. Abbey and Overton, English Church, 1, p. 416; Sykes, Sheldon to Secker, p. 20;
 - 6. S.C. Carpenter, Eighteenth Century Church and People (1959), pp. 171-172.
 - 7. G. V. Bennett and J. D. Walsh, Essays in Modern Church History (1965); R. O'Day and F. Heal, Princes and Paupers in the English Church, 1500-1800 (1981); A. D. Gilbert, Religion and Society in Industrial England. Church, Chapel and Social Change, 1740-1914 (1976); G. H. Jenkins, Literature, Religion and Society in Wales, 1660-1730 (1978).
 - 8. E. G. Rupp, Religion in England, 1699-1791 (1986), pp. 520.

1775 and are outside the limits set for this thesis. However his work underlines the significance of church buildings as a criterion for assessing the health of the church.⁹ And more recently two studies of the parish have re-iterated the belief in negligence and neglect.¹⁰

Others have queried this view. Spurr has emphasised the role of the parish church as "a theatre of social and political precedence" and of the chancel as a theatre for "the drama of the eucharist", as well as drawing attention to varying standards in the ordering of chancels, the provision of plate and the adorning of churches.¹¹ Walsh and Taylor take the view that the eighteenth century was less careless of church buildings and of the need to build new churches than is sometimes claimed. Significantly, like Legg, they stress the fact that the Victorians had a vested interest in "displaying the eighteenth century as a dark backcloth against which to depict the achievements of reform."¹² Since then Jacob has published a general study of the contribution made by the laity to the life of the church between 1689 and 1750 in which he emphasises how active they were in different ways, not least in rebuilding and furnishing churches; a

-
9. P. Virgin, The Church in an Age of Negligence. Ecclesiastical Structure and Problems of Church Reform, 1700-1840 (1989), pp. 5, 16-17, 23, 26, 142-143.
 10. A. Jones, A Thousand Years of the English Parish. Medieval Patterns and Modern Interpretations (2000), pp. 200-202; N.J.G. Pounds, A History of the English Parish. The Culture of Religion from Augustine to Victoria (2000), pp. 395-397.
 11. J. Spurr, The Restoration Church of England, 1646-1689 (1991), pp. 167, 349-350, 362-364.
 12. J. Walsh & S. Taylor, 'Introduction: the church and Anglicanism in the 'long' eighteenth century', in J. Walsh, C. Haydon and S. Taylor, eds, The Church of England, c.1680-1833. From Toleration to Tractarianism (1993), pp. 9-10, 64; Legg, Church Life, p. vii.

view endorsed by Gibson.¹³ This more favourable evaluation has been supported, on balance, by historians working on individual dioceses, archdeaconries and counties for about fifty years or so. But their work has had limited influence because so few monographs have been published. Much is contained in theses, episcopal biographies and records society publications which have a limited readership. It will, however, be drawn on widely for comparative purposes in the body of this thesis. There has, however, been a lack of research based on detailed examination of the documentary evidence relating to churches, and this thesis is an attempt to see what may be gained by such an approach.

Architectural writers have been less concerned with maintenance, but their work has laid the foundations of our understanding of fabric and furnishings. There are many books on churches - architectural histories, inventories and gazetteers - of which a number are of particular significance. Cox and Ford, in 1937, devote only two pages to post-medieval churches, but they express surprise that writers on Gothic churches "have failed to grasp the charm and appropriateness of these later productions" and they condemn "meddlesome Gothicising architects, parsons and landlords" for failure to appreciate early modern craftsmanship, as also bishops still prone to "anti-Renaissance " prejudice.¹⁴ However their hope that more attention would be paid to post-medieval churches has been realised in Whiffen's work on Stuart and Georgian churches and Basil Clarke's study, which examines the range of activity which contributed to the care of churches in the eighteenth century.¹⁵ Randall, too, gives

13. W.M. Jacob, Lay People and Religion in the Early Eighteenth Century (1996), pp. 186-222; W. Gibson, The Church of England, 1688-1832. Unity and Accord (2001), pp. 168-172.

14. J. C. Cox and C. B. Ford, The Parish Churches of England (2nd edn 1937), p. 64.

15. M. Whiffen, Stuart and Georgian Churches. The Architecture of the Church of England outside London, 1603-1837 (1948); B.F.L. Clarke, The Building of the Eighteenth-Century Church (1963).

substantial attention to early modern churches and places the more notable local churches, like Monnington-on-Wye, Tyberton and Shobdon in Herefordshire, within a national context.¹⁶

There have been two books on the relationship between the Anglican liturgy and architecture. Addleshaw and Etchells emphasise legal requirements and liturgical centres: the altar, pulpit and font.¹⁷ Yates, nearly 45 years later, places Anglican churches in the context of post-Reformation Europe. For Britain between 1660 and 1840 he proposes a sequence of conservatism, experiment and a return to orthodoxy in the arrangement of furnishings, and stresses ways of treating the pulpit as a focal point in accordance with Protestant emphasis on preaching and teaching. Like Legg and Walsh and Taylor, he considers that the bad reputation of the eighteenth century church is to a great extent due to Victorian prejudice.¹⁸

Pre-eminent among inventories are those of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, with their authoritative architectural descriptions. Those for Herefordshire were published in the nineteen thirties, so the survey ends in 1714, but they describe churches which are now much more ruinous than they were sixty-five years ago.¹⁹ Because they were published early they became the principal source for Pevsner who has provided the only complete gazetteer of all the county's churches.²⁰ Equally influential is Betjeman's guide listing a selection

16. G. Randall, The English Parish Church (1982), pp. 110, 125-126, 135-136, 173.

17. G.W.O. Addleshaw and F. Etchells, The Architectural Setting of Anglican Worship (1949), pp. 37-107, 148-202.

18. N. Yates, Buildings, Faith and Worship. The Liturgical Arrangement of Anglican Churches, 1600-1900 (rev. edn 2000), pp. 23-123.

19. R.C.H.M., England, An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Herefordshire (3 vols, 1931-1935).

20. N. Pevsner, The Buildings of England. Herefordshire (1963).

of churches throughout England chosen for "atmosphere and aesthetic merit". In a pioneering introduction he discusses the way in which churches changed over the centuries and his description of a typical "Georgian" church is the first attempted.²¹ More recently a Blue Guide to English churches and chapels has been published.²² The editor challenges the belief that churches were neglected in the eighteenth century and draws attention to the evidence of parish records.²³

In addition to national gazetteers three more limited works have extended appreciation of early modern churches - Churches the Victorians Forgot with its selection of prayer book interiors, Churches in Retirement featuring many obscure examples and Churches of South East Wiltshire. In the latter the church buildings and furnishings of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are discussed in detail, with drawings from the early nineteenth century set alongside photographs of the churches as they are now, thus underlining the nature and scope of changes made by the Victorians.²⁴ Awareness of these changes is an illuminating part of any serious study of churches in the late Stuart and early Georgian period.

The limitation of gazetteers is that their commentary is usually based on churches as they now are, with some reference to older pictorial material. This combination of evidence, however, does not reveal the extent to which Victorian churchmen obliterated seventeenth and eighteenth century work in the course of their restorations, a factor which Clarke alone has emphasised. Nor do surviving

-
- 21. J. Betjeman, Guide to English Parish Churches, (revised and updated by N. Kerr 1993), pp. xv, 5, 12, 17-25.
 - 22. S.C. Humphrey, Churches and Chapels of Northern England and Churches and Chapels of Southern England (2 vols, 1991). [Each volume has an identical introduction]
 - 23. Humphrey, Northern England, pp. 30-31.
 - 24. M. Chatfield, Churches the Victorians Forgot (1979); Redundant Churches Fund [now the Churches Conservation Trust], Churches in Retirement (1990); R.C.H.M., England, Churches of South-East Wiltshire (1987).

fabrics and illustrations tell us whether the churches received the constant attention which any building needs if it is to be kept in good condition. To identify the successes and failures of the post-Restoration church in this respect it is "absolutely necessary" to study the documentary evidence left both by the church hierarchy and the parish authorities.²⁵ It is, moreover, essential to study the evidence in detail if research is to reflect the fact that building maintenance is a continuing process, not a series of isolated incidents.

Chronologically the year 1662 has been taken as the starting point of the thesis, since it was the year when the Restoration settlement was officially promulgated under the Act of Uniformity; the Book of Common Prayer was re-introduced; dioceses and cathedrals were re-established; and the appointment of parish clergy put on a regular basis. Originally it was intended to take the study down to 1830, but bulk of evidence has precluded this. The year 1762 has been taken as finishing point, since there was then a lull in the rebuilding of churches in Herefordshire. As far as is known, no churches were rebuilt from 1763 until 1788. The year 1750 was considered as a finishing point, but this would have meant excluding Shobdon, one of the most famous of all eighteenth century churches; and Titley where the rebuilding of 1762 has been overlooked outside the parish.

Herefordshire

The county of Hereford has been selected as an appropriate locality for a number of reasons. Firstly there is considerable depth of evidence in parish and diocesan records. Secondly there is a thesis on the dioceses of Hereford and Oxford from 1660 to 1760, which provides an overview of ecclesiastical administration.²⁶ Thirdly the county is not as marginal as many English historians

25. Clarke, *Eighteenth-Century Church*, pp. 50, 98.

26 W.M. Marshall, 'The administration of the Dioceses of Hereford and Oxford 1660-1760,' unpubl. Ph. D. thesis, University of Bristol (1978).

have chosen to think; although Welsh influences were still strong and Herefordshire is separated from neighbouring English counties by a ring of hills unbroken by any significant river valleys. But the county was not a backwater politically or ecclesiastically. Its leading politicians at this time included the Prime Minister, Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford; as well as Paul Foley and Arthur Onslow, both of whom served as Speaker of the House of Commons. Of its eight post-Restoration bishops only one, Herbert Croft, was a Herefordshire man and only one, Humphrey Humphreys, was Welsh; although two others, Philip Bisse and Benjamin Hoadly, had held Welsh sees. Of the others Gilbert Ironside had been vice-chancellor of Oxford; while Nicholas Monk, Henry Egerton and Lord James Beauclerk were all from titled families.

In terms of jurisdiction an archdeaconry, with or without peculiars, would be a more logical unit, but the county has always been a primary unit for the study of local history and ancient monuments, and has a far stronger identity than most ecclesiastical divisions. Moreover, the county of Hereford is almost co-terminous with the Archdeaconry of Hereford and the capitular peculiars. Out of 200 rural parishes only 15 were outside these jurisdictions (map 1). The focus is on a selection of 80 places: 77 parishes and 3 chapelries. Of the chapelries, Marston Stannett and Westhide, belong to the parishes of Pencombe and Stoke Edith which are part of the study. Preston Wynne is in the parish of Withington which is not included. Within the selection of eighty, thirty-nine have been identified as key places (appendix IA). For twelve of these fairly substantial runs of itemised churchwardens' accounts survive (appendices IIA, section 1 & IIIA). In a further twenty-seven places churches or chapels were substantially or partly rebuilt between 1662 and 1762 (appendices IIA, sections 2-6 & IIB).

The evidence for the thirty-nine key places has been extended by evidence from a further forty-one. This includes all known references in diocesan, parish estate and personal archives (whether in Herefordshire or elsewhere), where the evidence throws light on patterns of activity, improvements and alterations to fabric and furnishing or the handling of problems. There are many places for which there are scattered references to broken fonts in the sixteen-sixties, to

SPECIAL NOTE

**THIS ITEM IS BOUND IN SUCH A
MANNER AND WHILE EVERY
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REPRODUCE THE CENTRES, FORCE
WOULD RESULT IN DAMAGE**

disrepair of church or chancel or to broken bells. These, like the many places where furniture or bells survive from the period, have been excluded because the evidence does not contribute to an understanding of how churches were cared for. Only two places are included for which there is no written evidence in manuscript or print, or in the form of inscriptions on the building, bells or furniture. These are Clodock and St. Margarets, well-known locally for their eighteenth-century furnishings and wall texts respectively.

Short series of itemised churchwardens' accounts for ten additional parishes (and for five key parishes included because of rebuilding) have been used to confirm that the range of activities recorded in longer series is a characteristic one (appendices IIC, section 1 & IIIB & C). Two parishes are included because of evidence of neglect by ratepayers (appendix IIC, section 2). A third group of places has provided evidence relating to chancels, both positive and negative (appendix IIC, section 3); and a fourth group throws light on furniture and decoration and on the problems that might arise in ordering a church (appendix IIC, section 4). The selection of places is not representative of the county as a whole and the evidence is very imperfect. Whether it comes from primary or secondary sources, buildings or their contents, it has survived by chance. Certain archives have been preserved and not others, while many churches have been substantially restored and refurnished since 1762. Conclusions drawn cannot be very definite, but it is possible to get some insight into what was achieved and what went wrong.

The range of local secondary sources available is limited. Since the middle of the seventeenth century a number of people have made collections towards the history of the county and a few have planned publications.²⁷ The Rev. John Duncumb, working for the eleventh Duke of Norfolk from 1790 to

27. J. Cooper, 'Herefordshire', in C.R.J. Currie and C.P. Lewis eds, English County Histories. A Guide (1994), pp. 176-185.

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1815, compiled a voluminous collection of notes, of which one and a half volumes were published before the Duke died. Further volumes were issued by a London bookseller and by subsequent editors, while some remain in manuscript with later additions (appendix IV).²⁸ The only complete histories are by the Rev. C.J. Robinson, who wrote two volumes, one on castles and one on mansions and manors, the second of which is particularly rich in genealogical information.²⁹ The Victoria County History published one volume for Herefordshire in 1908 but to a large extent historians are dependent on the Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists Field Club, which cover the history and antiquities of the county, as well as its natural history.

Herefordshire lies in the Marches of Wales. Historical geographers have, on the whole, given full weight to Welsh influences, particularly in the west, in their analyses of the landscape and settlement patterns; while for Welsh historians the Marches form a significant element in the history of Wales and they retain an awareness of how permeable the border remained after it had been defined in 1536, and even after the Council of the Marches was abolished in 1689. English historians have been less happy with the concept of the March as a shifting borderland. Some, perceiving strong Welsh links, treat Herefordshire as marginal to the history of England. Others barely notice Welsh influences.

There are particularly acute difficulties with population history, recusancy and nonconformity. The population history of Herefordshire in the eighteenth century has not been written; and the county is barely mentioned in the principal histories of English recusancy and protestant dissent. For the history of settlement, agriculture and river navigation it is necessary to rely on work that is

28. P. Riden, 'Introduction to the new edition', in J. Duncumb. Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford, 1 Part 1, General Introduction (New edn, 1996), pp. v-xxxvi.

29. C.J. Robinson, A History of the Castles of Herefordshire and their Lords (1869) and A History of the Mansions and Manors of Herefordshire (1872).

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not constructed on a self-contained treatment of individual counties or of Herefordshire's river systems. As a result, in order to compile the brief overview of topography and history presented in Chapters Two and Three, it has been necessary to consult a very wide range of secondary sources, both Welsh and English. To some extent the task has been eased by the issue of bibliographies and indexes on CD-ROM. But it has still been essential to scan series of journals and to consult monographs and articles which yielded little or nothing.

There has also been a problem with establishing the pattern of jurisdiction in Hereford Diocese. This has involved time-consuming attention to the headings, as well as the substance, of act books and visitation returns and to the content of the bishops' registers. The Diocese covered almost the whole of the county, together with the southern part of Shropshire, a segment of Worcestershire and parishes in Radnorshire, Montgomeryshire and Monmouthshire. Within Herefordshire it excluded eight parishes in the south-west, which were in the diocese of St. David's until 1852, and the parish of Lea in the south-east, which belonged to the diocese of Gloucester until 1975. There were two archdeaconries, Hereford and Salop (now Ludlow) and four peculiars. The archdeaconry of Hereford and the four peculiars included all but six of the Herefordshire parishes in the diocese, nine in Montgomeryshire, eight in Radnorshire and two in Monmouthshire.³⁰ The largest peculiar, containing twenty-two rural parishes and three chapelries, belonged to the Dean of Hereford. The other three, Little Hereford with Ashford Carbonell, Moreton-on-Lugg and Upper Bullingham, belonged to individual prebendaries (map 1).³¹

30. J. Harnden, The Parish Registers of Herefordshire, With Additional Notes on Other Source Material, 2nd. ed. (1988), pp. 6, 61. The total of six Herefordshire parishes in the Archdeaconry of Salop, given here, includes Richards Castle where the old parish church is in Herefordshire and the present one in Shropshire.

31. Harnden, Parish Registers, pp. 10-11.

It has sometimes been thought that peculiars were exempt from episcopal jurisdiction, a view endorsed by Marshall for the Diocese of Hereford from 1660; although he notes that episcopal visitations "could extend to peculiars" on the basis of the inhibition issued by Lord James Beauclerk in 1756.³² But it is clear from the records that in Hereford the situation was comparable to that in Dorset, Durham and Norfolk where peculiars were exempt from the control of the archdeacons, but not of the bishops.³³ There was, however, a dispute over the Bishop's right to visit the cathedral, which lasted from 1662 to 1677 which was resolved in favour of the bishop.³⁴ As a result, at the triennial visitation in 1677, all the parishes in the peculiars, represented by their clergy and the old and new churchwardens, formally acknowledged the Bishop's jurisdiction.³⁵ This position is confirmed at a later date by a terrier of Moreton-on-Lugg, stating in 1716 that the Bishop had jurisdiction there, as in all other peculiars in the diocese.³⁶

32. Marshall, 'Oxford and Hereford ', p. vi, 226; A. Tarver, Church Court Records. An Introduction for Family Historians (1995), p. 2.
33. E. Ralph, 'Bishop Secker's diocese book', in A Bristol Miscellany, Bristol Record Society 37 (1985), pp. 23-24; J. H. Bettey, 'A note on the Dorset parishes in Bishop Secker's diocese book', in A Bristol Miscellany, Bristol Record Society 37 (1985), p. 73; J.C. Shuler, 'The pastoral and ecclesiastical administration of the diocese of Durham, 1721-1771, with particular reference to the archdeaconry of Northumberland', unpubl. Ph. D. thesis, University of Durham (1975), pp. 5-6; W.M. Jacob, 'Clergy and society in Norfolk, 1707-1806', unpubl. Ph. D. thesis, University of Exeter (1982), p. 224.
34. H. Tomlinson, 'Restoration to reform, 1660-1832', in G. Aylmer & J. Tillers, eds, Hereford Cathedral (2000), pp. 116-117.
35. H.R.O. AL19/18 Episcopal register, 1634-1677, pp. 253v.-276.
36. H.R.O. HD4/2/6, p. 88v.

Peculiars therefore participated in the bishops' visitations and from the sixteenth-eighties Upper Bullingham and Moreton-on-Lugg were visited by the bishops with Hereford Deanery and Little Hereford with Ludlow (map 2).

The Parish Church and the Community

In rural parishes and chapelries the church or chapel was the only public building and the churchyard (if any) one of the few public open spaces. Both were significant communal centres. The church was the official place of worship and, with the churchyard, the main place of burial. It was a centre for festivities, a place associated with expressions of authority and status and with education. It contained the bells and often provided means of telling the time and reading the weather; while the churchyard was a place of relaxation. Both church and churchyard were a focus of communal identity and many different people were drawn into their care.³⁷

The prime function of the parish church was religious, although use had declined since the middle ages. There were no longer daily services, frequent ceremonies and festivals or prayers for the dead. But people still came to worship, to receive communion and to participate in the sacraments of baptism, marriage and burial which, as rites of passage, touched individuals, their families and the community. In church people heard the word of God in Bible readings, sermons and the catechism. Moreover church and churchyard, as places of burial, were dedicated to the commemoration of the dead. The rector, lay or clerical, could be buried in the chancel, a privilege extended to those who rebuilt churches. Others might be buried in the nave, although the practice of burial inside the

37. Jacob, Lay People, pp. 12, 187-188; K.B. Dillow, 'The social and ecclesiastical significance of church seating arrangements and pew disputes, 1500-1740', unpubl. D. Phil. thesis, University of Oxford (1990), p. 19; D. Spaeth, The Church in an Age of Danger. Parsons and Parishioners, 1660-1740 (2000), p. 7.

church declined in the eighteenth century. But memorials were still erected and hatchments hung up.

The church was strongly associated with authority. Royal arms emphasised the sovereign's supremacy; while memorials and hatchments recalled patrons, lay rectors and benefactors who rebuilt or beautified the building, gave furnishings and plate or endowed charities. Pews reflected the social hierarchy, alongside notices of charities and the work done by parish officers. The church might be used for vestry meetings and schools; and for storage of arms and armour, fire-fighting equipment, valuables and documents.³⁸

The church, too, contained the bells. Every church had one, many had four, five or six and perhaps a sanctus bell in addition. Their primary function was to call people to services and, in many parishes, to mark their passing. They were rung on request for weddings and, by custom, for funerals. Curfew was widely rung in the evening and, sometimes, a day bell in the morning. From the late seventeenth century change ringing became popular and peals were rung on special special occasions, including state festivals like Guy Fawkes and Oak Apple Day.³⁹ They were rung as well to celebrate military triumphs. At Eaton Bishop, for example, the bells were rung for "the rejoicing at the reducing of Ireland" and the King's return in 1691.⁴⁰ They might also be rung to greet the eminent and to celebrate election victories. In the mid-eighteenth century the bells at Stoke Edith were rung when Thomas Foley returned from spending the

38. Spurr, Restoration Church, p. 167; J.H. Bettey, Church and Parish. A Guide for Local Historians (1987), pp. 93, 95, 97, 107-108, 121.

39. D. Cressy, Bonfires and Bells. National Memory and the Protestant Calendar in Elizabethan and Stuart England (1989), pp. 47, 69-70, 145-146, 173-174; E. M. Leather, The Folk Lore of Herefordshire (1912), pp. 115, 160-161; R. Palmer, The Folklore of Hereford and Worcester (1992), pp. 57-61, 92. 102.

40. H.R.O. AG4/22; Cressy, Bonfires, p. 92.

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winter in London and he had peals rung in Hereford and Yarkhill, as well as Stoke Edith, when he was elected to parliament in 1742.⁴¹

Parish churches stood at the heart of their communities. They touched all ranks through public worship and the administration of local government.⁴² Their churchyards were places of burial, recreation and amusement. Plays, dancing and ales had been suppressed, but the churchyard was still used for ball games, feasts and wakes and, sometimes for cockfighting.⁴³ Churches were built for the worship of God and because religion was deeply, and often controversially, woven into the fabric of early modern society, they were deeply affected by the varying fabric of that society. They focused locally a range of beliefs, attitudes and practices - religious, political, social and cultural - which underlay and coloured the assumptions and actions of those involved in their care.

The Care of Churches

Three categories of people were involved in the care of churches: those legally responsible, those drawn in on a voluntary basis and those paid for their work. The first category was hierarchical. At its apex were the Archbishop of Canterbury and the bishops with, alongside or below them, archdeacons and owners of peculiars. It was their responsibility to ensure that churches were properly cared for and furnished. Below them again were the parishes. Here responsibility for the chancel belonged to the rector. In practice this involved some of the beneficed clergy and a substantial number of office holders and lay people who owned impropriate tithes. Responsibility for the rest of the fabric and all the furnishings belonged to the parish, except where a family still maintained a

41. H.R.O. E12/iv/40; Cressy, Bonfires, p. 73.

42. Spaeth, Age of Danger, p. 86.

43. D. Dymond, 'God's disputed acre', Journal of Ecclesiastical History 50 (1999), pp. 480-495; Spurr, Restoration Church, p. 19; Bettley, Church and Parish, 80, 88-89, 100-102; Palmer, Folklore, 70-71.

chapel or aisle. Communal responsibility devolved on the churchwardens, who were answerable to the vestry for their expenditure, met out of church rates. The vestry authorised major expenditure; otherwise churchwardens acted on their own initiative, knowing that they had to report on the state of the church and its furnishings at visitations and to submit accounts to the parish. At the base of the pyramid came the parish landowners and their tenants. Legally all were rateable for the fabric and those resident in the parish for "other necessities", although in practice the distinction was usually ignored.⁴⁴

Those involved on a voluntary basis subdivide into three groups. The first contains the wealthy landowners who could afford to rebuild and refurnish entire churches. With them are their peers who added private chapels or aisles to their parish church, paid for churches to be refurnished and adorned, or gave a ring of bells. The second group consists of those who subscribed either to the rebuilding of a church or to the installation of furnishings and clocks. They ranged from prominent landowners and bishops to the obscure individuals who contributed sixpences. And to these one should add contributors to briefs. The third group consists of those who gave furnishings, building materials and time. Donors of furnishings and materials were usually wealthy individuals or small groups of the well-to-do. The donors of time were craftsmen who gave their labour free of charge.

Those who were paid, through fees or wages, are a very varied category. The chancellor of the diocese, the official principal of the archdeacon, and the notaries and apparitors who staffed the ecclesiastical courts discharged the routine legal responsibilities of the higher clergy. The stewards of the landed gentry took responsibility for building schemes in their employers' absence. More shadowy are the architects and surveyors. Most of them are unidentified and their role was solely to draw up the plans. Much building work was supervised by those who

44. R. Burn, Ecclesiastical Law, 1 (1763), pp. 268-270; E. Cannan, History of Local Rates in England (2nd ed. 1912), pp. 15, 24-25.

commissioned it or their representatives. Of considerable significance are the craftsmen and labourers employed in building and maintenance or in making furniture. Many worked in their own parishes or close by and most came from Herefordshire, although a majority of the bellfounders hailed from neighbouring counties. Finally their ranks included the poor. They appear in churchwardens' accounts as unskilled labour and gatherers of moss; while Thomas Secker drew the attention of the gentry to the fact that

...repairing and embellishing their Churches will employ the Poor
full as beneficially, as adorning their Seats and Gardens ...⁴⁵

None of these categories is self-contained. They overlap and their members were linked in a network which extended upwards from the poor to the bishop and outwards from the parish to the county boundary and beyond. Between them they maintained or failed to maintain the parish churches in which many continued to worship.

Primary Sources and Methodology

The main primary sources for this thesis are parish records and the archives of the diocese and the dean and chapter of Hereford. Nothing has come to light in national collections of archives and manuscripts, which is not available in Hereford, apart from a seating plan for Holme Lacy. Evidence on particular buildings and on individuals involved in their care is also available in estate and personal papers, antiquarian manuscripts and illustrations. Itemised churchwardens accounts are the most vital source for the maintenance of churches. Without them it is impossible to show the range of work done or to demonstrate that a church received consistent care. Churchwardens' accounts, covering in total nearly 800 years, have been examined (appendix III). The more substantial runs, covering over 600 years for 12 parishes, have been analysed in

45. T. Secker, 'A charge delivered to the clergy of the Diocese of Oxford in the year 1753', in Eight Charges delivered to the Clergy of the Dioceses of Oxford and Canterbury (1769), pp. 179-180.

detail to establish the range, pattern and consistency of maintenance work (appendix IIIA). Shorter runs for another 15 parishes confirm the range of work, but the series are too short and sporadic to confirm pattern and consistency. (appendices IIIB & C). Unfortunately, although itemised accounts survive for three parishes where there was rebuilding, in no case do the wardens' accounts themselves record rebuilding costs (table 1). Nonetheless, the accounts are very revealing. By working on them in detail it has been possible to show the extent to which maintenance was an ordinary part of parish life and to identify periods of restoration, sometimes extending over several years.

The most significant series in the diocesan archives are the bishops' registers, the diocesan registrar's files and the acts of office, which are in effect visitation acts. The registrar's files (comprising about 30,000 documents) contain almost all the surviving visitation returns, alongside a variety of other documents including letters, testimonials and certificates, some of which relate to churches. They include, too, an almost complete set of visitation returns for the peculiar of Moreton-on-Lugg from 1675 to 1762. There are also separate series of returns for episcopal visitations in 1716, 1719 and during the seventeen-twenties. Overall about 20% of the visitation returns submitted have survived, so that the acts of office, which include citations of churches and chancels out of repair, help to fill the gaps; as do the bishops' registers, which contain faculties and, very occasionally, lists of seats. A little material has come to light, too, in acts of instance and consistory court papers. In addition many records of the archdeacons' work are intermingled with the diocesan archives, so that the lack of separate records for the archdeacon of Hereford's court is not as serious as it might appear. The Dean and Chapter's archives include chapter act books, visitation returns (comprising over 1000 documents), acts of office for the Dean's peculiar and a commonplace book for the Diocese, known as Bishop Humphrey Humphrey's Book and opened in 1711.

Detailed and systematic examination of diocesan and peculiar records has had several useful results. Firstly it has produced evidence relating to chancels, which is otherwise almost totally lacking. Secondly it has thrown light on the

Table 1. Coincidence of rebuilding & itemised churchwardens' accounts

This table excludes private aisles and vaults.

Parish	Rebuilding	Churchwardens' Accounts	
		Dates	Years Extant
Allensmore	1668-82, 1716		
Bodenham	c.1740	1661-1705	10
Brampton Abbots	1663	1673-1753	50
Brobury	1676-82, 1694-95		
Byford	c.1710-1717		
Canon Frome	c.1669-1674	1713-1718	04
Croft	1682?		
Dinedor	c.1737		
Dilwyn	1687-1689		
Eardisland	1758-1760		
Eardisley	1705-1710		
Hope-under-Dinmore	c.1708	1730-1740	04
How Caple	1693-1695		
Llanrothal	1680-1682		
Marston Stannett	c.1711		
Middleton	c.1725	1730-52, 1762	22
Monnington-on-Wye	1679-1680		
Norton Canon	1705-1717		
Preston Wynne	1727-1730 ¹	1727-1730	
Shobdon	1725-30, 1749-56		
Staunton-on-Wye	1716		
Stoke Edith	1740-1741	1673-1749	71 ²
Titley	1757-1763	1686-1757	58 ³
Tretire	1723		
Tyberton	1719-1722		
Whitney	1740		
Wormbridge	1674	1704-1724	c.21

1. Rebuilt by subscription and a donation. Accounts in the parish register.
2. Rebuilding paid for by Thomas Foley not by the parish.
3. Approximate cost can be estimated from rates authorised by the vestry.

way in which the authorities monitored the care of churches. Thirdly it has revealed rebuilding in a number of parishes where architectural evidence has been destroyed by restoration, demolition and further rebuilding. And fourthly it has allowed revised dating of a number of towers. The indications are that selective use of the evidence up till now has resulted in a very incomplete understanding of what was achieved in the century after the Restoration. Fifthly comparison of parish and diocesan records for churches which were rebuilt may give the lie to claims that the old building was decayed or to later assumptions of neglect.

Further evidence on the rebuilding of churches is available in the estate archives of the Bateman, Brydges, Foley and Hopton families, while personal notebooks and accounts add details about individuals and, by implication, their contemporaries. Of the various antiquarian manuscripts the most important for the student of churches are the volume of "visitations" made by the Rev. C.J. Bird in the mid-nineteenth century, with very detailed descriptions of the churches visited; and the church notes of Sir Stephen Glynne. Useful material can also be found in James Hill's manuscripts and in the published and unpublished collections of the Rev. John Duncumb. There is much detail, too, in prospectuses, pamphlets, newspaper reports and official records relating to Victorian restoration.

The starting point for illustrations is Hereford Library, which has extensive collections of drawings, watercolours and photographs, many of them showing churches before restoration. Other illustrative material is available locally in Hereford Museum and at the Bishop's Palace. More can be found in national collections including those of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, the British Library, the Bodleian Library, the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Society of Antiquaries. The Dryden Collection in Northampton Public Library, too, is rich in pictorial items for all parts of the country. For this thesis only the collections in Hereford Library and at the Bishop's Palace in Hereford have been examined. Other collections would corroborate and extend what has emerged from these and from printed books about the appearance of churches after the Restoration and would add detail to what is known about

churches after the Restoration and would add detail to what is known about individual churches and chapels. The main intention of the thesis, however, is not to document individual fabrics, but to focus on what was happening to the county's churches overall. This entails placing less emphasis on pictorial evidence and more on using archival evidence to establish patterns of activity. For this reason national collections of illustrative material have not been explored and little use has been made of written evidence from the Victorian era.

The churches themselves are a vital part of the evidence, but it is all too obvious in many cases that nineteenth-century restoration has destroyed much from both medieval and early modern periods, including evidence of rebuilding and modification. Externally the Victorians were generally consistent in removing plaster and limewash and replacing the long windows and dormers inserted to give better light. Internally they stripped plaster and limewash, and with it, the texts, notices and figures with which churches were adorned. They replaced stone floors with wood or tiles and modernised the furnishings. These changes had a drastic impact on the appearance of the buildings. But they also left them flawed as evidence to an extent which has yet to be fully appreciated.

Aims and Structure of the Thesis

The aim of the thesis is to examine the care of churches in Herefordshire from 1662 to 1762, with a view to encouraging more research on the care of churches in the late Stuart and early Georgian period. The Anglican church has been seen, by 1700 at the latest, as having entered an age of negligence from which it only began to recover in the eighteen-twenties. This negligence included neglect of church buildings. Such a view has sometimes been queried, but it is only recently that doubts have been pressed. In the meantime Betjeman's enthusiasm for Victorian architecture has exerted more influence than his ambivalence towards Victorian restoration.⁴⁶ The subject, moreover is one of continuing relevance within the Church of England. How do small, rural

46. Betjeman, *Guide*, pp. xv, 5, 10, 14-17.

communities maintain and restore churches that are many centuries old?

There has, in fact, been little emphasis on people in the study of churches. Well-known architects and craftsmen feature alongside their wealthy employers. But the effort put into the maintenance of churches by ordinary lay people and clergy has more usually been ignored. Greater attention has been paid to provision and destruction of statues, paintings, ornaments and plate, which can be linked with prominent individuals and times of historical crisis. Local antiquarians, on the other hand, when they notice people connected with a church, concentrate on armorial glass, monuments and inscriptions in the tradition of Dingley's History from Marble.⁴⁷ Churches are sources for family history, but the part that a family played in their care is rarely considered.

The thesis entails a shift of emphasis, so that a study of the churches themselves is complemented by a study of the individuals, institutions and communities engaged in their care. As a result the framework within which the study of churches is usually presented has been changed and evidence evaluated on a different basis from that normally used in architectural and historical studies. The term "care" has been interpreted broadly to include work on both fabric and furniture. Soft furnishings, church plate, service books, musical instruments and vestments are excluded, along with monuments to the dead. The network of people considered is a wide one. It takes in diocesan and parish clergy, principal landowners and the mass of ordinary lay people, including the churchwardens and craftsmen drawn from their ranks.

The body of the thesis is divided into four parts. Part One presents an overview of the landscape and the economy and society of Herefordshire from 1662 to 1762. Part Two, the central section of the thesis, looks at the care of churches. Two preliminary chapters consider the county's churches as they were between 1662 and 1762 and the institutional framework of care. The six main

47. J.G. Nicholls, ed., History from Marble. Compiled in the Reign of Charles II by Thomas Dingley, Gent., Camden Society Old Series 94 & 97 (1867-1868).

chapters cover maintenance and restoration, rebuilding and furnishing. The emphasis is on establishing consistency of care, on the amount of rebuilding achieved and on the various problems which came into play particularly in the provision and arrangement of furniture. It also highlights the various reasons for the rebuilding of churches and the ways in which this was achieved. The analysis in Part Two is then used to evaluate the contribution made to the care of churches by the clergy who are the subject of Part Three and the different groups of lay people who are the subject of Part Four. People from all social groups were drawn in, including the poor. The final chapter seeks to draw together the issues raised by the thesis particularly in relation to the use of evidence and the assumptions on which accusations of negligence have been based.

PART ONE. HEREFORDSHIRE.

CHAPTER TWO. POPULATION AND LANDSCAPE

If England be the Paradise of Europe, this is the Garden of England,
and here is a Place call'd the World's End, and we have a Place call'd
Heaven. It is famed for 4W. Wood, Water, Wool, Wheat and Cyder
and hops etc ...¹

Herefordshire has been famous for the beauty of its landscape and its fertility since at least the middle of the seventeenth century, although contemporaries, in the century after the Restoration, had complaints about isolation and poor communications.² The twentieth century has contributed both admiration and topographical analysis. The county is in essence an undulating lowland, surrounded by hills and drained by the River Wye and its principal tributaries the Lugg, the Arrow and the Frome (map 3). The lowlands at its heart are crossed by two lines of hills from north-east to south-west and are surrounded on all sides by hills, some within and some outside the county boundary. It is between 35 and 40 miles across (maps 4 & 5). On the east it is shut in by the Malverns and the Woolhope Dome and on the south-east by May Hill and the Forest of Dean in Gloucestershire. On the south-west it is contained by the hills on either side of the River Monnow between Monmouth and the Monmouth Gap; and by the Black Mountains between there and Hay. In the north-west it is bounded by the Radnor Uplands, Radnor Forest and its own north-west uplands as far as Ludlow,

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1. Thomas Blount's manuscript, quoted in Theo Bongaerts, ed., The Correspondence of Thomas Blount (1978), p. 67.
 2. D. Whitehead, 'Sense with sensibility: landscaping in Georgian Herefordshire', in S. Daniels & C. Watkins, eds, The Picturesque Landscape. Visions of Georgian Herefordshire (1994), p. 12.

and on the north-east by the hills of the Teme valley between Ludlow and the north end of the Malverns. To the north of Hereford the lowland is broken by a line of hills between the Lugg and the Wye; and to the south by another line running from the Woolhope Dome and Aconbury to Garway, where it merges with the hills north-east of the Monnow.³

Hereford itself lies at the centre of the county and roads radiate from the city like the spokes of a wheel, linking it with the smaller market towns within and just beyond the county boundary, with Worcester and with Gloucester (map 6). Leominster, half-way between Hereford and Ludlow, is another significant road junction. A major road from Worcester via Bromyard, links Leominster with the Welsh Border, dividing west of Leominster to run west to Kington and north-west to Presteigne; while another, running north-east, links Leominster and Tenbury Wells. Ledbury too is a focus for roads leading from eastern Herefordshire into the Severn valley and to Gloucester.

Population and Settlement Patterns

Within this landscape the population was distributed over a complex pattern of villages, hamlets, farmsteads and cottages. As yet nothing has been published on the population of the county in the eighteenth century. For the later seventeenth century there are the contemporary estimates of Thomas Rickman, based on baptisms, marriages and burials; and there are modern ones based on the Hearth Tax and the Compton Census. The problems of using the hearth taxes and

3. H.C. Darby & I.B. Terrett, The Domesday Geography of Midland England (1954), pp. 58, 105-106; D. Sylvester, The Rural Landscape of the Welsh Borderland (1969), pp. 347-349.

the Compton Census have been under discussion for over thirty years.⁴ They centre around the accuracy of the returns, the use of multipliers and the difficulties of reconciling figures from the hearth tax with those from the Compton Census.⁵ These problems are compounded because, for several reasons, the population might fall in the short term.⁶ In addition, for Hereford diocese, the Compton Census poses further problems because it is not clear whether incumbents counted inhabitants or conformists and there is evidence of inconsistency in this and other respects.⁷

Faraday, using a multiplier of 5.2, has calculated that the population of the county in 1671 may have been 72,5000 or approximately 340 per parish (including urban parishes). But this is much higher than estimates derived from the Compton Census, unless an assumption is made that 45% of the population in 1676 was under 16. This produces a total of 69,775 or approximately 327 per

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4. J. Patten, 'The hearth taxes, 1662-1689', Local Population Studies 7 (1971), pp. 14-27; E.A.W. Whiteman, ed., The Compton Census of 1676: a Critical Edition (1986); K. Schurer & T. Arkell, Surveying the People. The Interpretation and Use of Document Sources for the Study of Population in the Late Seventeenth Century (1992).
 5. A. Crocket & K.D.M. Snell, 'From the 1671 Compton Census to the 1851 Religious Census of Religious Worship: Religious Continuity or Discontinuity?' Rural History 8(1), 1997, pp. 57-58.
 6. Whiteman, 'The Compton Census of 1676', p. 90.
 7. E.A.W. Whiteman, ed., The Compton Census of 1676: A Critical Edition (1986), pp. 243-248.

parish.⁸ Whiteman suggests that a multiplier of 4.25 people per household is the most suitable for the period 1650-1749 and that for the purpose of calculating the population of counties (rather than dioceses) in 1676, it should be assumed that 40% of the population was under 16. She also suggests that Rickman's original estimates, derived from baptisms, marriages and burials, are unduly distorted by the burial figures; and that more satisfactory totals may be obtained using the baptism and marriage data only.⁹ On the basis of these assumptions, the Hearth Tax for Lady Day 1664 yields a population of 55,998 rising to 57,681 in 1670 on a revised version of Rickman's estimate and to 58,973 in 1671 using the Hearth Tax. It rose to 63,960 in 1676; and to 67,640 in 1700 using the revised version of Rickman's figures. These calculations give a total per parish of 262 people in 1664 rising to 371 in 1700.

Wrigley and Schofield have estimated that there was little growth in population overall between 1640 and 1709, a period when deaths quite often exceeded births; but after 1710 the population began to rise in spite of higher death rates in the seventeen-twenties and early seventeen-forties.¹⁰ For Herefordshire this estimate ties in well with indications that there was no pressure on church seating from 1662 until after 1720, after which some parishes, at least, had to provide more seats.¹¹

8. M. A. Faraday, 'The hearth tax in Herefordshire', *T.W.N.F.C.* 41 (1973), pp. 79-81; Whiteman, *Compton Census*, p. cx. Faraday's estimate is based on the assessments for Michaelmas 1671 which, with those for Lady Day 1664, are "the most complete and legible" and which include exemptions. The number of houses is adjusted upwards to allow for missing returns and a few which omit exemptions. The multiplier is 5.2.

9. Whiteman, *Compton Census*, pp. lxxv, cvi-cvii.

10. E.A. Wrigley and R.S. Schofield, *The Population History of England, 1541-1871, A Reconstruction* (1981), pp. 161-162.

11. Below pp. 182-184

Whatever its precise level, the rural population was a scattered one. There were few nucleated villages and these were concentrated mainly in the lowland bowl north and west of Hereford. Sylvester, in her analysis of settlement patterns, distinguishes three areas: the central and eastern parts of English Herefordshire, lying east of the Lugg and the Wye below Mordiford; the western part of English Herefordshire, lying west of the Lugg and north of Aconbury Hill and the watershed between the Wye and the Golden Valley, drained by the River Dore; and Welsh Herefordshire covering the whole area south of that watershed and west of the Wye (map 3). In the eastern section of English Herefordshire, apart from four villages, the pattern is one of hamlets and scattered farms, solitary churches and parks. In the western section settlement is dispersed or semi-dispersed with more hamlets and all but four of the county's older nucleated villages. In the Welsh area a pattern of dispersed farms, occasional hamlets and isolated parish churches predominates. In Archenfield, between the Monnow and the Wye, this pattern is rarely varied, but in the foothills of the Black Mountains it was modified by the early arrival of the Normans, particularly in the Golden Valley where there is a belt of villages and substantial hamlets. But, as Sylvester acknowledges, the distinction between village and hamlet is largely subjective and often difficult to define.¹²

What is not in doubt is the dispersal of settlement for which a number of reasons can be found. Overlying an older pattern there are the Norman manors and parks, piecemeal enclosure of land belonging to small settlements, the development of orchards and hopyards in the seventeenth century, the late clearance of woodland and the establishment of squatter settlements on commons. Sylvester stresses Welsh influence throughout the Golden Valley and Norman influence along the Border in the west and north-west of the county. But in all these areas it is the intermingling of Norman and Welsh influence which is the salient feature and, as she acknowledges, villages and hamlets, indicating early Norman penetration, are to be found as much in the Golden Valley as on the

12. Sylvester, Welsh Borderland, pp. 350-373.

Sub-Regions

The complexities of cultural influence, combined with the physical characteristics of the landscape, make it difficult, for several reasons, to divide Herefordshire into sub-regions. Firstly its landscape has been heavily influenced by its position as a border county lying across the division between England and Wales. Offa's Dyke runs south-eastwards across the county from Rushock Hill north of Kington to Bridge Solers about five miles west of Hereford; while in the south-west along the upper reaches of the Monnow and in the south, in Archenfield, Welsh influence was strong. Moreover it was only in 1536 that the line of the border was fixed. Before then there was a restless and ill-defined borderland that was only pacified after the establishment of the Council of the Marches in the late fifteenth century. The legacy is evident to this day in Welsh place names, particularly in the south and south-west; in the line of castles, often two deep, which stretch from Ludlow to Monmouth; and in the dedications to Celtic saints and to St. Michael and the Virgin Mary.¹⁴ Secondly it has been rightly stressed that the county has "... a landscape of intricacy and variety. Low hills capped with woods separated by narrow valleys ... well-watered by fast-flowing streams." As a result distinctions between upland and lowland become

13. Sylvester, Welsh Borderland, 376; J.N. Jackson, 'Some observations on the Herefordshire environment of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries', T.W.N.F.C. 36 (1958-60), pp. 29-32; J. Thirsk, 'The South-West Midlands', in J. Thirsk, ed., The Agrarian History of England and Wales. Vol. 5. 1640-1750. Part 1. Regional Farming Systems (1985), pp. 162-163, 193.
14. Darby & Terrett, Midland England, p. 57; J.N. Jackson, 'The historical geography of Herefordshire, from Saxon times to the Act of Union, 1536', in Herefordshire, its Natural History, Archaeology and History [1954], pp. 181-188.

blurred, with the brooks that feed the rivers cutting small valleys through higher and lower ground alike.¹⁵ And thirdly it has been pointed out that although Herefordshire lies in the Highland Zone, in relief it is more like an enclave of the Lowland Zone.¹⁶

Two studies - Salt and Darby and Terrett - propose regional divisions, which differ from each other and from the areas used by Sylvester in her analysis of settlement patterns. Both Salt and Darby, directly or indirectly, acknowledge the existence of a "Welsh" zone in the west of the county and an "English" zone in the east. Darby has nine sub-regions five lowland and four upland, derived primarily from physical factors, but heavily modified by cultural and political influences in the west (maps 7 & 8). Three of the lowlands - the Central Plain, the Eastern Plain and the Ross Region - lie in the English Zone; and two - the Western Border and Archenfield lie in the Welsh Zone. Ross and Archenfield have light sandy soils, but in the other lowland sub-regions the soil is predominantly a heavy loam. Darby expresses the view that the Western Border "is characterised as much by the way it reflects the conditions of eleventh century border life, as by its physical geography"; although it is less rich than Archenfield in Welsh place names and dedications characteristic of the Celtic church. Of the uplands two - Bromyard and the Woolhope region - belong to the English Zone; the other two - Ewyas and the North-West uplands - to the Welsh Zone. In all of them the soil varies, and it is cultural and political factors (the place names, dedications and castles, especially in Ewyas) which give the Welsh sub-regions their distinctive character.¹⁷

Salt, like Darby and Terrett, stresses the contrast between Welsh and

15. Whitehead, 'Sense with sensibility', p. 16.

16. Sylvester, Welsh Borderland, p. 349.

17. Darby & Terrett, Midland England, pp. 105-110.

English zones, but proposes only two upland and two lowland sub-regions which take only very limited account of Welsh elements in the landscape.¹⁸ Fundamentally the variations between these authors and between them and Sylvester underline the problems of analysing the county landscape. But, for the purposes of this chapter, Darby's regions (which reflect undeniable political and cultural influences) will be used to establish how far, in Herefordshire, there is a meaningful relationship between sub-regions, the size of parishes and the size of parish churches

Sub-Regions and Parish Boundaries

Parish boundaries in Herefordshire, as elsewhere, were probably settled in the thirteenth century; and it was within those boundaries, from the sixteenth century until 1868, that compulsory church rates were levied for the care of parish churches and chapels. The county's parishes range in size from Willersley with 300 acres to Clodock with 18,250. Overall they can be divided into four bands: very small with fewer than 1000 acres; small from 1000 to 2499; medium from 2500 to 3999; and large with 4000 or more. The total of rural parishes in the county at this period was 200.¹⁹ Of these 39 (19.5%) were very small, 95 (47.5%) were small, 35 (17.5%) were medium and 31 (15.5%) were large (appendix V). In the Welsh Zone the distribution is slightly polarised with the balance tilted towards higher percentages of very small parishes and of large ones. But in neither zone are the variations from the county distribution very marked. At the level of sub-regions the distribution is much more uneven and because the sub-regions vary in size and some contain very few parishes no convincing analysis can be made. The county therefore provides the unit of analysis for establishing

18. A.E.W. Salt, 'Economic geography of Herefordshire', in Herefordshire, its Natural History, Archaeology and History, pp. 159-161.

19. This figure includes Brampton Abbots, Ross and Walford, which were chapelries of Ross until the sixteen-seventies. It excludes Pembridge, counted as urban, on account of its market and borough court.

how far the key selection of parishes may be regarded as characteristic in terms of size. Chapelries are not characteristic of Herefordshire. By the second half of the seventeenth century there were perhaps 20 chapelries, but three of them were in the vast upland parish of Clodock, leaving fewer than ten per cent of all parishes with a chapelry.

Sub-Regions and Parish Churches

Establishing a relationship between parish churches and the landscape to which they belong is a complex undertaking. Richard Morris has shown how, over a period of many centuries, churches were built, moved and allowed to decay within a shifting settlement pattern; and how the pattern of provision was influenced by the presence of landowners of exceptional wealth and influence.²⁰ In the century after 1662, in Herefordshire, one church and one chapel were moved and no additional ones were provided. But there was considerable investment in rebuilding for a variety of reasons and wealthy landowners played a significant part. Churches, however, are the responsibility of the whole community and their size, defined by length and ground plan, reflects to a great extent, the character and resources of the communities which built and adapted them during and after the definition of parish boundaries in the central middle ages. Size, therefore, rather than architectural elements, will be the criterion for attempting to establish a relationship, if there is one, between churches and the county's sub-regions.

But, in Herefordshire, as elsewhere, churches vary in ground plan and size considerably. Many consist simply of nave and chancel. Many others have been extended in a limited way by the addition of a single aisle, a transept or chapel. Churches with two aisles, two transepts or some combination of aisle, transept and chapel are unusual. The very smallest churches usually have bellcotes and the largest have towers. Otherwise towers, with or without spires, and turrets of

20. R. Morris, Churches in the Landscape, (new edn, 1997).

varying sizes and forms are distributed fairly evenly between small and medium-sized buildings.

Any attempt to group churches by size is inevitably complicated by many variations. But by taking in combination the overall length of the church, the length of the nave and the number of extensions, it is possible to arrive at a broad grouping, which in most instances reflects the predominant character of the buildings well. The small churches consist of nave and chancel with no extensions. They measure no more than 60 feet overall and the nave measures no more than 40 feet in length. The medium-sized churches have only one extension, if any. The church measures from 61 to 80 feet and the nave from 41 to 65. The large churches measure 81 feet or more, with a nave measuring over 65 feet, and have at least two extensions. There are very few churches which do not fit the categories, the most notable exceptions being seven on the borderline between medium and large. Two long churches, Eardisland and Clodock, have no extensions. By contrast, Aymestry, Kingstone, Linton and Walford-on-Wye have two extensions but are otherwise medium sized. Whitbourne had no extensions until the nineteenth century and both church and nave are of medium length, but its high walls create an exceptionally spacious interior. There is also an exception on the borderline between medium and small at St. Margarets, where the overall length of nave and chancel is just over 60 feet because of the length of the chancel.

According to the census of 1901 there were 223 ancient parishes in Herefordshire.²¹ Of these, there were 200 rural parishes whose churches stood within the county boundary. The inventories of the Royal Commission list 138 rural parishes where the medieval churches were still in use and their medieval dimensions can be determined fairly accurately. To these should be added five

21. J. Hamden, ed., The Parish Registers of Herefordshire, 2nd. edn, (1988), p. 6. The census figure comprises all those places which had become parishes by 1841, including 8 parishes whose parish churches were in other counties.

parishes where the ruins of abandoned churches were substantial enough to be measured, giving a total of 143 (appendix VI).²² Of this total 25 parishes (17.4%) had large churches and 26 (18.1%) had small ones, leaving 92 (64.3%) with medium-sized buildings. Herefordshire thus emerges as a county in which nearly two thirds of the churches were of a moderate size and under a fifth were respectively large or small. But if we knew more about the medieval churches which were rebuilt between 1650 and 1902, it is possible that the balance between small and medium would be more even. Chapels, where they survived, were small.

Of the total of 143 churches 55 (38.4%) lie in the Welsh Zone and 88 (61.5%) in the English Zone (appendix 6). Both have an average percentage of medium-sized churches, with a slightly higher percentage (20.1%) of small ones in the Welsh Zone and a slightly lower percentage (15.9%) in the English Zone. The Welsh Zone has a slightly low percentage of large churches (16.3%) as against an average percentage (19.1%) for the English Zone. But the variations between the county and the zones are not large. On the other hand, when the figures are broken down by sub-regions there is not a single sub-region which conforms to the overall pattern. However, yet again, because the sub-regions vary in size and some are so small, they cannot provide a framework for analysis and the county will be used to determine how far the key selection of churches is characteristic in terms of size. And at county level one factor is worth noting. All the large churches belong to parishes with rich resources of meadow or woodland or both; and in most there were important ecclesiastical landowners in the middle ages, while Norman influence was often strong. There is, thus, an indication that presence of a major landowner, commanding rich resources, could be highly significant in determining the size of the church.

22. R.C.H.M. England, An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Herefordshire (3 vols, 1931-1935).

The County and the Key Parishes

As a group the thirty-seven key parishes conform only loosely to the patterns indicated above. The settlement pattern, in almost every parish is the characteristic one of hamlets, scattered farms and cottages. Four parishes contained villages or large hamlets: Eardisland, Eardisley, Shobdon and Winforton with the latter being alone in having only a single outlying farm instead of several. For a population estimate the Health Tax of 1671 probably provides the securest base. Faraday's calculations give 58 as the mean average of houses per parish, with half the parishes in a band from 29 (-50%) to 87 (+50%).²³ This results in a mean average population of 247 per parish using a multiplier of 4.25. For key parishes there are problems in arriving at a figure because the return for Croft is missing and Staunton-on-Wye is assessed with Letton. But if Letton is treated as a substitute for Croft, the mean average of houses is 53, with 11 parishes under 26 (-50%) and 8 over 78 (+50%).²⁴ The mean average is therefore a little low, but half are still in the band between plus and minus 50%. The mean average population (using a multiplier of 4.25) is 225 per parish, with Bodenham at the top of the scale with 536 people and Llanrothal at the bottom with 47.

The thirty-seven key parishes are divided into three or four bands by acreage, number of houses and size of church in Table 2. Small or very small parishes and small or very small populations were in a large majority. Only about 40% of parishes were medium or large in extent and approximately 30% had a

23. Faraday, 'Hearth tax', p. 80.

24. Marston Stannett and Preston Wynne are included in Pencombe and Withington respectively. The total on which the mean average is calculated includes the detached chapelry of Westhide as part of the parish of Stoke Edith.

Table 2. Key parishes: acreage, number of houses and size of church

Acreage	V. Small	Small	Medium	Large
	07	16	06	08
	18.9%	43.2%	16.2%	21.6%
No. of houses	11-39	40-68	69-97	98-126
	14	11	05	06
	37.8%	29.7%	13.5%	16.2%
Size of church		Small	Medium	Large
		08	19	10
		21.6%	51.4%	27%

medium or large population. On the other hand medium and large churches amount to nearly four-fifths of the total, so that in many parishes sizable churches were maintained out of a small acreage by a small number of households, whose ranks were further thinned by poverty. In a substantial majority of parishes in 1671 between a quarter and a third of households were exempt from the hearth tax, either because they did not pay church or poor rates or because their houses were worth less than one pound.²⁵ On the other hand there would be a contribution from ratepayers living in other parishes.²⁶

A rather loose conformity to the overall pattern emerges when the key selection of parishes is compared with the county in terms of acreage (table 3). The percentages of very small and medium parishes match the figures for the county, but small parishes are under-represented by 7.5%, while large parishes are correspondingly over-represented. In the group of twelve parishes with good

25. Faraday, 'Hearth tax', p. 77. The number paying rates but living in houses worth less than £1 was probably tiny.

26. Below pp. 250-251.

Table 3. Percentages of Parishes by Acreage.

	Total	V. Small	Small	Medium	Large
County	200	39	95	35	31
		19.5%	47.5%	17.5%	15.5%
Key selection	37	07	16	06	08
		18.9%	43.2%	16.2%	21.6%
Group of 12*	12		06	04	02

* Parishes with longer runs of churchwardens' accounts.

accounts, however, small parishes make up half the total.

Any correlation between the county and the key selection disappears, however, when comparison is made in terms of the size of churches (table 4). Medium-sized churches are under-represented at 51.4%, small churches are slightly over-represented and large ones heavily so. In the group of twelve, however, the distribution is closer to the county figure.

Table 4. Percentages of Parish Churches by Size.

	Total	Small	Medium	Large¹
County	143	25	92	26
		17.4%	64.3%	18.1%
Key Selection	37	08	19	10
		21.6%	51.4%	27%
Group of 12		02	07	03

1. Figures include borderline examples i.e. 1 small and 7 large.

What is clear overall is that there is no necessary correlation between the size of the parish, the number of households and the size of its church. In the county there were 118 large and medium-sized churches, but only 66 large and medium-sized parishes; while for the key selection the figures are 29 churches and 14 parishes; and for the group of twelve, 7 and 4. As a result many small parishes, with a limited population, were maintaining a fairly large church. But acreage and population were not the only factors affecting the income available for the care of a parish church. Land values had a considerable influence and there was a

limit to the level at which a rate could normally be levied.

There is, however, a problem with the figures for the size of churches, because in over a third of the places in the key selection we cannot be absolutely sure what size the medieval church was. It is a generally sound assumption at this period that churches rebuilt on the same site were rebuilt on their old foundations. But it is clear that at How Caple, Shobdon and Stoke Edith, for example, modifications were made to the ground plan for the new churches and the same may have been true elsewhere, particularly for churches rebuilt at a later date. The evidence has, therefore, to be treated with caution.

Whatever its character, the parish was the basic unit of local and ecclesiastical government and its church a focus of communal life. Parish boundaries determined where people paid rates and tithes; where they normally worshipped and received the sacraments of baptism, marriage and burial; and where they looked for financial support in times of trouble. But parishes were never totally self-contained. Many people owned or occupied land and paid rates and tithes in more than one parish and churchwardens might be non-resident. Family ties would also transcend parishes boundaries, with close links within a cluster of neighbouring parishes on a pattern which has been analysed, for example, in Shropshire and Nottinghamshire. The buying and selling of commodities and services also took place across parish boundaries. It is clear, too, from churchwardens accounts that, while both craftsmen and building materials might come from within the parish, some craftsmen and much material came from outside.²⁷ Of the two chapels in the sample, Preston Wynne and

27. D. Hey, An English Rural Community. Myddle under the Tudors and Stuarts (1974), pp. 200-203; A. Mitson, 'The significance of kinship networks in the seventeenth century: South-West Nottinghamshire', in C.V. Phythian-Adams, ed., Societies, Cultures and Kinship, 1580-1850 (1996), pp. 56-62; E.A. Wrigley, 'How reliable is our knowledge of the Demographic Characteristics of the English Population in the Early Modern Period?' Historical Journal 40 (3) 1997, pp. 577-579.

Marston Stannett, it can only be said that they represent a form of pastoral provision that was still available in Herefordshire, though not widely so.

How far parishes were "open" or "closed" at this date it is difficult to say on account of a lack of research. There may not have been undue pressure on the poor rate if the population grew only slowly and the dispersed pattern of settlement may have helped to disperse paupers. Parish accounts show that there were vagrants on the roads in the late seventeenth century. On the other hand they also show that a good many of the poor stayed in the communities where they fell on hard times.

Conclusions

In a county as varied as Herefordshire it is not easy to define sub-regions physically or to set agreed boundaries to cultural zones. Neither appears to be useful as a unit of analysis for the study of parishes and parish churches. The county is therefore the setting for this thesis. Within that setting parish boundaries provided the framework of financial support for parish churches and parish clergy. At the same time social and economic factors combined to create a world in which people and commodities came and went across those boundaries and the fluctuating fortunes of communities and individuals could influence the care of church buildings. Topographical analysis at the level attempted in this chapter has failed to establish any clear cut patterns of relationship between the size of a parish, the size of its church and its population. The landscape and its communities are too varied. But it may be possible, by using archival evidence in depth, to establish characteristic patterns of success or failure in the care of churches.

PART ONE. HEREFORDSHIRE

CHAPTER THREE. ECONOMY AND SOCIETY

Until the nineteenth century, Herefordshire was the equivalent of a land flowing with milk and honey.

I observed that they are a diligent and laborious people, chiefly addicted to husbandry, and they boast, not without reason, that they have the finest wool, and the best hops, and the richest cider in all Britain ... 'tis certain, that not any of our southern counties, the neighbourhood of London excepted, comes up to the fertility of this county.¹

By the middle of the seventeenth century the Herefordshire landscape, fertile and well-watered, had for centuries supported a population engaged mainly in agriculture, rural crafts and by-employments. There were a few very localised industries, but none developed to any extent. The population was distributed within a varied settlement pattern, contained in a web of parish boundaries. Farming was the county's mainstay, but there was reasonably regular employment for craftsmen like masons, carpenters, blacksmiths and wheelwrights, engaged in building and the manufacture of tools and equipment. Clergy, lawyers and land agents formed the basis of an emergent professional class; while at the lowest level, rebuilding country houses and churches, along with the development of gardens and parks, provided casual employment for the able-bodied poor.

But fertile soil and hard work did not necessarily secure a livelihood. It is

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1. D. Sylvester, The Rural Landscape of the Welsh Borderland (1969), p. 347; D. Defoe, A Tour through the Whole Island of Great Britain (Penguin ed. 1971), p. 372-373.

quite clear from tax returns and rate assessments that landed wealth was concentrated in the hands of a few and that most people were not adequately cushioned against hard times, sickness or old age. Socially and economically there was a pyramid, with the clergy represented at every level except, perhaps, the poorest. For ecclesiastical, and some moral purposes, the population came under the jurisdiction of the Anglican authorities, including those who did not accept that jurisdiction. All these factors shaped the lives and fortunes of those drawn into the care of churches inherited from generations of their forbears. The churches belonged not just to the landscape in which they stood, but to human communities upon which they depended for survival. For these communities the Civil War was undoubtedly disruptive. But we do not know how long they took to recover socially and economically, although there are indications that, in some cases, recovery took decades rather than years.² Meanwhile, from 1641 to 1660, Anglican norms of religious belief and practice were laid aside and it is clear from the diocesan acts of office that their restoration took at least ten to twelve years.³

The county's landscape was considerably influenced its position on the Welsh border.⁴ But long after place names and dedications were settled and castles had lost their defensive role, Welsh influences remained. A number of families had estates on both sides of the border and the pedigrees of the gentry in the west and south show that there was much intermarriage. With estates went political influence. In the south the Somerset family was heavily involved in the politics of both Herefordshire and Monmouthshire; while in the north-west the Harleys had a high political stake in Radnorshire. Trade links also extended west and south into Wales along river valleys and through the border towns. The

2. At Canon Frome, for example, where church and manor house were destroyed, the rebuilding of the church did not begin until 1669; and it was 1717 before the Hoptons adorned the church and added a private aisle.

3. J. Spurr, The Restoration Church of England 1646-1689 (1991), pp. 3-28; H.R.O. HD/4, vols 99-100.

4. Above pp. 43-46..

recusant communities in Monmouthshire had strong links with their counterparts in Archenfield, and it is probable that many of the dissenters in the south-west of the county were members of Breconshire causes.⁵ Many of the Anglican clergy themselves were Welsh and almost certainly Welsh-speaking. How far Welsh was still spoken in the county it is difficult to know. Evidence from the diocese of St. David's shows that people in Herefordshire were Welsh-speaking and could be all but monolingual as late as 1757; and in Archenfield churchwardens notices were still posted in Welsh and English until the eighteen sixties.⁶ Yet, by the mid-eighteenth century English had spread into the eastern parts of Wales and, although the bilingual zones were constantly shifting, they were receding westwards by 1750.⁷

Agriculture and the Economy

The years between 1640 and 1750 were a period of depression in agriculture, when prices rose by only two per cent. Grain prices fluctuated but fell overall, while the price of wool fell sharply. The price of cattle and pigs, by contrast, rose. Two factors helped to counteract the depression: better estate management and innovation. The gentry, after losses in the Civil War, needed to improve the yield of their estates and they, together with the clergy, pioneered change. And for Herefordshire a number of contemporary changes were of prime importance. They included the introduction of new fodder crops, fruit growing

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5. G.H. Jenkins, The Foundations of Modern Wales 1642-1780 (1987), pp. 192-193.
 6. G.H. Jenkins, R. Suggett and E.M. White, 'The Welsh language in early modern Wales' in G.H. Jenkins, ed., The Welsh Language before the Industrial Revolution (1997), pp. 56-57; M. Richards, 'The population of the Welsh border', Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion (1970), p. 95-96.
 7. Jenkins, Foundations 1642-1780, p. 220; Jenkins, Suggett and White, 'Welsh language', p. 49.

and the development of industrial crops like hops and timber.⁸

Herefordshire is a county of old enclosure. By 1675 only eight per cent of the total area was open.⁹ It was also a county of smallholders. As late as 1866 most holdings were under 50 acres.¹⁰ It is primarily arable, divided between corn and cattle, and corn and livestock combined with specialist ventures. But in the uplands on the Welsh border there was a pastoral economy with an emphasis on cattle rearing, grazing and some dairying (map 9).¹¹ However it cannot be too strongly stressed that it is a very diverse county. Both the Bromyard uplands and the ryelands of Ross and Archenfield can be seen as eccentric regions; while the varied pattern of farming established in the seventeenth century was maintained throughout the eighteenth.¹²

Some forms of farming did less well than others. Herefordshire long wool could not compete in price with Spanish merino wool, while tobacco growing was suppressed for the benefit of the Virginians.¹³ But the county still

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8. J. Thirsk, ed., The Agrarian History of England and Wales, Vol. 5 1640-1750, Part 1 Regional Farming Systems (1984), pp. xix, xxiii-xxvi; J. Thirsk, 'South-West Midlands' in J. Thirsk, ed., Regional Farming Systems, pp. 162-163; E.L. Jones, 'Agricultural conditions and changes in Herefordshire 1660-1850', T.W.N.F.C. 37 (1961-1963), p. 39; F. Heal & C. Holmes, The Gentry in England and Wales 1500-1700 (1994), pp. 117, 151-156.
 9. Jones, 'Agricultural conditions', p. 37.
 10. Thirsk, 'South- West Midlands', pp. 172-173.
 11. Thirsk, 'South-West Midlands', pp. 161-164.
 12. Thirsk, 'South-West Midlands', pp. 172-173; Jones, 'Agricultural conditions', p.32.
 13. Thirsk, 'South-West Midlands', p. 175; J. Thirsk, 'Agricultural policy: public debate and legislation' in J. Thirsk, ed., The Agrarian History of England and Wales, Vol. 5 1640-1750, Part 2 Agrarian Change (1985), p. 343.

profited from specialist crops, particularly hops and cider apples, and from an increase in the breeding of pigs.¹⁴ It also profited from timber which was supplied to the navy and to the iron works in the county. But by the seventeenth century there were complaints of shortages in the areas serving the ironworks; and when commissioners enquired into timber supplies for the navy between 1787 and 1793 they found that in Herefordshire the supply of oak had declined and that most new plantations had been made for ornament. At the same time hop-growing had increased the value of underwood.¹⁵

Industrial enterprises hardly existed. Ironworks, using ore from the Clee Hills and the Forest of Dean, were confined to small areas on the northern and southern fringes of the county. Otherwise industry was a matter of processing agricultural products and producing goods for local markets. Gloves were made in Hereford, Weobley and Kington, as also in Leominster which produced a range of woollen and leather goods and specialised in hats. Kington and Ledbury manufactured narrow cloths, Bromyard made cheese and Ross was known for its smiths. But there was no major industry.¹⁶ Tanneries would have existed in the towns and Cooke mentions one at Derndale in the parish of Canon Pyon, which was closed down in the early nineteenth century.¹⁷

Marketing was crucial to success and in this respect Herefordshire was at a disadvantage because of poor communications. The roads were notoriously poor and had not improved by 1756 when Bishop Pococke declared the roads to

14. Thirsk, Regional Farming Systems, pp. xxiv-xxvi; Thirsk, 'South-West Midlands', pp. 175.

15. S. Robinson 'The forests and woodlands areas of Herefordshire', T.W.N.F.C. (1921-1923), 198-200, 210-211, 220; Jackson, 'Herefordshire environment', T.W.N.F.C. 36 (1958-1960), 30-31.

16. Jackson, 'Herefordshire environment', 32-34.

17. W.H. Cooke, Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford. In continuation of Duncumb's History. Hundred of Grimsworth (2 parts, 1886-1892), p. 73.

be "generally exceeding bad".¹⁸ River navigation was not much better. Several attempts were made to improve the Wye and the Lugg, but although the Wye was navigable as high as Whitney Bridge and the Lugg as high as Leominster, there were recurrent problems that were never fully overcome.¹⁹ Nonetheless Bristol was a significant market, the best cider and cattle reached London and by 1750 the county had been drawn into the tide of commerce passing between Bristol and Birmingham.²⁰ Within the county Thomas Cox identified good markets at Hereford, Kington and Ross, and found both Ross and Ledbury well-built. But he also commented on the lack of an adequate trade to enrich Hereford and indicated that Leominster market was not as well-frequented as it had been, although the town was still a major stopping place on the route to and from Wales. At Weobley and Pembridge he found the markets "very ordinary" and "very indifferent".²¹

In general it seems that average to small farmers, on less-than-ideal soils and without good access to water transport, suffered most between 1640 and 1750. So it is probable that the prevalence of smallholding and the lack of good, navigable rivers contributed to the high level of poverty, to which John Beale

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18. J.J. Cartwright, ed., The Travels through England of Dr. Richard Pococke, successively Bishop of Meath and Ossory, during the Years 1750, 1751 and Later Years ... (2 vols, 1888-1889), 2, Camden Society New Series 44, p. 228.
19. Jackson, 'Herefordshire environment', pp. 38-39; T.S. Willan, 'The River Navigation and Trade of the Severn Valley, 1600-1750', Economic History Review 8 (1937-1938), pp. 74-79; T.S. Willan, River Navigation in England and Wales 1600-1750 (1936), pp. 41, 45-46, 53-56, 65, 84-85, 92.
20. Thirsk, 'South-West Midlands', pp. 159, 172-173; Jones, 'Agricultural conditions', p. 33.
21. T. Cox, Magna Britannia et Hibernia ... or, A New Survey of Great Britain ..., 2, Gloucester, Southampton, Hereford ... (1720), pp. 928, 933-937.

drew attention as early as 1657.²² Higher up the social scale the majority of parish gentry and clergy were not wealthy. Like their counterparts elsewhere in the West Midlands, they lived modestly in their own communities.²³ Land alone did not produce wealth. The richest families and individuals in the county had other sources of income.

The key places in this study lie in the arable areas, except for Croft, Shobdon and Titley in the North-West Upland where the economy was pastoral. But to the extent that Croft and Shobdon are on the edge of the region and belong to estates with land in the Central Plain they, like most places, share in the pattern of mixed farming, numerically dominated by smallholders.

The Social Hierarchy

In the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries there was broad, general agreement that society could be divided into categories defined by a combination of wealth, social status and occupation. At the top came the nobility and gentry, followed by professional people and merchants. Below them came farmers and tradesmen, then husbandmen, labourers and paupers. The hierarchy, however, was not a rigid one. Within it families and individuals moved both up and down, and there was a certain amount of overlap between the categories. In economic terms some farmers were at least as prosperous as the professional men and minor gentry who were their social superiors.²⁴ Conversely, many of the clergy were little better off than the smallholders and craftsmen amongst whom they lived.²⁵ In Herefordshire the hierarchy was headed by a few families whose wealth was not solely derived from land. Among the older families the Harleys

22. Thirsk, Regional Farming Systems, p. xxx; John Beale, Herefordshire Orchards, quoted in Jackson, 'Herefordshire environment', p.35.

23. Thirsk, 'South-West Midlands', pp. 162-163.

24. K. Wrightson, English Society 1580-1680 (1982), pp. 18-23; R.W. Malcolmson, Life and Labour in England 1700-1780 (1981), pp. 11-12.

25. A. Russell, The Clerical Profession (1980), pp. 31.

had built up their resources through public office, urban development, the law and commerce; the Scudamores and the Coningsbys through public office; and the Brydges through public office and the law. Of the newer families, the Foleys and the Knights had fortunes derived from the iron industry; while Robert Price of Foxley and William Gregory of Woolhope were successful lawyers and Sir James Bateman was a founder of the Bank of England. It was from the ranks of such men and their peers that members of parliament were usually drawn.

Below them came minor county and parish gentry and the more prosperous farmers and clergymen, living an existence in which they were closely involved with tenants and neighbours; so that, in spite of social and economic inequalities, local society was well integrated in a way that was also characteristic of Wales for much of the eighteenth century.²⁶ These people shaded off into the ranks of the many smallholders and craftsmen and the poorer clergy, who formed the largest group within the hierarchy. And they in their turn overlapped with the ranks of labourers, paupers, squatters and vagrants.

If this framework is translated into an analysis of contemporary documents it emerges that, in Herefordshire, most of the population lived in small houses and that small properties vastly outnumbered large ones. In 1671 the rural parishes contained approximately 10,699 houses (table 5). Nearly a third were exempt from hearth tax, and over half had only one or two hearths, leaving fewer than thirteen per cent with three to five hearths, and just under three per cent with six or more. In the key parishes the analysis reveals slightly higher percentages of larger houses offset by a slightly lower percentage of those exempt. As far as the larger houses are concerned, this is probably to be expected in a selection which includes a substantial number of parishes where leading families rebuilt or

26. D. Whitehead, 'Sense and sensibility: landscaping in Georgian Herefordshire', in S. Daniels and C. Watkins, eds, The Picturesque Landscape. Visions of Georgian Herefordshire (1994), p. 16; Jenkins, Foundations 1642-1780 (1987), p. 108.

added to their parish churches.

Table 5. Houses Ranked by Number of Hearths, 1671.¹

	Total	9 +	6-8	3-5	1-2	Exempt
County²	10,699	111	207	1357	5630	3394
		1.0%	1.9%	12.7%	52.6%	31.7%
Key Parishes	1,902	26	44	256	1012	567
		1.4%	2.3%	13.4%	53.2%	29.8%

1. Based on counted, not adjusted, totals.

2. Rural parishes, excluding townships of parishes with churches in adjacent counties.

There are no assessments for the mid-eighteenth century which can be compared even broadly with the hearth tax. But some idea of the distribution of landed families in the county can be gained from Isaac Taylor's map of 1754, on which he distinguishes "Seats or Houses of Old Building" and "Seats or Houses of New Building".²⁷ Inevitably there are a few omissions, but more crucially he includes virtually every house whose name included the term "Court". Many of these, by 1754, were no longer owned or occupied by gentry and their inclusion emphasises the fluidity of the social hierarchy in which houses and families rose and fell. In the century after the Restoration many gentry families died out altogether or died out in the male line, and many of their houses passed to farmers or families from the market towns who did not rank as gentry. Comparison with Robinson's Mansions and Manors shows that, in the middle of the eighteenth century, out of approximately 135 "seats" marked on the map, only 102 were owned or occupied by the gentry, including the Bishop's palaces at Sugwas in the parish of Eaton Bishop and at Whitbourne, which were let from about 1670 and 1722 respectively.²⁸

27. I. Taylor, New Map of the County of Hereford (1754).

28. C.J. Robinson, A History of the Mansions and Manors of Herefordshire (1872). The total of 135 here does not include Brockhampton Park and Clatter Park in the parish of Bromyard; Brilley Court in the parish of Kington; or Hergest Court in Kington, which is in Wales.

If five obvious omissions are repaired, the total of "seats" in 1754 is 107.²⁹ A breakdown by zone and sub-regions is given in Appendix VII.A. This shows no major difference between Welsh and English zones, with 76 (38%) of parishes and 36 (33.6%) of seats in the Welsh Zone and 124 (62%) and 71 (66.3%) in the English Zone. But if the sub-regions are grouped not by zone, but according to their proximity to Hereford, there is a distinct contrast between four "inner" sub-regions, Archenfield, the Central and Eastern Plains and Woolhope, and five "outer" sub-regions, the Western Border, Ewyas, the North-West Upland, Ross and Bromyard (appendix VII.B). The "inner" sub-regions contained 70 (65.4%) out of 107 seats, with 37 (34.5%) in the "outer" ones. This is the more remarkable since the most of the estates of the Dean and Chapter of Hereford lay close to Hereford and many of the prebendaries held livings in the area. They, therefore, lived either in their parsonages or in Hereford.

Two other points are worth noting about the distribution of seats. Firstly it does not entirely reflect the distribution of political influence. There were only eight seats in the North-West Upland. Yet the Harley family, whose estates lay mainly in that region, were amongst the county's leading families. Alongside them, for much of the century after 1662, were the Crofts, who sold Croft Castle in 1746 and the Batemans who bought Shobdon in 1705.³⁰ Secondly there were approximately 107 seats in 200 rural parishes, some of which had at least two seats. There were, therefore, many parishes without resident gentry; this being the pattern which emerges from the tax and rate returns, which show that in a considerable number of parishes the upper echelons of the social and economic hierarchy were absent. On the other hand there is little doubt that major landowners, like the Foleys, the core of whose estate extended from Stoke Edith, where they lived, into the neighbouring parishes of Tarrington, Weston Beggard, Dormington and Yarkhill, had as much influence in these parishes as in

29. The omissions are Moor Park, Eardisley; Green Court, Eaton Bishop; Treworgan, Llangarron; Lulham House, Madley; and Upper Sapey.

30. Robinson, Mansions and Manors, pp. 80, 251.

their place of residence.

If a comparison is made between figures for the county and those for the key parishes there are noticeable differences (table 6). In the county as a whole there are 107 seats in 200 rural parishes, whereas in the key selection there are 32 seats in 37 parishes and a significantly higher percentage of these are in the "inner" sub-regions; but of these parishes, 14 (37.8%) had no seat at all. As with the hearth tax, only to a greater extent, this probably reflects the presence of key parishes where wealthy families rebuilt or extended churches. But it also reflects the presence in the key selection of a number of parishes, like Eaton Bishop and Stretton Grandison, where there were several "seats", most occupied by minor landowners.

Table 6. Gentry Seats in Rural Parishes in 1754

A. Overall Distribution.

	Total Parishes	Total Seats
County	200	107
Key selection	37	32

B. Distribution by Sub-Regions in terms of proximity to Hereford

	Inner Sub-Regions	Outer Sub-Regions
County	70 (65.4%)	37 (34.5%)
Key selection	24 (75%)	08 (25%)

Overall Herefordshire emerges as a county in which the distribution and influence of landowners at parish level was uneven, with many parishes being run by a small group of farmers and craftsmen in conjunction with the incumbent or his curate. Not every parish had landowners, wealthy or otherwise, who could come forward with money when exceptional expenditure on a church was needed. And only in a few places were the parishioners likely to find themselves worshipping in a new building of a totally difference appearance to the one it replaced.

The Distribution of Land

The perception that Herefordshire was a county of small landowners is

confirmed by tax and rate assessments.³¹ Large holdings were in a minority, although it is important to remember that, since parishes and (more rarely) townships were discrete units of assessment, the returns exaggerate the fragmentation of ownership and occupation. Faraday has calculated that in 1663 42% of land was owned or occupied by people living outside the parish or township where some of their land was situated.³² Some of these were gentry whose estates consisted of major holdings in three or four parishes, together with smaller pieces of land in others. But there were also farmers and smallholders whose lands straddled parish boundaries and the situation was in constant flux. Within each parish the same farms, cottages and fields remained as units of assessment but, over time, owners and tenants came and went.

An analysis of landholdings in the county and the key parishes in 1663 shows the same kind of pyramid as that displayed in the hearth tax, although they are not directly comparable because of the number of people holding land in two or more parishes (table 7). In the county (exclusive of Hereford) holdings of £100 and upwards account for 19% of the total, with a substantial proportion (41%) in the bracket from £11 to £49, and a quarter valued at £10 or less. Altogether nearly two-thirds (66%) of holdings were worth less than £50. But between the key parishes and the county there are obvious discrepancies. The upper echelons of the pyramid, from £50 upwards, are heavily under-represented, while very small holdings account for nearly two-thirds (65%). This is an indication that the selection is not biased towards the wealthy, although some of the very small holdings were fragments of major estates. Superficially this conflicts with the very high percentage of gentry houses in the key places, some occupied by the richest families. Two considerations are relevant. Firstly, estates were

31. Above p. 58.

32. M.A. Faraday, Herefordshire Militia Assessments of 1663, Royal Historical Society, Camden Series 10 (1972), p.18.

Table 7. Land Owned in Holdings of Various Magnitudes¹

	County ²	Key Places ³
£500 or more	01%	00
£200 - £499	07%	00.8%
£100 - £199	11%	00.9% ⁴
£50 - £99	15%	04.0%
£11 - £49	41%	33%
£10 and less	25%	65%

1. Figures are based on the valuations made in the parishes/townships, which were often raised by the commissioners.
2. Figures taken from Faraday, Herefordshire Militia Assessments, p.18. They exclude Hereford, but not the other towns.
3. Totals for 34 places. Four returns are missing. Marston Stannett is not distinguished from Pencombe, but Preston Wynne is assessed separately from Withington.
4. The figure excludes the parish of Willersley, included at £100, with the parish of Winforton.

assessed parish by parish, not as a whole, and their owners' other income excluded; so that the wealth of the richest is masked. Secondly, though, many gentry were people of modest means, status being no guarantee of wealth.

But the overall picture conceals many contrasts and much change. Families like the Scudamores of Kentchurch, the Herefords of Sufton and the Mynors of Treago had been established in those places since at least the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries.³³ But the Croft family, lords of Croft since the eleventh century, sold their estate there in the seventeen-forties to the ironmaster Richard Knight; while several ancient families, like the Baskervilles of Eardisley and the Lingens of Sutton St Nicholas and Stoke Edith died out or left the county.³⁴ The number of holdings in a parish, by 1663, bore no relation to its size. Dilwyn

33. Robinson, Mansions and Manors, pp. 153, 155, 212, 294.

34. Robinson, Mansions and Manors, 80, 107, 257.

(6080a.) had 24 holdings, as against Madley (5440a.) with 52. Among medium-sized parishes, Hentland (2550a.) had 68, compared with Stoke Edith (2660a.) which had 12. And while the small parish of Dinedor (1740a.) had 19 holdings, Aconbury (1470a.) had two, valued at £120 and £10 respectively. Most small holdings (valued at £10 or less) probably belonged to very small farmers and cottagers. But 16 such holdings in Hentland belonged to men assessed for horse and the holding of £10 at Aconbury belonged to Viscount Scudamore. In short, the pattern of landholding had become as diverse as the landscape.

Unfortunately there are no tax or rate assessments for the eighteenth century to provide comparison with the militia assessments. Valuations survive for five key parishes, ranging in date from 1663 to 1762; and there are poor rate assessments, from which valuations might be reconstructed, for another six dating from 1675 to 1762.³⁵ But it is doubtful whether aggregate figures derived from them would have much validity. What is clear from these records is that the pattern of landholding did not alter significantly from 1662 to 1762. Smaller properties heavily out-numbered larger ones and it seems likely that a very large part of the population lived on, or near, the breadline. These people would often struggle to pay rates, taxes and tithes, so that rebuilding all or part of a parish church imposed a major burden if there was no one wealthy enough to bear all or most of the cost. It should therefore come as no surprise that rebuilding and restoration might take many years and that more seating, rather than an extra aisle, was the preferred solution if the population outgrew the church.

Religious Allegiance

Most people supported the Church of England, at least nominally, although the church was already handicapped by anachronisms and anomalies which were still unresolved by the mid-nineteenth century and which did not

35. Church rate assessments are less useful in this context as they exclude the clergy and impropriators' tithe holdings.

affect other denominations.³⁶ Of these, the Baptists, the Quakers and the Independents were all represented in the county and recusancy was strong, especially in the south. The first count of recusants and protestant dissenters for the period is provided by the Compton Census, which records 65,942 'conformists', 714 papists and 1,076 nonconformists in the Diocese. Figures from the Salt Manuscript bring the total of 'conformists' to 66,244.³⁷ For rural Herefordshire the figures are 27,574 'conformists', 410 papists and 640 nonconformists. In the towns there were 8,591 conformists, 75 papists (of whom 24 are recorded in Ross) and 314 nonconformists (of whom 110 are recorded in Ross and 105 in Leominster).³⁸

Between 1676 and 1706 the figure for recorded papists in the county's rural parishes within Hereford diocese dropped from 397 to 281. After 1706 there are no complete figures available, but the reality of the drop is underlined by figures for the deanery of Archenfield, the most strongly recusant. In 1676 there were 164 recusants recorded, in 1706 there were 123 and in 1716 about 70. In the 37 key parishes the numbers are 94 in 1676, 35 in 1706, and in 1716 (for 14 parishes where numbers are given) 14 or 15.³⁹ The decline between 1676 and 1706 was possibly due to the sacking of the Jesuit college at Cwm in the parish of Llanrothal and to the strength of anti-papist feeling in the county. Conversions to and from Catholicism were frequent and among the most fervent converts to

36. K.D.M. Snell & P.S. Ell, Rival Jerusalems. The Geography of Victorian Religion (2000), pp. 54-55.

37. Whiteman, Compton Census, pp. 245-246.

38. Ross in the Compton Census apparently includes Walford, which became a parish in 1671; and Brampton Abbots and Weston-under-Penyard, which became parishes in 1676.

39. Whiteman, Compton Census, pp. 252-253; H.C.A., 7008/1, pp. 268-274; H.R.O. HD5/40-73.

Anglicanism was Herbert Croft, who was Bishop of Hereford from 1661 to 1691.⁴⁰ But it is more difficult to account for the sharp decline in Archenfield between 1706 and 1716. Either the pressures placed upon the papists took their toll, so that a younger generation turned to the Church of England. Or there was less insistence on identifying recusants. A comparison of visitation returns and consistory court act books at Philip Bisse's primary visitation in 1716 shows that none of the recusants presented then was cited.⁴¹ On the other hand there is no means of knowing how many 'church papists' there were, who conformed outwardly, but practised the old religion in private.⁴²

The main centres of nonconformity were the towns, particularly market towns. The Independents had meetings in Hereford, Bromyard, Ledbury and Ross. The Quakers were represented in Leominster and Ross, and the Baptists in Leominster and at Ryeford in Weston-under-Penyard, a chapelry of Ross until 1676.⁴³ Rural parishes rarely had more than a few families of nonconformists at any one time, often of different persuasions, and refusal to pay church rate was rare. In the key parishes in 1676 nonconformity was weak, accounting for only 49 people in 37 parishes. In fact half of all the rural nonconformists were concentrated in two parishes - Clodock with 220 and Almeley with 100.⁴⁴ At Almeley (with 150 conformists and 4 papists) there was a strong Quaker meeting.⁴⁵ Its members refused to pay church rate and by 1716 were subject to an

40. Philip Jenkins, 'Anti-popery on the Welsh Marches in the seventeenth century', *Historical Journal* 23 (1980), pp. 275-293.

41. H.R.O. HD4/1 Vol. 109, pp.1-27; HD5/14/40-73, 99-134, 182-216.

42. A. Crockett & K.D.M. Snell, 'From the 1676 Compton Census to the 1851 Census of Religious Worship: Religious Continuity or Discontinuity?', *Rural History* 8(1) 1997, p. 79.

43. Harnden, *Parish Registers*, pp. 99.

44. Whiteman, *Compton Census*, pp. 254, 471

45. E.S. Whiting, R. Morris and J.R. Hughes, *The Background of Quakerism in Wales and the Border* (1952), pp. 3-11.

annual distraint.⁴⁶ Some thirty years later the parish achieved a substantial restoration and some re-ordering of a large church.⁴⁷

Conclusions

Herefordshire in the century after the Restoration maintained a varied agricultural economy and was famous for the quality of much of its produce. But it could not effectively exploit its advantages, partly because of poor communications and partly because of the numbers of smallholders and cottagers. The social hierarchy was headed by a few very wealthy families who had income from non-agricultural sources outside the county, with the gentry unevenly distributed between the parishes, while the pattern of landholding was a fragmented one. Many people lived on or very close to the bread line and had little or nothing to spare. Most of them supported the Anglican church and after 1689 the perceived threat from both recusants and nonconformists apparently receded. Even in 1676 these were, numerically, a tiny percentage of the population and, given the reality of distraint, they did not seriously impair the ability of the inhabitants to maintain their parish churches, even if they refused to pay church rate. High levels of poverty were likely to be a much greater difficulty.

46. H.R.O. HD5/14/183.

47. Below pp. 254-255.

PART TWO. THE CHURCHES

CHAPTER FOUR. HEREFORDSHIRE CHURCHES

c. 1662- 1762

... most of the old parish churches in England are building (sic) rather than architecture ... the humble expression of a village community's worship ... ¹

Within the framework of architectural history churches have always formed a separate study, distinct from and pre-dating vernacular architecture. Yet most country churches are fundamentally vernacular buildings, built and maintained by local craftsmen, using local materials and local methods of construction. If one takes away the arched windows and, perhaps, a few pieces of architectural ornament, there is little to distinguish a small church from the farm buildings and houses around it. To this rule, however, there is one very conspicuous exception in Herefordshire. In a county famous for its half-timbered houses there are no half-timbered churches. Timber framing is used occasionally for towers, but there are no half-timbered churches or chapels comparable to those of Cheshire or Shropshire.

The Appearance of Churches

The vernacular tradition in architecture lasted into the nineteenth century, but from the mid-seventeenth century it survived alongside buildings which were innovative in design and to some extent in the use of materials. In Herefordshire some of the churches rebuilt between 1662 and 1762 were entirely new, or almost so, in fabric and design; some were adapted using a combination of old and new materials, with modern and medieval features intermingled in the design; while

1. J. Betjeman, Guide to English Parish Churches, (rev. edn, 1993), pp. 5-6.

others were reconstructed to the old designs, reusing old materials as far as possible. Brick was used for three churches between 1673 and 1720 and brick faced with stucco for a fourth in 1742.² The handling of stone also changed. The south wall of Whitney, rebuilt in 1740, is faced with oblong blocks of rough stone laid in regular courses, not with uncoursed rubble; while the contract for Titley in 1762 specifies that the walls "in front" are to be of freestone from Rushock or Morleys Wood "in hammer work".³ Shobdon, built of Downton freestone and finished about 1756, is faced with ashlar, as were Monnington in 1680 and Preston Wynne in 1730. The stone for Preston Wynne came from a local quarry at Withington and from Broomy Hill near Hereford; while that for Monnington probably came from Ladylift on the Foxley estate.⁴

Stylistically too there were changes, although churches and chapels were still being rebuilt in traditional Gothic style down to 1712. Tyberton, begun in 1719, is the first wholly classical church; while Shobdon, built between 1749 and 1756, is the earliest example in the county of Gothic Revival. Elsewhere there are combinations of old and new ranging in date from the sixteen-nineties to the seventeen-forties. At How Caple and Whitney classical features co-exist with medieval windows, both reused and copied; while at Norton Canon the medieval windows were reinserted in new brick walls. At Shobdon, too, medieval bell-openings were reused when the tower was rebuilt between 1725 and 1730, to the subsequent confusion of architectural historians.⁵ It does, in fact, demonstrate both the casual reuse of rubble, combined with functional reuse of window openings, as

2. Canon Frome, Norton Canon, Tyberton and Stoke Edith.

3. H.R.O. A65/21.

4. H.R.O. AF27/1; J.J. Cartwright, The Travels through England of Dr. Richard Pococke, successively Bishop of Meath and Ossory, during the Years 1750, 1751 and later Years ... Camden Society, New Series, 42 & 44 (2 vols, 1888-1889), 2, pp. 220, 225.

5. Below p. 152.

highlighted by Stoker and Everson in medieval Lincolnshire.⁶

In total out of 200 rural churches in Herefordshire thirteen churches and two chapels were rebuilt between 1662 and 1762, as far as is known; including several which were reconstructed apparently without much change. The latter, like those in the other key places, remained predominantly medieval. Yet, like all medieval churches, they were then visually very different from the buildings we see to-day. Their interiors had been substantially altered during the sixteenth century and most have been radically altered since, inside and outside, by the Victorians. Nineteenth century restorations, which stopped short of rebuilding, often entailed very drastic change. Whole walls were taken down and plaster and limewash stripped away inside and out. Wall paintings, both medieval and early modern, were destroyed, windows altered, aisles and vestries added, porches replaced or rebuilt, and modifications made to roof lines, cresting, battlements and parapets; while gable crosses were both added and removed. The only Herefordshire church that is now completely plastered and painted white externally is that at Leinthall Earls, although the tower at Leintwardine is still encased in unpainted, greyish brown rendering. A large area of plaster remains on the north wall at St. Margarets, where close examination reveals tiny flakes of plaster on the stonework all along the north, south and east walls; and a photograph from the nineteen-thirties shows another large area still in place on the south wall.⁷ There are patches of plaster, too, on the walls at Llanrothal and Wigmore.⁸ And there is an implied reference to plaster in the churchwardens accounts at Whitbourne, since

6. D. Stocker with P. Everson, Rubbish Recycled: a Study of the Re-use of Stone in Lincolnshire, in D. Parsons, ed., Stone: Quarrying and Building in England A.D. 43-1524 (1990), pp. 83-93.
7. D. Brabbs. English Country Churches (1985), p. 112; R.C.H.M. England, An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Herefordshire (3 vols, 1931-1935), 3, plate 93.
8. Redundant Churches Fund, Churches in Retirement (1990), p. 57; R.C.H.M. England Herefordshire Inventory, 3, plate 183.

the sundial there was apparently painted on the wall.⁹ At Bacton, near St. Margarets, Sir Stephen Glynne noted that the outside walls were mostly whitewashed as late as 1872.¹⁰

The installation of bigger windows in old walls dates from at least the thirteenth century and seems to have been given added impetus by the need to provide a good light for side altars. In the early modern period it was given further impetus by the introduction of seating, the greater emphasis on preaching, the increase of literacy and the building of two and three decker pulpits, from which the minister both preached and read the service. If better light was needed for the preacher one solution, quite commonly adopted, was to move the pulpit; but this altered the relationship between seats and pulpit, a major reflection of status within the social hierarchy. Sometimes windows were enlarged, as at Winforton in 1710, to improve light for new seats.¹¹ Sometimes dormers of an essentially domestic character were installed. Such windows have gone, for example from Eardisland, Eaton Bishop, Kingsland and Pipe and Lyde.¹² The Victorians also altered fenestration to achieve more coherent facades. At Pipe and Lyde, in addition to removing the dormer on the south side of the nave, they modernised all the windows except one; and at Winforton they rebuilt the south wall with windows of uniform design.¹³ Frequently they made extensions. At Whitbourne a south vestry was added and the north wall and north porch taken down to make way for an aisle,

9. H.R.O. AL92/1, 1693, 1710.

10. Sir Stephen Glynne, 'Church notes', Volume 89, pp. 25-26.

11. H.R.O. F83/4.

12. Norman C. Reeves, The Leon Valley. Three Herefordshire Villages. Kingsland, Monkland and Eardisland (1980), p. 126; H.R.L. PC2369; print in the possession of the writer; James Hill's mss, 3, p. 319.

13. R.C.H.M. England, Herefordshire Inventory, 2, p. 152; Herefordshire Inventory, 3, p. 212.

which may have been needed to replace seating lost by the removal of the "deep west gallery" seen by Sir Stephen Glynne.¹⁴

In restoring church exteriors the Victorians were generally consistent in removing plaster and creating a regular Gothic fenestration. Inside they were equally consistent and generally ruthless. They removed plaster, painted decoration and notices from the walls, replaced stone floors, took out ceilings, dispensed in some instances with surviving medieval furnishings and replaced many from the early modern period. Interior walls in the century or so after the Restoration were plastered, painted white and "adorned" with the Royal Arms and with texts painted on boards or on the wall. The Canons of 1603(1604) require that the Decalogue should be at the east end of the church where people could most easily see and read it, with other chosen sentences written on walls in convenient places.¹⁵ The practice of including the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles Creed was introduced as early as the reign of Edward VI and additional sentences were selected from the Bible.¹⁶ Sometimes figures were added.

Unfortunately we know very little about what was chosen or why. The adorning of a number of Herefordshire churches and chancels is recorded but details only survive for Eaton Bishop in 1718.

Att a parish Meeting ... the Church Wardens and some others
Inhabitants ... did then treate and agree with William Fisher of y^e
Citty of Hereford Limner touching the Painting and new Drawing of
the Kings Arms, The Lords Prayer, the Tenn Commandments, the
Creed, Twelve Sentences and Death and Tyme, and in order for y^e
New adorning of our parish Church ...¹⁷

14. H.R.L. PC2268; Sir Stephen Glynne, 'Church notes', Volume 97, pp. 88-89.

15. 'The Canons of 1603(1604)', in G. Bray, ed., The Anglican Canons 1529-1947, Church of England Record Society 6 (1998), Canon 82.

16. G.W.O. Addleshaw and F. Etchells, The Architectural Setting of Anglican Worship (1948), pp. 35, 104.

17. H.R.O. N25/10.

Three sets of texts have survived in the county, one from the eighteenth century at St. Margarets and two, which are partially destroyed, from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries at Abbey Dore. Those in the chancel at St. Margarets pay tribute to the virtues of innocence, purity of heart and peacemaking. Those in the nave focus on avoiding sin. The later paintings at Abbey Dore, which include Death, Time, and David with a harp, were executed in 1701. The texts are biblical and include at least one also used at St. Margarets.¹⁸

Between 1662 and 1762 churches were usually paved with stone and ceiled. Installation or replacement of ceilings and pavements is recorded in a number of Herefordshire churches and is discussed more fully in Chapter Six.¹⁹ Ceilings were generally removed by the Victorians to "open out the church" and replaced with plaster on the pitch of the roof. Stone floors were superseded by wood or tiles, a process which often entailed destruction of monuments.²⁰ The nature and arrangement of furnishings between 1662 and 1762 will be considered in more detail in Chapters Ten and Eleven. Here it is relevant to note that they varied a good deal and that the Victorians introduced a higher degree of standardisation. Typically, in the chancel, they favoured a communion table at the east end with a

18. J. Tonkin and D. Monger, 'Wall paintings and texts', in R. Shoesmith and R. Richardson, eds, *A Definitive History of Dore Abbey* (1997), pp. 181-184.

19. Below pp. 104-105.

20. The destruction of monuments is attested by W.H. Cooke, who took up the publication of Duncumb's Collections in the later 19th century. "The labours of an historian of this unfinished work are inordinately increased by ... the recent action of the parochial clergy, who, under the plea of "church restoration", have denuded the consecrated edifices of their historical records in marble and stone, entrusted to their guardianship by the pious liberality of departed relatives." W.H. Cooke, *Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford. In Continuation of Duncumb's History*, 3 (1882), preface, no page number.

straight rail running from north to south, choir stalls in place of houseling benches, an organ, and a small reading desk at the west end. In the nave they placed the pulpit at the east end and the font at the west end in accordance with medieval tradition, with pews facing eastward. They replaced box pews (where they existed) with open ones and took out galleries. Only exceptionally did they retain or replace the Ten Commandments, the Apostles Creed and the Lord's Prayer. In addition to removing box pews, they lowered three decker pulpits and removed their sounding boards, took out medieval roodscreens, replaced baluster fonts and, sometimes, medieval ones.

These were considerable changes, as Betjeman has stressed, and they resulted in the medieval churches we now know.²¹ But if we are to understand and evaluate standards of care in the pre-Victorian period, we have to try to envisage the buildings as they were then. This is not simply a matter of seeing the churches where our predecessors worshipped more precisely. It is also a question of understanding the demands laid on those responsible for their care. In addition there is a need to reconsider the implications of Victorian work in evidential terms. Much early modern restoration and rebuilding has been masked or destroyed.

Building Materials

To rebuild, restore or maintain a church it was necessary to employ workmen and to find materials. When churches were rebuilt materials were sometimes supplied by craftsmen and sometimes by their employers. Otherwise materials were generally found by employers. The materials most used, as is evident from the buildings themselves and from accounts are stone, timber, lime, hair, moss, glass and sometimes iron. Brick was also used from the sixteen-sixties.

The predominant stone in Herefordshire is old red sandstone, most of which came from the quarries as rubble. This is normally difficult to dress into blocks and there is very little freestone. Limestone is available in the Woolhope Dome

21. J. Betjeman, Guide p.14-15; J. Betjeman, 'Hymn', in The Illustrated Poems of John Betjeman (1995), pp. 56-57.

and the North-West Upland. The sandstone also yields roofing slates or "tiles" and paving slabs, so that it is the traditional material for walls, roof coverings and floors.²² Most of the purchases recorded in churchwardens' accounts are for roofing and paving stone. Walling stone was not often bought, perhaps because it was not often needed. On the other hand it seems likely that, whenever possible, old stone was re-used, as it was in Lincolnshire.²³ It was not only a valuable resource but, if old stone was available close at hand, the cost of transport was saved as well as the cost of quarrying. Timber, particularly oak in which Herefordshire is rich, is as important in the fabric of churches as stone. It provides the framework of the roof, bell frames and wheels, doors and most of the furniture. It is used for the framework of bell turrets and spires and to cover them with shingles or weatherboarding. There are also towers which consist in part of timber framing with an infill of boarding or plaster.

Church walls were plastered and limewashed inside and either rendered and limewashed or simply limewashed outside.²⁴ To maintain them and to install and repair ceilings churchwardens had regularly to buy large quantities of lime and hair. Similarly they regularly purchased moss for packing roof slates to keep out the wind.²⁵ Glass was usually supplied by glaziers, but churchwardens purchased iron for hinges, locks and keys, and for parts of the bell frames. No accounts for the maintenance of chancels or private aisles have come to light except for Madley, but the same pattern of finding workmen and materials probably applied.

22. N. Pevsner, The Buildings of England. Herefordshire (1963), p. 15-16; A. Clifton-Taylor, The Pattern of English Building (new edn, 1972), pp. 138-139; A. Clifton-Taylor and A.S. Ireson, English Stone Building (new edn, 1994), pp. 27, 32, 211, 226.

23. Stocker with Everson, 'Rubbish Recycled', pp. 83-101.

24. Clifton Taylor, Pattern of Building, p. 43; Clifton Taylor and Ireson, Stone Building, p. 102.

25. P. H. Fisher, Notes and Recollections of Stroud, (new edn 1891, reprinted 1975), p. 353.

Responsibility for the Fabric

Responsibility for the fabric and furniture of a church at this date was divided. Property owners or their tenants were responsible for the fabric of the main body of the church. But only those resident in the parish were legally responsible for "other necessities", a term which included furniture, weather cocks, clocks and sundials.²⁶ In a few parishes, however, an aisle or transept was still maintained by a family who used it as a memorial chapel and, sometimes, as a private pew. The chancel was maintained by the rector, defined as the recipient of the great tithes. Oversight, after the Restoration, was exercised through the framework of dioceses and archdeaconries. Canon 86, which required ecclesiastical visitors to survey churches every three years and to report negligence annually to the Court of High Commission, became a dead letter and no alternative provision was made for regular central oversight.²⁷ Visitations were held twice a year: in Hereford Diocese by the Bishop, the Chancellor of the Diocese, the Archdeacons of Hereford and Salop or the Dean of Hereford and the individual canons who held peculiars. Churchwardens were required to attend and to report on the state of the entire church, not just the parts maintained by the ratepayers; and if chancels or private aisles needed repair they were expected to identify those responsible. Where work needed doing instructions would be given for it to be completed within a specified time and, if need be, extensions would be granted at subsequent visitations. When the work was finished a certificate would be submitted to confirm this.

If the authorities thought there was cause for concern, those responsible for the fabric and furnishing would be cited to appear in the consistory courts which entailed closer oversight, since the courts sat approximately every four weeks. Their main function was correction; that is to say they were primarily concerned to put matters right, not to punish. Defendants were cited to repair or rebuild

26. R. Burn, Ecclesiastical Law, (2 vols, 1763), 1, pp. 268-270; E. Cannan, Local Rates in England (2nd edn 1912), pp. 15, 24-25.

27. 'Canons of 1603(1604), Canon 86.

churches and to mend or replace furniture. As at visitations time would be allocated, extensions granted and certificates were required. If a certificate was not forthcoming, those concerned would be cited to confirm that they had done the work.²⁸ Strictly speaking excommunication was automatic after three non-appearances.²⁹ But in practice the courts were tolerant and allowed five or six non-appearances before deciding to excommunicate. Even then it seems from the notes in the act books that sentence was not often carried out, since defendants would at that point appear to receive instructions or to confirm that they had finished work but failed to let the court know.³⁰

The same system applied to everyone alike - ratepayers, tithe owners and private individuals - and it does not seem to have been unduly mitigated by considerations of status as far as the care of churches was concerned. The evidence shows that there were often delays in repairing, restoring or rebuilding churches, but few people failed to respect the system or to comply with their obligations.

28. H.R.O. HD4/1/99-125, Hereford Diocese, Acts of Office 1662-1762; H.C.A. 7002/1/4-9, Dean's Peculiar, Act Books 1667-1746.

29. Burn, Ecclesiastical Law, 1, p. 545. The initial sentence, if carried out, would be lesser excommunication. It was only rarely "aggravated" to greater excommunication; and only in the case of persistent recusants and dissenters, prior to 1689, were offenders regularly named to the secular authorities who might imprison them.

30. H.R.O. HD4/1/99-125; H.C.A. 7002/1/4-9.

PART TWO. THE CHURCHES

CHAPTER FIVE. ECCLESIASTICAL OVERSIGHT

... every Chancellor, Archdeacon, Commissary, and Official, and every other person having ecclesiastical jurisdiction, at the ordinary time when the Churchwardens are sworn; and the Archbishop and Bishops, when he or they do summon their Visitation, shall deliver ... to the Churchwardens ... of every parish, ... such books of articles as they ... shall require for the year following ... to ground their presentment upon ... ¹

Ecclesiastical historians remain divided over the health of the post-Restoration church, with Virgin and Spaeth maintaining a pessimistic view, while Spurr, Jacob, Gregory and Gibson find much to commend.² Outside their ranks belief in

1. 'The Canons of 1603(1604)' in G. Bray, ed., The Anglican Canons 1529-1947, Church of England Record Society 6 (1998), Canon 119.
2. P. Virgin, The Church in an Age of Negligence. Ecclesiastical Structures and Problems of Church Reform, 1700-1840 (1989); D. Spaeth, The Church in an Age of Danger. Parsons and Parishioners, 1660-1740 (2000); J. Spurr, The Restoration Church of England, 1646-1689 (1991); W.M. Jacob, Lay People and Religion in the Early Eighteenth Century (1996); J. Gregory, Restoration, Reformation and Reform, 1660-1828. Archbishops of Canterbury and their Diocese (2000); W. Gibson, The Church of England, 1688-1832. Unity and Accord (2001).

laxity and negligence towards the care of churches, in many cases, remains firm.³

After the Restoration central oversight of the care of churches disappeared, so that responsibility devolved entirely on the dioceses. The ordinary mechanism for monitoring the state of church buildings was the system of bi-annual visitations backed by the church courts.⁴ But the authorities were evidently not satisfied with this and tried various ways of reinforcing and extending the system. Inspection by commissions of parish clergy did not, apparently, outlast the late seventeenth century;⁵ perhaps because they had no jurisdiction and they may have aroused lay resentment, as the clergy did if they exercised their right to present at visitations.⁶ Much later, in the seventeen-sixties, parish clergy were drawn in once more, when questions about church buildings were included in articles addressed to them.⁷ More significantly, however, inspection by senior clergy was introduced. At least two bishops, Nicolson of Carlisle and Bowers of Chichester, carried out inspection personally or through trusted delegates at their primary visitations.⁸ More usually, however, inspection became the responsibility of archdeacons and this approach, supporting the routine of visitations and courts, was still in force in the eighteen-forties.⁹ In Hereford diocese, unfortunately, no

3. J.M. Robinson, Treasures of English Churches (1995), p. 127-128; S. Frear, A Companion to the English Parish Church (1996), pp. 179-180; A. Jones A Thousand Years of the English Parish. Medieval Patterns and Modern Interpretations (2000), pp. 200-201; N.J.G. Pounds, A History of the English Parish. The Culture of Religion from Augustine to Victoria (2000), pp. 395-396.

4. Above pp. 80-81. 5. Appendix VIII, items 9 & 12.

6. Gregory, Restoration, Reformation, p. 261.

7. Appendix VIII, items 22 & 23. 8. Appendix VIII, items 12 & 13.

9. Jacob, Lay People, pp. 190-191; C. Pickford, Bedfordshire Churches in the Nineteenth Century, Bedfordshire Historical Record Society 73, 77 & 79 (3 vols, 1994-2000), 1, pp. 10-14.

surveys or inspection books survive for the years from 1662 to 1762. This chapter, therefore, is based on visitation and consistory court records and examines the way in which the ordinary mechanisms of oversight were used.

The Aftermath of the Civil War and Interregnum

Evidence for the state of churches immediately after the Restoration is thin. For the years 1660 to 1662 there are churchwardens' accounts and presentments for 17 out of 25 country churches and chapels in the Dean of Hereford's peculiar, of which 12 (70%) needed repair.¹⁰ These included Kingstone where over £15 was laid out in 1660, mainly on roofs and guttering, and Madley where extensive repairs were carried out in 1662.¹¹ For the archdeaconry of Hereford 26 visitation returns survive for 1662 and for January 1663. Of 26 churches 14 (54%) were out of repair.¹² These included Almeley where the wardens' accounts, like those for Madley, confirm that work was being done.¹³ Disrepair was apparently widespread. But the only parish where problems persisted was How Caple, where the roof wanted tiling, the floor was not well paved and the steeple and bells not repaired. However a major factor here was a vendetta waged against the incumbent by Edward Caple, the principal landowner, who was a churchwarden; and there are indications that this was not entirely resolved until the Caple family sold their estate in the sixteen-seventies.¹⁴

10. H.C.A. 4589 i, vi-viii, xi, xii, xvii, xx-xxii, xxiv, xxvi-xxix, xxxiii, xxxv.

11. H.C.A. 4589, vii, xii; H.R.O. BK52/34.

12. HD7/4/48,55-57, 81-93, 98-100, 126; HD7/6/195, 206. The return for "Stretton" assigned by Marshall to Stretton Grandison is now thought to relate to Church Stretton. W. Marshall, 'The administration of the diocese of Oxford and Hereford 1660-1760', unpubl. Ph.D. thesis, University of Bristol (1978), p. 160.

13. H.R.O. HD7/6/206; G73/1.

14. H.R.O. HD7/7/158; HD7/17/7; HD4/1, vol. 117, p. 15v.

On the face of it, there is an inexplicable discrepancy between the percentage of churches out of repair in the Dean's peculiar and the percentage for the rest of the archdeaconry in the early sixteen-sixties. This may be because both series of records are incomplete and the diocesan records start two years later than those for the peculiar and do not reflect the state of churches immediately after the Restoration. It may also be due to the fact that the peculiar lies close to Hereford, which was besieged twice by the Roundheads, in 1645 and in 1646. At Canon Frome, too, outside the peculiar and about twelve miles from Hereford, the manor house was destroyed in 1645 by Parliamentary forces and the inhabitants, as they later explained, "for their Loyalty to his Ma^{tie} reduced to very greate poverty". Their church had been demolished to make the house "more tenable against the enemy" and was not rebuilt for some time.¹⁵ So the poor state of the churches near Hereford may reflect high levels of military activity and their economic aftermath. But the picture is further complicated by evidence that churches and parsonages in at least four parishes in central and southern Herefordshire were damaged by a severe gale late in 1662.¹⁶ This evidence, limited though it is, indicates just how difficult it is to be certain that disrepair is simply due to neglect, whether during the Interregnum or at any other time.

Although so many churches were out of repair immediately after the Restoration, the same was not true of chancels. Only ten needed attention, all of them in parishes where tithes belonging to ecclesiastical office holders were let to laymen under the Commonwealth. In the Dean's peculiar chancels were out of repair in seven out of sixteen parishes (41%). In the archdeaconry of Hereford the total was three out of twenty-six (11.5%). But only at Bosbury, where the tithes belonged to the Bishop, is there definite evidence of neglect. There, it was stated, "...o^f Chauncell so ruinous for fear of Immanen damage it is almost useless for the Administration of y^e holy Sacrament ..."¹⁷ But, like the other chancels, Bosbury does not feature again in the records and appears to have been restored quite

15. H.R.O. R93 LC8239(1). 16. H.R.O. HD7/4/55-57, 91.

17. H.R.O. HD7/4/89.

Problems with furniture were even fewer. Only six parishes are known to have repaired or replaced fonts in the sixteen-sixties, though there may well have been others.¹⁸ But there were difficulties over the ordering of the nave at Stretton Grandison in 1664 and the Vicar of Bromyard was sent to inspect the church and make recommendations.¹⁹ Yet, by 1664 it seems that most churches and chancels were in a reasonable state of repair, although it took a little longer to complete replacement of fonts. And the diocesan act books, which begin early in 1663, show that the main physical problem facing parishes in the ensuing decade was not the state of churches, but the state of churchyard fences.²⁰

The First Fifty Years, 1663-1712

By 1663 the framework of diocesan administration was back in place. Herbert Croft held his primary visitation in 1662 and thereafter visitations were held twice a year and the consistory courts sat to hear office cases at regular intervals of about four weeks. During the next fifty years the authorities faced two major problems in relation to the care of churches: delays in rebuilding and sustained neglect of a few chancels. Delays in rebuilding occurred in places where there was no wealthy landowner. Monnington, where the church was paid for by Uvedale and Mary Tomkyns, was completed in two years.²¹ But at Allensmore, where the tower fell on the nave in 1668, work was still being done

18. Below pp. 166-167, 177.

19. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 99, pp. 211-212.

20. H.R.O. HD4/1, vols 114, 115, 99, 100.

21. N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England. Herefordshire*, (1963), pp. 254-255.

in 1682.²² At Canon Frome the church, demolished in 1645, was rebuilt over a period of five years from 1669 to 1674.²³ And at Brobury it took six years to complete the nave in the sixteen-eighties and, over a decade later, a further two years to rebuild the chancel.²⁴ The main cause of these delays was almost undoubtedly lack of money and the authorities could do little except to monitor work. But by the early eighteenth century, when the churches at Hope-under-Dinmore and St. Weonards were rebuilt, the work was completed within one or two years, so that by then, it seems, parishes were better able to find the money.²⁵ On the other hand, rebuilding at Norton Canon took twelve years, from 1705 to 1717.²⁶

Sustained neglect of chancels was a more intractable problem. Only at Much Marcle, after some 14 years of neglect, was the diocese able to resolve delays stemming from a combination of uncertainties and confusion.²⁷ And even there the situation was probably taken in hand by a new and energetic vicar.²⁸ But at Wigmore, Eardisley and Bredwardine, there was neglect which lasted for periods ranging from 12 or 14 years to over 40. Those responsible were cited and even excommunicated, but neglect was only remedied when tithes changed hands.²⁹

Problems over furniture hardly existed, apart from a dispute over two seats at Stoke Edith in 1679, resolved by the Bishop.³⁰ But resolving problems was not

22. H.C.A. 4591 v; H.R.O. AL19/20, p. 7v.

23. H.R.O. HD7/12/70; HD7/16/520.

24. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 119, p. 107; vol. 124, Weobley Deanery, p. 13; HD7/36, 11 February 1704/5, 15 November 1705.

25. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 107, p. 57v.; HD7/38; HD4/1, vol. 108, Archenfield Deanery, [Easter] 1710, Michaelmas 1710.

26. H.C.A. 4601 xxvii; 7002/1/8, 124v. 27. H.R.O. HD7/34.

28. B.A. Bax, *The English Parsonage*, (1964), p. 102.

29. Below pp. 119, 124-129.

30. H.R.O. AL19/19, pp. 154v.-157; J72/9.

the main preoccupation of the authorities. They were more regularly involved in monitoring routine maintenance and restoration through bi-annual visitations. The records are incomplete, but some indication of success or failure over the years from 1662 to 1712 can be gained from the acts of office for the primary visitations of Philip Bisse in 1716 and Benjamin Hoadly in 1722.

Philip Bisse and Benjamin Hoadly, 1713-1723

Philip Bisse, who was bishop from 1713 to 1721, had a strong interest in architecture and church furnishing, which he applied to bringing churches in his diocese up to the highest possible standard. At his primary visitation in 1716 every parish where any defect was reported in fabric, furniture, plate or service books was apparently cited. In the archdeaconry of Hereford only 46 (25%) out of 184 escaped citation. Closer examination, however, reveals that the number of places with defective fabric was not high. Forty-three (23.3%) were cited to carry out repairs. Of these ten had broken or uneven floors, four needed whitening and three had broken bells. This leaves 26 (14.1%) where walls, roofs, towers or windows needed attention, including Whitney where the spire wanted shingling and Canon Pyon where windows were broken.³¹

Yet evidence from Pencombe shows how rapidly the situation could change. The parish was not cited in the summer of 1716, but in December it was ordered to adorn its church and given a year to do so.³² It seems probable from the amount spent in 1717 that the church had been badly damaged by a gale, late in 1716, which broke a window. The accounts record payments of over £31 (well above the norm of £6 or £7 for the parish). These cover work on the tower, ceiling, walls and windows; a scaffold for painting the royal arms and a cover for the font.³³

31. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 109, pp. 1-27.

32. H.R.O. HD4/1. vol. 109, p. 28v. 33. H.R.O. L33/7; HD7/43.

Overall, however, the condition of churches had improved since 1662, when nearly 60% were out of repair and, in spite of natural disasters, further improvement was achieved. At Benjamin Hoadly's primary visitation in 1722 just eight churches (4.3%) out of 184 in the archdeaconry of Hereford were cited.³⁴ These may have been only the worst cases. But the 39 returns which survive for the visitation reveal no serious problems, except at Whitney where the Wye was encroaching on the churchyard.³⁵ On the other hand Philip Bisse was unable to speed up the pace of rebuilding at Norton Canon where the church begun in 1705 was not finished until 1717; or at Eardisley where the rebuilding of the tower took seven years from 1710 to 1717.³⁶ Nor did he or Benjamin Hoadly insist on the rebuilding of the tower at Shobdon, which was blown down in 1719.³⁷

If the state of churches had improved so had that of chancels. The long-running problems of the previous fifty years had been solved and in 1716 only 13 chancels (7.6%) out of 184 were out of repair, compared with 10 out of 42 (23.8%) between 1660 and 1662.³⁸ This seems an astonishingly low figure, yet one should not have been presented at all. At Staunton-on-Wye the chancel had been demolished prior to rebuilding and no citation was issued.³⁹ This leaves five chancels where clergy were responsible, two belonging to the Dean and Chapter of Hereford and five to laymen. Yet it is impossible to point to neglect. At Preston-on-Wye a door needed attention; while at Byford the roof had been damaged by the removal of the old tower.⁴⁰ By 1722, at Hoadly's primary visitation, only two chancels merited citation.⁴¹ All in all, by the third decade of the eighteenth century, it seems that tithe owners in Herefordshire maintained a

34. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 109, pp. 68v.-76.

35. H.R.O. HD5/14/38. 36. Below pp. 142, 151.

37. Below p. 152. 38. HD4/1, vol. 109, pp. 1-27.

39. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 109, p. 11v.

40. H.R.O. HD4/1. vol. 109, pp. 1v, 8v.

41. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 109, pp. 68v.-76.

Furniture was generally well maintained but Bisse's enquiries in 1716 revealed that 24 places did not have both a pulpit and a reading desk, contrary to canon law, and two other cases came to light later, bringing the total to just over 14 per cent. Six places pleaded lack of space, but only Aylton, where the church is very tiny, received a dispensation.⁴² Bisse therefore improved compliance with canon law. In addition the authorities, under his successor, seem to have introduced effective guidelines for the re-allocation of seats. In 1722, for the first time, apparently, between 1662 and 1762, the ecclesiastical courts allocated seats in parish churches. In both instances a new allocation was needed because there were ratepayers without seats. At Orleton there was a declared wish to avoid future disputes. The chancellor of the diocese therefore appointed a commission to allocate the seats with instructions, to pay due attention to the quality of the persons and the value of their properties, subject to the community's request that men and their wives should sit together.⁴³ At Little Hereford the registrar of the peculiar promulgated the seating plan in accordance with the parish tradition of seating men and women separately.⁴⁴ These two allocations were not only the first, but the last to be made by the authorities, which suggests that the principles which they embodied may have become a model for the diocese.

Overall there appears to have been a genuine improvement in the condition of churches between 1662 and 1716 and a further improvement between 1716 and 1722. Furniture in most churches was brought into line with canonical standards and principles for the allocation of seats, apparently established in 1722, forestalled a possible wave of disputes as the population rose. But the authorities could still not speed rebuilding; a further indication that slow progress was almost certainly due to lack of money.

42. 'The Canons of 1603(1604)', Canons 82 & 83; H.R.O. HD4/1. vol. 109, pp. 1-27, 45v.; HD7/18/310.

43. H.R.O. AL19/21, pp. 93v.-95.

44. H.C.A. 4464/18.

The Last Forty Years, 1723-1762

The Anglican church in Herefordshire entered the middle years of the eighteenth century with churches and chancels in good order, except to the extent that rebuilding could take a long time. The last fairly full set of visitation returns, those for the chancellor's visitation in 1744, show that in 144 parishes only 3 churches (2%) were out of repair and no chancels were presented at all.⁴⁵ In the meantime fewer cases of any kind came to court. But churches and chancels were still cited, although numbers rarely rose even a little above those for 1722.⁴⁶ However it is at this time that it becomes clear that a few parishes had failed to present or remedy defects over long periods and that not even Bisse's vigilance had brought the difficulties to light. Failures of co-operation were at the root of the problems. At Kingstone in 1737 a churchwarden presented a clock and a gallery, installed without faculties, which had been causing problems for ten and twenty years respectively.⁴⁷ More seriously the rector of Llanwarne in 1747, in a letter, wrote that the roof of the north aisle was about to fall in on the pulpit and an adjacent pew. He asked permission to move the pulpit as the parishioners would not agree to repair the roof, adding that "I really officiate in Danger of my Life ..."⁴⁸ In both cases orders were given to remedy the defects, but neither the clergy nor their parishioners were admonished.⁴⁹ The clergy were reluctant to use their right of presentment and were not under official pressure to do so.

In spite of occasional failures, it seems that churches and chancels were usually well cared for and, whether by coincidence or not, all the churches and towers rebuilt during Henry Egerton's episcopate from 1723 to 1746 were completed promptly, apart from the tower at Shobdon (appendix II.B). Although an order to rebuild Shobdon tower, blown down in 1719, was given the same year, it had to be re-iterated at Michaelmas 1723 and the parishioners then took a

45. H.R.O. HD7/64.

46. H.R.O. HD4/1, vols 109 & 110.

47. Below pp.183, 251. 48. H.R.O. HD7/65.

49. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 110, pp. 15v., 67v.

year to come to a decision.⁵⁰ Work began in 1725 and was completed in 1730.⁵¹ Under Lord James Beauclerk, however, delays lengthened again. Shobdon church, where there were practical problems, took seven years to complete and Titley six.⁵² There was also a long delay at Eardisland where the spire was reported to be dangerous in 1750 and yet the contract for rebuilding the tower was not made until 1760.⁵³ So it seems, again, that the courts had little ability to speed rebuilding.

It is clear, though, that from the late seventeen-twenties the bishops were monitoring the construction of galleries and private pews more closely, as a growing number of faculties are entered in their registers.⁵⁴ These were undoubtedly prompted by population growth and quite probably by social tensions generated by changes in the ownership of estates. But the main concern of the diocese was to ensure that pews and galleries were not obstructive in any way. The floor area and placing of each is carefully specified.

Conclusions

The picture which emerges from this survey is one of a slow improvement in the care of churches from 1662 until 1716, when Philip Bisse's primary visitation led to swifter progress, after which high standards seem generally to have been maintained throughout the archdeaconry of Hereford and the peculiars.. But the picture is based on records which have considerable limitations. In conclusion, therefore, it seems appropriate to consider these limitations, before attempting to compare Hereford with other dioceses and to discuss the issues raised by this chapter.

Three factors affect the evidential value of visitation records and those of the courts. Firstly the records are very incomplete. No more than 20% of

50. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 109, pp. 55, 65, 83, 90; HD7/48, 18 October 1724.

51. H.R.O. HD7/48, 8 October 1725; HD7/30.

52. Below pp. 137-139, 142-144. 53. H.R.O. AJ32/58.

54. H.R.O. AI.19/22-23.

visitation returns survive; while the acts of office in the diocese and the dean's peculiar vary in scope and completeness. This makes it extremely difficult to assess the picture at any given date or to draw comparisons. Secondly the returns relate to the state of church buildings at just two points in the year and are only complemented to a limited extent by certificates. The evidence therefore masks not only many occasions when churches were out of repair, but also the amount of time, money and effort which went into carrying out repairs promptly. Brampton Abbots had new bell wheels in 1681 and stated at visitation that all was well. In 1694 the parish repaired the roof and walls of the church and in 1701 the roof. In both years they reported the church in good repair.⁵⁵ At Stretton Grandison there were substantial repairs to the steeple in 1734 and the church was whitened in 1736. In both years the churchwardens presented the church in good condition.⁵⁶ Winforton was ordered to whiten its church in 1719 and the church wardens' accounts reflect this order.⁵⁷ The rector certified that the work was done on December 12th and the churchwardens reported that they had nothing to present on December 18th.⁵⁸

A third factor entails indications that parishes might not present tasks that were not urgent until they were ready to raise money and do the work. It was also vital that the churchwardens during a restoration, for example, should be willing and able to supervise the work and to subsidise it if necessary.⁵⁹ At Brampton Abbots the church was in good repair in 1714, yet extensive work was done on ceiling and paving in 1715.⁶⁰ At Edwin Ralph there was nothing to present in 1726, but in 1727 considerable sums were spent on the roof and on adorning the

55. H.R.O. AA15/18; HD7/21/46; HD7/30; HD7/34.

56. H.R.O. J29/1; HD7/54; HD7/56.

57. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 109, p. 60; F83/4.

58. H.R.O. HD7/59; HD7/44. 59. Below pp. 284, 288.

60. H.R.O. HD7/41; AA15/18.

church.⁶¹ At Titley the church was in good repair in 1704, but large sums were spent on roof and other repairs in 1705.⁶² These delays highlight the problems of using static sources, such as visitation returns and court records, in isolation to assess the care of churches, which is a never-ending process.

But static sources are the best records we have for evaluating the condition of church buildings in dioceses and archdeaconries and to the extent that they are available in print, they allow comparisons to be made (table 8). This table is based on a range of documents - visitation returns, surveys and a speculum - which vary in completeness and which were compiled by different people at different times. They also reflect varying standards. Many do not mention dirt in churches, which was contrary to canon law.⁶³ In addition the tables mask the fact that, while some churches and chancels were seriously dilapidated, in others the defects were small. Comparisons are therefore broad. What is most noticeable is that figures derived from inspections are higher than those from parochial returns, including returns made by clergy. This is probably due to the fact that inspectors would set high standards. The figures also show that, except in Canterbury diocese in 1759, chancels were better cared for than churches. Some results call for specific comment. The large difference between initial figures for Hereford and Buckingham is probably due to lack of returns for Hereford and, possibly, the fact that the earliest date from 1660 and 1661 in an area badly affected by the Civil War (table 8a). The rise in Lewes archdeaconry between 1674 and 1677 is mainly due to increased disrepair in Pevensey deanery, which raises the possibility that coastal storms were a factor. Similarly, high levels of disrepair in Carlisle diocese may reflect the impact of mountain and coastal storms and the effect of sea air. For what they are worth the tables show a fairly marked improvement in the condition of churches and a more modest one in the condition of chancels, an improvement reflected in work on Devon and on the

61. H.R.O. HD7/49; N20/2. 62. H.R.O. HD7/35; N20/2.

63. 'The Canons of 1603(1604)', Canon 85.

Table 8. Levels of Disrepair

Note. A list of all published documents is given in Appendix VIII.

NR = Number of returns/places. A = Archdeaconry. C = County. D = Diocese.

Table 8a. Analysis of Visitation & Court Records, 1660-1764

Note. Figures for other areas are not strictly comparable with those for Hereford. They include chapels & urban churches and exclude peculiars exempt from episcopal jurisdiction. Figures are from visitation returns, except for Hereford in 1716.

Area	Date	NR	Out of repair	
			Churches	Chancels
Hereford A.	1660-1662	42	59.9% (25)	23.8% (10)
Buckingham A.	1662	165	20.0% (33)	6.6% (11)
Lewes A.	1674	98	16.3% (16)	0.0% (0)
Lewes A.	1677	113	24.7% (28)	4.4% (5)
Hereford A.	1716	184	23.3% (43)	5.9% (11)
Hereford A.	1744	144	2.0% (3)	0.0% (0)
Surrey C.	1764	22	4.5% (1)	0.0% (0)
Hampshire C.	1764	168	4.8% (8)	2.4% (4)

Table 8b. Analysis of Inspections, 1674-1759

Area	Date	NR	Out of Repair	
			Churches	Chancels
Worcester D.	1674 ¹	230	33.9% (78)	18.6% (43)
Worcester D.	1687	83	36.1% (30)	22.8% (19)
Chichester D.	1687	244	42.2% (103)	30.3% (74)
Carlisle D. ²	1704	97	50.5% (49)	45.3% (44)
Chichester D.	1724	263	41.4% (109)	30.0% (79)
Canterbury D.	1759	260	17.7% (46)	21.5% (56)

1. Total includes 6 places in Kinton Deanery not mentioned in the survey because the inspectors only commented on churches out of repair.

2. Bouch, Prelates and People, drawing on the same returns, gives a total of 31 places (including urban parishes) where the church and/or chancel were in bad condition. Jacob, Lay People, quotes 8-10 as being neglected.

diocese of Ely.⁶⁴ But the figures are in a sense out of context. A church exists over long periods within a landscape, a climate, and a community and within a sequence of change and fluctuation. All these factors have a bearing on its care, but they are rarely evident in static sources.

This chapter, however, has been concerned with judicial and administrative oversight. Three issues emerge: the alleged inefficiency of the system; the extent of lay autonomy; and an emphasis on peace and good will. The charge of laxity and inefficiency is difficult to sustain. Visitations were held twice a year. Churchwardens were required to make presentments on oath and to attend in person.⁶⁵ In addition some dioceses, at least, extended their oversight through inspections. The limitations of individual churchwardens' presentments have to some extent been exaggerated. In only two Herefordshire parishes - Kingstone and Llanwarne - is there evidence of a prolonged cover-up. In other parishes wardens sometimes delayed presenting the need for restoration, while the parish made the necessary arrangements. But in Herefordshire, as elsewhere in England presentment of churches out of repair was common.⁶⁶

The extent of lay autonomy is difficult to gauge. It was always tempered by the authority of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Philip Bisse showed what could be done by using visitation, backed by the consistory court, as an instrument of policy and it is a pity that evidence for inspections is so very poor in Hereford diocese. But autonomy at parish level was well-established. Rural communities had regulated their own affairs in the middle ages through manorial courts, tithings and vestries and took responsibility for their churches. References to

64. A. Warne, Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century Devon (1969), pp. 53-54; M. Cross, 'The church and local society in the diocese of Ely c. 1630-c.1730', unpubl. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Cambridge (1991), pp. 216-218.

65. Below p. 276.

66. Gibson, Church of England, p. 131.

churchwardens and their obligations first appear in the thirteenth century.⁶⁷ It is a great mistake to assume that, because many lay people were ill-educated or illiterate, they did not understand their obligations.

The Church, moreover, preached peace and goodwill and churchwardens were expected to keep the peace whenever the congregation met.⁶⁸ More fundamentally, the message of peace and goodwill was constantly reiterated in the liturgy, the preaching and the teaching of the Church. In these circumstances the authorities used judicial powers with restraint. They had also to consider the very real difficulties faced by those responsible for church buildings and the effort made, year in and year out, to maintain buildings and their furniture. This effort is the subject of the next six chapters.

67. R. Morris, *Churches in the Landscape* (paperback edn, 1997), p. 286.

68. 'The Canons of 1603(1604)', Canon 85.

PART TWO. THE CHURCHES

CHAPTER SIX. REPAIR AND RESTORATION

THE BODY OF THE CHURCH

A parish church is rather like an old man's bicycle that has had three new wheels, two sets of handlebars, the pump stolen and replaced, and the frame repainted so many times that no one can count the colours - yet to its owner it is still the same bicycle ...¹

Historians writing on the Anglican church at national level have frequently laid stress on neglect of church buildings. By contrast, most of those writing on individual diocese, counties or archdeaconries have found evidence of good care and improvement. J.C. Shuler, among them, emphasises one crucial factor.

Primarily we must recognise the extreme susceptibility to decay which characterises many of the things which an archdeacon must labour to improve. Stone weathers and timber rots, quite independently of the men who supervise their use in reconstruction.²

Churches required constant attention.³ Yet no one has attempted to examine the series of itemised churchwardens accounts, which survive for at least some parishes, although these are the records most likely to reveal how consistently parishes churches were maintained over time. This chapter, therefore, moves on

1. R. Foster, Discovering English Churches (1979), p. [7].
2. J.C. Shuler, 'The pastoral and ecclesiastical administration of the diocese of Durham 1721-1771, with particular reference to the archdeaconry of Northumberland', unpubl. Ph.D. thesis, University of Birmingham (1994), pp. 479-480.
3. R. Morris, Churches in the Landscape (paperback edn, 1997), p. 317.

from the framework of visitations and courts to study work done at parish level.

Legally and in practical terms responsibility lay on churchwardens, who collected and spent the rates and submitted accounts at the end of each year.⁴ Occasionally gifts and subscriptions eased the financial burden, but most of the money came from church rates. Basic requirements of good maintenance and cleanliness were set out in the Canons, which refer the wardens to the Book of Homilies in which the sermon on maintaining churches emphasises repair, cleanliness and "comely adorning" and makes the point that it is easier to keep a building clean and well decorated if it is properly repaired. It also draws a repeated domestic parallel, urging that the congregation care for God's house as they would for their own homes.⁵

There are twelve parishes in Herefordshire where itemised accounts exist for at least 34 years out of 101 from 1662 to 1762 (appendix III.A). There are also shorter sets for five key parishes where rebuilding occurred and for ten additional parishes (appendices III.B & C). These are too slight and incomplete to demonstrate consistency of care, but they do confirm that the range of work carried out in parishes with more substantial accounts was entirely typical.

The Twelve Parishes

The twelve parishes for which longer series of accounts survive have not been chosen on any systematic basis. Their itemised accounts have survived by chance. They are scattered across the county, mostly in the English Zone, with all sub-regions represented except Ewyas and Woolhope (table 9). Small parishes predominate as they do in the county and key selection, but the absence of very

4. 'The Canons of 1603(1604)', in G. Bray, ed., The Anglican Canons 1527-1947, Church of England Records Society 6 (1998), Canons 85 & 89.

5. 'The Canons of 1603(1604)', Canon 85; 'An homily for repairing and keeping clean and comely adorning of churches of Churches', in Certain Sermons or Homilies Appointed to be Read in Churches ... (1673), pp. 161-164.

small parishes undermines comparisons (cf. table 3). Percentages of small, medium and large churches, as far as they can be determined, reflect those in the key selection, but the mean average population of 252 is higher than that of 225 in the key places and closer to the average for the county at 247.⁶ All of them shared in the same diverse agricultural economy, affected as it was by poor communications.⁷ The social hierarchy, as expressed in the hearth tax of 1671 and on Taylor's map of 1754, conforms to the patterns of both county and key selection (table 10). A large majority lived in homes with one or two hearths and it was from this group and the one above that churchwardens were usually drawn. Gentry houses, as identified in 1754, were very unevenly distributed, as they were throughout both county and key places.⁸ But the situation was constantly changing. Titley had four large houses in 1671, but the only gentry house in 1754

Table 9. Twelve Parishes. Topography & Population.

Pop = Population. WZ = Welsh Zone.

Parish	Sub-Regions	Size of Parish	Size of Church	Pop 1671
Brampton Abbots	Ross	Small	Small	89
Eaton Bishop	Central	Small	Large	225
Edwin Ralph	Bromyard	Small	Medium	110
Hentland WZ	Archenfield	Medium	Medium	336
Madley	Central	Large	Large	518
Pencombe	Bromyard	Large	Medium?	246
Pipe & Lyde	Central	Medium	Small	85
Stoke Edith	Eastern	Medium	Medium?	212
Stretton Grandison	Eastern	Small	Medium	68
Titley WZ	N.W.Upland	Small	Small?	424
Whitbourne	Bromyard	Medium	Large	463
Winforton WZ	Western	Small	Medium	251

6. Above p.50. 7. Above pp. 57-61.

8. Above pp. 63-64..

Table 10. Twelve Parishes. Houses: Size & Status, 1671 & 1754.

Parish	1671 Hearths				1754
	6+	3-5	1-2	Exempt	Gentry
Brampton Abbots	0	6	15	0	0
Eaton Bishop	0	9	27	17	3
Edwin Ralph	0	1	18	2	0
Hentland	4	11	53	11	0
Madley	4	12	72	34	3
Pencombe	4	16	23	15	0
Pipe & Lyde	0	4	16	0	0
Stoke Edith	3	1	22	24	1
Stretton Grandison	3	3	4	6	2
Titley	4	5	29	2	1
Whitbourne	1	11	45	52	2
Winforton	1	4	25	29	0

was Eywood, built by Edward Harley in 1705.⁹ A Stoke Edith, by contrast, one of the two gentry families there in 1680 survived in 1754.¹⁰

Analysis of the pattern of landholding in the twelve parishes shows that larger holdings were even less usual here than in the key places, where they are under-represented by county standards (tables 7 & 11). These tables mask prosperity in terms of both real estate (because assessments were made by parish or township) and personal wealth, but they highlight the fact that parish rates were levied for the most part on many small units of modest value. In the twelve parishes there were only 16 holdings worth £50 or more.

9. C.J. Robinson, A History of the Mansions and Manors of Herefordshire (1872), p. 269.

10. H.R.O. J72/9.

Table 11. Twelve Parishes. Pattern of Landholding, 1663.

G. = Grandison

Parish	£200+	100-199	50-99	11-49	Under 10
Brampton Abbots	0	0	4	11	9
Eaton Bishop	0	0	0	13	26
Edwin Ralph	0	0	0	8	18
Hentland	0	0	1	5	62
Madley ¹	0	0	4	24	24
Pencombe	0	0	1	17	17
Pipe & Lyde	0	0	0	6	14
Stoke Edith	0	0	3	4	5
Stretton G.	Return missing				
Titley	0	0	1	8	22
Whitbourne	0	1	0	7	25
Winforton ²	1	0	0	3	18

1. Excludes the five portions of great tithe.

2. Excludes Willersley, assessed with Winforton at £100.

Levels of dissent were extremely low. In 1676 there were 18 recusants and 16 nonconformists in these twelve parishes and by 1706 the number of recorded recusants had dropped to seven.¹¹

Parochial Endeavour: The Range of Work Done

Ordinary work on a parish church comprises repairs, improvements and restoration. It can be further subdivided into work on the fabric and work on items built into the fabric - bells, clocks, sundials and weathercocks. It includes work that takes just a few days, as well as programmes of restoration lasting several years. Legally the fabric consists of walls, windows and coverings,

11. E.A.O. Whiteman, The Compton Census of 1676. A Critical Edition, British Academy, Records of Social and Economic History New Series 10 (1986), pp. 251-261; H.C.A. 7008/1, pp. 268, 270, 278. The figure of 7 recusants in 1706 includes a joint return for Madley with Tyberton.

precisely the areas which needed most attention.¹² Repairs to walls and ceilings have to be identified by default. Payments for repairs, described as "work on the church" or "mending the church", are made alongside purchases of lime, hair and various other materials like sand, clay and stone. The implication is that most of the work involved maintaining plaster and limewash. Roof repairs are represented by purchases of "tile", moss and, sometimes, other materials, coupled with payments to tilers or masons. In the case of windows a distinction is occasionally drawn between "glazing" and "repairs". This is probably not consistent, but may be taken as indication that remedial work on window surrounds, glazing bars and lead was carried out. Sometimes there are references to "window lids" and lattices.

Wall, roof and window repairs feature repeatedly in the accounts. Other parts of the building were more resilient. Doors are rarely mentioned and most of the references specify replacement of moving parts - hinges, locks and keys. Floors needed only occasional repair and from time to time accounts specify work on a tower, turret, spire or porch. But these may be under-represented. The accounts for Winforton in 1693 record quite large payments for "work about the church", "carriage of tile" and "repairing the church porch". The rector's notes indicate that a major part of this consisted of uncovering the porch, setting it upright, boarding it in and covering it again.¹³

Of items built into the fabric, bells and clocks occur most often in the accounts. Bells, clappers, bell harness, wheels and frames feature repeatedly; so does the purchase of bell ropes, renewed about once every two years. Clocks existed in five of the parishes - Edwin Ralph, Madley, Pencombe, Stoke Edith and Winforton. They had to be regularly maintained and oiled and needed frequent repair.¹⁴ Sundials and weathercocks by contrast were durable, in spite of their exposed position, and are mentioned very little. Most repairs were small. But at Stoke Edith in 1748 a new socket for the weather cock was needed. This

12. 'The Canons of 1603(1604)', Canon 85. 13. H.R.O. F83/4.

14. H.R.O. N20/2; BK52/34-36, 38-40; L33/7; J72/9; F83/4.

involved fetching ropes and ladders, buying hooks for the spire and borrowing a cradle from Mordiford, about four miles away, to take the weathercock down.¹⁵

Restoration and improvement generally entailed very extensive work: stripping and reconstructing roofs; whitening and adorning walls; installing or replacing ceilings and paving floors; inserting new windows and enlarging older ones; repointing or shingling spires; replacing sanctus bell turrets; and recasting bells. Some parishes enhanced their church with a clock. Sometimes several tasks was undertaken at the same time. At Whitbourne in 1679, for example, a rate was levied

Concerning the Reparacion of the Church Porch and for making a nue Pinocle of the steeple and a nue B-oore upon the leds and for Repairing the Latices of the Steeple windows and for the bildinge of a nue Teritt over the lightle Bell and for Whiting the Church, and poynting the Steeple and for Tiling the Repairs of the Church and Porch and ffor Tiling the teritorie and for glazinge and ledinge the Church and territt and other necessities incident thereunto the sume of [£]26.00.00¹⁶

At Brampton Abbots in 1715 a more modest programme of ceiling and paving was undertaken

Paid for Sealling the Church and for Carpenters Work and Timber and for a Pin to go through the Bem and for the Pafing and Carrig and lime and for Pafing it and for halling 3 Lode of Rubbig which comes to [£]6.10.08¹⁷

At Madley substantial roof repairs were combined with the recasting of two bells in 1662 and 1669 and in 1745 major repairs to the roof were followed by the recasting of the great bell, paid for in instalments in 1746 and 1747.¹⁸

But more usually renewals and alterations were carried out individually. Roofs were stripped and re-covered at Stoke Edith in 1674, at Winforton in two

15. H.R.O. J72/9. 16. H.R.O. AL92/1.

17. H.R.O. AA15/18. 18. H.R.O. BK52/34.

stages in 1699 and 1700 and at Edwin Ralph in 1748.¹⁹ At Eaton Bishop in 1744 lead, which had deteriorated, was removed from part of the roof and replaced with slates.²⁰ Whitening or washing of walls is recorded at Stoke Edith in 1678, at Whitbourne in 1679, Pencombe in 1683, Winforton in 1708 and 1719, Madley in 1731 and 1758, Stretton Grandison in 1736 and Pipe and Lyde in 1752.²¹ Part of Eaton Bishop church was whitened in 1751.²² Whitening sometimes coincided with "adorning" or painting the church with texts, as at Stoke Edith in 1678 and at Pencombe in 1683.²³ But this was not necessarily the case. Whitbourne was apparently adorned without being whitened in 1686 and again in 1715; and the same happened at both Eaton Bishop and Edwin Ralph in 1719.²⁴

Ceilings were installed or replaced at Titley in 1712, Whitbourne in 1714, and Edwin Ralph in 1750.²⁵ Substantial amounts of paving were laid at Whitbourne in 1699 and Hentland in 1700.²⁶ New windows were not often required, since the relationship between lighting and the arrangement of pulpit and pews seems to have been generally acceptable. Windows were added at Pipe and Lyde in 1678 or 1679, at Winforton in 1707 and at Brampton Abbots in 1709.²⁷ At Titley there may have been a new window in 1693, when unusually large sums were spent on "timber and workmanship about the window" and on glazing.²⁸ A new window at Winforton in 1707 was paid for by the rector and was made when the pulpit was moved, probably to the centre of the south wall. Three years later the parish paid for enlarging another window in order to improve the light for new seating.²⁹

19. H.R.O. J72/9; F83/4; N20/2. 20. H.R.O. N25/8,10.

21. H.R.O. J72/9; AL92/1; L33/6; F83/4; BK52/36,39; J29/1; G20/4.

22. H.R.O. N25/8. 23. H.R.O. J72/9; L33/6.

24. H.R.O. AL92/1; N25/8, 10; N20/2.

25. H.R.O. AB56/24; AL92/1; N20/2.

26. H.R.O. AL92/1; N13/1. 27. H.R.O. G20/3; F83/4; AA15/18.

28. H.R.O. AB56/24. 29. H.R.O. F83/4.

Although spires and towers are not often mentioned, from time to time they needed to be repointed or shingled. The spire at Stoke Edith was pointed in 1710; and it is probable that the payment made for "pointing the steeple" at Stretton Grandison in 1734 refers to the spire, since the mason's equipment had to be brought from Hereford.³⁰ At Eaton Bishop the spire was shingled in 1719 and again in 1737.³¹ At Pipe and Lyde large sums were paid for timber and for "work about the steeple" in 1694 and a substantial payment made for shingling in 1751.³² At Winforton the rector recorded the repair of defects in the bell house in 1700 and at Pencombe very costly repairs were carried out in 1737.³³ The only parish in the sample with a sanctus bell turret was Whitbourne and this was rebuilt in 1679 as part of the major programme of renovation referred to above.³⁴

There is, however, an obvious discrepancy in policy towards towers and spires. It was taken for granted that a parish was obliged to repair or, if necessary, rebuild a tower. But spires might be taken down and not replaced. Blount records that Richards Castle "had formerly a Spire Steeple til casually burnt".³⁵ At Whitney, when the church was moved in 1740, the parish did not replace the spire, which had needed shingling in 1716.³⁶ At Weston-under-Penyard the parish received permission to take down a stone spire damaged by lightning in 1738.³⁷ And at Eardisland the vestry asked permission to take down the spire, described as 'Ruingous' in 1749. It was finally demolished in 1758 and not replaced when the tower was rebuilt in 1760.³⁸

30. H.R.O. J72/9; J29/1. 31. H.R.O. N25/8.

32. H.R.O. G20/3,4. 33. H.R.O. F83/4; L33/7.

34. H.R.O. AL92/1.

35. R. & C. Botzum, eds, The 1675 Thomas Blount Manuscript History of Herefordshire (no date, c.1996), p. 50.

36. H.R.O. HD4/1 vol. 109, p. 12v.

38. H.R.O. AJ32/58; HD4/1, vol. 110, pp. 112v., 117v., 120, 121.

Five of the twelve churches possessed clocks. Stoke Edith had one by 1673 and Madley by 1698.³⁹ Winforton bought one in 1699, Edwin Ralph had one by 1712 and Pencombe by 1738.⁴⁰ Given that they cost much more than a dial to buy and maintain, it is surprising that parishes acquired them at all. But the most expensive form of renovation that a parish could undertake was recasting bells. The cost of recasting a complete peal and rebuilding the bell frames and wheels was massive (ranging from about £65 to £95 including transport costs). Yet three of the twelve parishes where accounts survive ~~did~~ did so: Whitbourne in 1717, Winforton in 1722 and Eaton Bishop in 1725.⁴¹ And they were not alone. Eardisley recast its bells in 1662; and in 1708, when the tower was rebuilt, they recast them again and raised the number from four to five.⁴² Dilwyn also recast a complete peal in 1732 and an analysis of Sharpe shows that between 1662 and 1762 at least 24 other rural parishes did the same, excluding four where new rings were presented.⁴³ The alternative was to recast bells as the need arose and a number of the 37 key parishes did just that. Bodenham cast at least one in 1665.⁴⁴ Byford cast one in 1671 and another in 1741.⁴⁵ Brampton Abbots recast one in 1673, while Eardisley had to recast three out of a very new peal when they were broken in 1671.⁴⁶ Madley cast two in 1662, one in 1669 and another in 1746.⁴⁷ Staunton-on-Wye recast one in 1673 and Winforton one which broke in 1671.⁴⁸ Again this was quite common. Sharpe records a total of 131 bells from the period apart from complete peals.⁴⁹

39. H.R.O. J72/9; BK52/35,36,39,40.

40. H.R.O. F83/4; N20/2; L33/7.

41. H.R.O. AL92/1; F83/4; N25/8,10. 42. H.R.O. HD7/4/99; HD7/52.

43. H.R.O. HD7/52; F. Sharpe, The Church Bells of Herefordshire, their Inscriptions and Founders (5 vols 1966-1975), Vols 1-4.

44. H.R.O. HD7/7/144. 45. H.R.O. HD7/14/322; HD7/61.

46. H.R.O. HD7/14/331; HD7/16/482. 47. H.R.O. BK52/34,38.

48. H.R.O. HD7/16/487; HD7/14/313.

49. Sharpe, Herefordshire Bells, Vols 1-4.

Restoration and recasting bells inevitably caused extra expense. This was normally met out of the rates. The vestry levied a very much higher rate than usual as the need arose, and there is little evidence of objection. But there were alternatives. One was to spread the cost over several years, the option adopted by Eaton Bishop and Winforton to pay for their bells.⁵⁰ Another option was to schedule the work. At Winforton the stripping of the nave roof was done in two stages in 1699 and 1700, part of a programme of restoration which started in 1698 and continued, with short breaks, until 1710.⁵¹ At Pipe and Lyde a similar programme occupied seven years from 1749 to 1755, with a break in 1754.⁵² A third alternative was to limit the need for major renewals. Madley, with a very large church, achieved this not only by recasting its bells in ones and twos, but by spending more frequently on routine maintenance as the analysis below indicates.⁵³ These patterns of activity, which imply planning, coupled with the lack of much objection to the extra expense, prompts the preliminary conclusion that parishes took the obligation to keep their churches in repair seriously and cannot be accused of neglect.

Parochial Endeavour: The Frequency of Work

The previous section has discussed the range of work carried out on parish churches. This section will assess how frequently work was done. A superficial glance over any set of churchwardens' accounts shows that there were few years when the parish did not spend money on fabric or bells. In order, therefore, to try and establish whether or not church buildings received consistent attention, the different tasks that contributed to maintenance, improvement and restoration will be examined more closely. To test consistency of attention, analysis will focus on recurrent tasks: that is general repairs, together with whitening and adorning; repair and reconstruction of roofs; repair, enlargement

50. H.R.O. N25/8,10; F83/4. 51. H.R.O. F83/4.

52. H.R.O. G20/4. 53. H.R.O. BK52/34-36, 38-40.

and construction of windows; recasting and repair of bells and their adjuncts (excluding bell ropes); and maintenance and repair of clocks.

Establishing a pattern of activity is difficult because there is no complete set of accounts for the whole period of 101 years from 1662 to 1762. The figures are Stoke Edith 71 years, Pipe and Lyde 69, Titley 58, Madley 52, Pencombe 51, Brampton Abbots 50, Edwin Ralph 48, Eaton Bishop 46, Whitbourne 45, Stretton Grandison 37, Winforton 35 and Hentland 34. For Winforton there are also the rector's notes recording all the restoration done during nine years for which accounts are lost, bringing the total to 44 years. But if the years in which money was spent on different parts of the fabric are added up and converted to a percentage of the years for which accounts are available in each parish (rounded up or down to the nearest full figure), the figures give some idea of the regularity with which parishes attended to recurrent tasks (appendix IX). If the parish percentages for each task are then added together to produce an overall percentage, this provides a standard against which parish averages can be evaluated (table 12).

Table 12. Levels of Maintenance: Overall and Parish Percentages for Years when Fabric, Bells and Clocks Received Attention.

	Repairs	Roofs	Windows	Bells	Clocks
Overall %	38	37	48	48	78
Brampton Abbots	36	20	40	36	
Eaton Bishop	43	54	61	63	
Edwin Ralph	48	37	06	17	59
Hentland	20	19	44	50	
Madley	77	67	85	79	75
Pencombe	45	51	65	51	100
Pipe & Lyde	39	36	27	39	
Stoke Edith	29	39	45	60	72
Stretton Grandison	27	19	78	51	
Titley	33	53	62	09	
Whitbourne	38	33	38	67	
Winforton ¹	16	20	16	32	83

1. Based on 44 years to include the rector's notes.

The overall percentages mask wide variations which are often impossible to explain. They may be accounted for partly by the gaps in the accounts and partly by the varying long-term effects of age and climate. Severe weather was also a factor, particularly high winds. Sometimes it is possible to suggest explanations for figures that are unusually high or low. Madley, for example, has exceptionally high percentages, except for its clock. It has a huge church, but during the 52 years for which accounts survive there was no major restoration, just consistently high expenditure year by year.⁵⁴ This may indicate a decision to maintain the church well, in order to avoid heavy occasional rises in church rate. At Winforton, by contrast, percentages are very low. This is partly due to the lack of accounts for nine years from 1696 to 1704, when the rector recorded only restoration work. But it also reflects the fact that the roof was stripped in 1699 and 1700 and that very little maintenance was done on roof and walls from 1705 to 1728 when itemised accounts cease.⁵⁵ A similar drop in roof repairs is observable at both Stoke Edith and Edwin Ralph after their roofs were stripped in 1674 and 1748 respectively, but without a significant drop in other work.⁵⁶

At Titley the situation was complex. An almost average level of general repairs is coupled with a high average for roof repairs, with substantial work being carried out on roof and walls together in 1705, 1724, 1742, 1749 and 1755. This recurrent combination is not observable elsewhere and its growing frequency underlines the fact that problems with the building were mounting. By 1757, in spite of the parishioners' best efforts, it was unsafe and the roof was taken off, prior to rebuilding in 1762.⁵⁷

The overall percentage of 48% for both windows and bells is hardly surprising. Glass is easily broken and in churches it was sporadically damaged by gales and by ball games. The variations in mean averages probably reflect, as well, variations in the number and size of windows. But the figure of 6% for

54. H.R.O. BK52/34-36, 38-40. 55. H.R.O. F83/4.

56. H.R.O. J72/9; N20/2. 57. H.R.O. AB56/21,24,30,31.

Edwin Ralph still seems extraordinarily low, even allowing for the fact that it has very small windows. With bells there is some correlation between the averages and the number of bells in the church. The exceptionally low figure of 9% for Titley is almost certainly due to the fact that the parish had one or perhaps two bells hung for chiming, since no payments were made for repairs for bell frames or wheels.⁵⁸ At the top end of the scale Whitbourne and Eaton Bishop enlarged their peals from five to six bells in 1719 and 1725 respectively and each had a sanctus bell.⁵⁹ Stoke Edith and Madley already seem to have had six bells and a sanctus when the accounts commence.⁶⁰ Clocks needed frequent oiling and fairly frequent repairs. The percentages, calculated over the years when parishes are known to have had clocks, reveal the extent to which clocks entailed exceptional expense.⁶¹

The figures that result from this analysis mask many uncertainties not least because of the gaps in the accounts. The indications are, however, that the fabric, bells and clocks received fairly regular attention and were normally kept in good order. Again the impression is not one of neglect.

Voluntary Contributions

Although the cost of maintaining, improving and restoring parish churches was normally met from church rates, individuals would occasionally pay for bells, adorning or paving a church. Sometimes, too, the ratepayers, inhabitants and others would subscribe to buy a clock. James, Viscount Scudamore presented a ring of eight bells to Holme Lacy in 1709 and his generosity was mirrored at Wigmore where, in 1721, the Earl of Oxford and his son presented six bells and a sanctus.⁶² At Eardisland a new ring of five was paid for by a woman parishioner in 1728 and a similar ring was given to Kentchurch in 1730 by William and

58. H.R.O. AB56/24,30,31. 59. H.R.O. AL92/1; N25/8,10.

60. H.R.O. J72/9; BK52/34-36, 38-39.

61. H.R.O. N20/2; J72/9; BK52/34-36, 38, 39; F83/4; L33/7.

62. Sharpe, *Herefordshire Bells*, 2, pp. 235-236; 4, 546-547.

Walter Scudamore.⁶³ At Kingstone there are six bells, of which five were cast in 1756. The fourth is inscribed as the gift of Richard Russel, but there is nothing to show whether he gave a full ring of five or six or only a single bell.⁶⁴ All these bells were cast in Gloucester by the Rudhall family, but there are no accounts to show whether the donors paid for the bells alone or whether they met the incidental costs too. But they incurred expenditure which might range from about £55 to over £100.

Adorning was less expensive. Eaton Bishop was quite elaborately adorned out of the rates in 1719 for £5.⁶⁵ But the work done would vary. Between 1717 and 1723 the Hoptons added a private aisle and a vault to the church at Canon Frome, which was completed in 1680. At the same time they repaired the tower, restored the chancel and adorned the church. Some of this was probably necessary because of their own building work, but it seems that no expense was spared, since they paid for the font to be painted and gilded in 1720 and for the royal arms in 1723.⁶⁶ A little earlier Aconbury was adorned by James, Lord Chandos who, like the Hoptons, made a vault where he was buried in 1714.⁶⁷ Hope-under-Dinmore was adorned by Lord Coningsby, probably some time between 1715 when his second wife died and 1718 when Hill visited the church; while Castle Frome was adorned about the same time by the Unetts.⁶⁸ A notable private donation is also recorded at Bodenham, where William Bowkes paved a very large church in 1714.⁶⁹

63. N.C. Reeves, The Leon Valley. Three Herefordshire Villages. Kingsland, Monkland and Eardisland (1980, pp. 136, 139; Sharpe, Herefordshire Bells, 2, pp. 141-144, 245-246.

64. Sharpe, Herefordshire Bells, 2, pp. 254-255.

65. H.R.O. N25/8,10. 66. H.R.O. R93 LC8351.

67. James Hill's manuscripts, vol. 3, pp. 8,52.

68. Hill's mss, vol. 1, p. 333; vol. 3, p. 359.

69. J. Duncumb, Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford (8 vols 1804-1915), 2, p. 59.

Three parishes are known to have raised subscriptions for clocks, Winforton in 1699, Kingstone about 1727 and Westhide in 1728. Contributors at Winforton came from inside and outside the parish. They ranged from the lord of the manor to people giving twopence and fourpence.⁷⁰ For Kingstone which bought a second hand clock there is no list, but it is clear from the arguments that arose during the next decade that not all the ratepayers had supported the subscription.⁷¹ At Westhide there is simply a record that the minister, curate and inhabitants subscribed for a clock.⁷²

The generosity of individuals who gave bells, adorned and paved churches and subscribed to clocks was very real and it is probable that a number of similar gifts and subscriptions are unrecorded. They represent only a very small proportion of the money spent, year in and year out, on parish churches. Yet they contributed significantly to that work and it seems unlikely donations would have been forthcoming in a society that was careless of its churches.

Conclusions

It is difficult to draw firm conclusions about the care of churches from 1662 to 1762 because of limitations in the evidence. But it is possible to determine overall patterns. Churchwardens' accounts in Herefordshire do not support assumptions of neglect. Nor do the figures derived from diocesan sources given in Chapter Five (above table 8). Among historians who have worked on these sources Morgan and Ford regard the Anglican church as negligent, although Ford acknowledges an improvement in the condition of churches.⁷³ Braby, while stressing the more serious problems, concludes that oversight was effective and

70. H.R.O. F83/4. 71. H.R.O. HD7/57.

72. H.R.O. AA69/2.

73. P. Morgan, Inspections of Churches and Parsonage Houses in the Diocese of Worcester in 1674, 1676, 1684 and 1687, Worcestershire Historical Society New Series 12 (1986), p. 5; W.K. Ford, Chichester Diocesan Surveys 1686 and 1724, Sussex Record Society 78 (1994), pp. 9, 15.

co-operation reasonable.⁷⁴ Others have gone further in drawing attention to good practice and generosity. Purvis concluded that, although Yorkshire churchwardens were not over-zealous, they were neither indifferent nor lethargic.⁷⁵ Warne, writing on Devonshire, found that churches had been in bad condition at the Restoration, but that by 1735 there had been a marked improvement. He also emphasises that many churches were clean, light and attractive.⁷⁶ Ward, too, finds in Hampshire that returns do not support later allegations of negligence and suggests that the wording of questions resulted in returns which "might underestimate both the ravages of time upon church buildings and also the amount of contemporary improvement which may have gone on without a faculty".⁷⁷ More broadly both Jacob and Humphrey have concluded that neglect was not the norm.⁷⁸

Churches inevitably went out of repair because they were old, damaged by storms, much altered and much used. A very few were more or less neglected. But churchwardens' accounts show that churches received regular attention; while developments at Titley, where the church had to be rebuilt in spite of the best efforts of the parish, should serve as a check on assumptions that problems are proof of neglect. Detailed analysis of the accounts shows that maintenance was a

- 74. P. Braby, 'Churchwardens' presentments from the Vale of Evesham 1660-1717, part 1', *Vale of Evesham Historical Society* 5 (1975), pp. 68, 78.
- 75. J.S. Purvis, The Condition of Yorkshire Church Fabrics 1300-1800, St. Anthony's Hall Publications 14 (1958), p. 25.
- 76. A. Warne, Church and Society in Eighteenth Century Devon (1969), pp. 53, 56-58.
- 77. W.R. Ward, Parson and Parish in Eighteenth Century Hampshire. Replies to Bishops' Visitations, Hampshire Record Series 13 (1995), p. xxi.
- 78. S.C. Humphrey, Churches and Chapels of Northern England (1991), p. 31; W.M. Jacob, Lay People and Religion in the Early Eighteenth Century (1996), pp. 186-195, 208-209, 221-222.

regular item and that, from time to time, quite extensive restoration work was carried out. Much of this was done on a basis of communal initiative without instructions from the authorities. The vestry, which usually included the minister or his curate, levied church rates, authorised exceptional expenditure and audited the accounts. The money was raised and spent in the parish and expenditure scrutinised in a forum where all the ratepayers could participate. The laity might fail to comply with canon law, on occasion, for many different reasons, but such failures were part of a wider picture of compliance and co-operation, in which discipline was tempered by the knowledge that many of the communities responsible for churches had very limited resources.

PART TWO. THE CHURCHES

CHAPTER SEVEN. REPAIR AND RESTORATION

CHANCELS AND PRIVATE AISLES

The chancel is the most sacred part of the church ...¹

The chancel in early modern times was a place apart, reserved for holy communion and parts of the marriage service. It might be little used, but it was holy, associated with a sacrament which the laity regarded with considerable reverence.² Responsibility for its maintenance lay on the owners of the great tithes or on those who farmed them, including, in some parishes, the vicar. And in a few places landowning families retained responsibility for private chapels or aisles. They, like impropiators, were subject to the same expectations and legal requirements as the ratepayers and failure on their part was presented at visitations.

There has, however, been a belief that chancels, like churches were neglected, especially by lay rectors.³ Yet historians commenting on neglect do not generally distinguish between church and chancel and it is very difficult, within this period, to find clear-cut examples of negligence. Chancels, like churches, were

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1. T. Secker, 'A charge delivered to the clergy of the Diocese of Oxford in the year 1750', in Eight Charges delivered to the Clergy of the Dioceses of Oxford and Canterbury ... (1769), p. 150.
 2. W.M. Jacob, Lay People and Religion in the Early Eighteenth Century, pp. 59-61; D.A. Spaeth, 'Common prayer? Popular observance of the Anglican liturgy in Restoration Wiltshire', in S.J. Wright, ed., Parish, Church and People: Studies in Lay Religion 1350-1750 (1988), pp. 125, 128-132.
 3. F. Heal & C. Holmes, The Gentry in England and Wales, 1500-1700 (1994), p. 336.

presented at visitations or described as out of repair in surveys, but in only a few cases, where their condition was very bad, does it seem likely that deliberate neglect was a factor. Jacob draws attention to the fact that the gentry were most usually presented for failing to repair chancels or, more rarely, for sexual offences.⁴ But in Herefordshire they were not often presented at all and the figures in Table 8 show that chancels were normally in better repair than churches.⁵

In England and Wales it has been estimated that there were probably more rectors than vicars among the parish clergy.⁶ But in Herefordshire the balance was different. Out of 200 rural parishes incumbents received the great tithes of 63 (31.5%). Ecclesiastical office holders held all the tithes of 41 (20.5%) and shared them with laymen in 18 (9%). Corporate bodies held the tithe of two parishes and in the remaining 76 (38%) tithes belonged to laymen.⁷ Ecclesiastical office holders were headed by the Dean and Chapter of Hereford, with the entire tithe of 23 parishes and parcels in ten.⁸ The bishopric held all the tithes in 17 parishes and parcels in six; while the portionists of Bromyard had the entire tithe of Stanford Bishop and parcels in Grendon Bishop and Wacton.⁹ Winchester College owned the tithes of Titley and Price's Hospital in Hereford those of Mansell Lacy.¹⁰

The total value of rectories occupied by parish clergy was approximately

4. Jacob, Lay People, p. 141. 5. Above p. 95.
6. J. Spurr, The Restoration Church of England, 1646-1689 (1991), pp. 174, 180.
7. H.C.A. 7008/1, pp. 477-502; H.R.O. HD4/2/6, pp. 31, 51v.-54; H.C.A. 7006/1, pp. 12v.-26v.
8. H.C.A. 7006/1, pp. 12v.-26v.
9. J. Duncumb, Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford (8 vols, 1804-1915), 2, pp. 80-82; HD/2/6, pp. 31, 51v.-54.
10. R. & C. Botzum, The 1675 Thomas Blount Manuscript History of Herefordshire, no date [c.1996], p. 68; H.R.O. HD7/60.

£3242, giving a mean average income of about £51.10.00.¹¹ The value of the tithes and "rectories" owned by the Dean and Chapter and the Bishop, as estimated under the Commonwealth, was about £1455.¹² This may or may not have been attainable in the aftermath of the Civil War, but it was not realised under the system of ecclesiastical leases to which the church reverted at the Restoration. This system, which embodied low customary rents and higher entry fines, reduced the Bishop of Hereford's tithe income annually from an estimated £1016 to about £135.18.04 in 1662. This had risen to nearly £193 in 1702.¹³ Profits under this system went to the farmers, as figures for five parishes in Archenfield demonstrate. In 1723 the tithes of Llangarron, St. Weonards, Hentland, Little Dewchurch and Ballingham were let to the Duke of Chandos and Robert Gwillim. The lease was renewed in 1730 for a fine of £450.¹⁴ If this lease reflects a pattern of renewal every seven years, the lessees were paying a fine equivalent to £64.06.08 a year, plus a customary rent of £24.13.04 amounting to an annual payment of £89 for tithes valued at £200 in 1649, including a little glebe.¹⁵ This gave them nearly £18 a year for each chancel, or about two fifths of the average income available to a clerical rector to cover chancel repairs, dilapidations, household and farming expenses and gifts to the poor. If this level of profit was characteristic, then tithe farmers were at an advantage compared to the clergy. For lay impropiators there are no figures available, but since they owned tithe, their income should have been better than that

11. H.C.A. 7008/1, pp. 225, 232, 481-493, 497, 502. The figures incorporate adjustments from the certificates for poor livings. There are no valuations for Whitbourne or Weston-under-Penyard. The valuation of Winforton, incorrectly valued at £30, has been raised to £51.
12. H.R.O. HD4/2/6, pp. 41-43; H.C.A. 7006/1, pp. 1-26v. A "rectory" comprised tithes together with some combination of parsonage, glebe or farm buildings.
13. H.R.O. HD4/2/6, pp. 41-43; H.C.A. 7008/1, pp. 204-208.
14. H.C.A. 7031/4, p. 144.
15. H.C.A. 7006/1, pp. 18-19.

Evidence for work on chancels (as on private aisles) comes almost entirely from act books and visitation returns relating to occasions when buildings were out of repair. These reveal, most significantly, that tithe owners were subject to one penalty which others escaped. Tithes might be sequestered and applied to chancel repairs, a sanction most frequently invoked during Herbert Croft's episcopate from 1661 to 1691. Orders for sequestration were given in several parishes, including Wigmore in 1678 and Pixley in 1680, but there is no evidence as to whether they were enforced.¹⁶ Many of the records throw considerable light on the human problems involved and show that in certain circumstances chancels were particularly vulnerable. Clergy and laity alike succumbed to illness and old age. If a lay impropriator died without direct heirs there could be uncertainty over who was responsible. There might also be delays and argument if an owner was under age or impoverished, or if tithes were divided. Private aisles were vulnerable too, particularly if the owner no longer used the aisle.

Very limited evidence for the years 1660 to January 1663 reveals that ten chancels out of 42 (23.8%) were out of repair at this time, all in parishes where tithes belonging to ecclesiastics had been let under the Commonwealth. By 1716 the figure was down to eleven (5.9%) out of 184 in the archdeaconry of Hereford. Six years later, at Hoadly's primary visitation, only two were cited and in 1744 appear in the surviving presentments.¹⁷ Underlying these figures, however, there are considerable variations and the aim of this chapter is to assess how far chancels and aisles were neglected and, in particular, to establish whether or not there were significant differences in the standards achieved by parish clergy, ecclesiastical office holders and lay impropriators.

16. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 102, p. 76; vol. 120, p. 102.

17. Above pp. 84, 89.

Chancels: Parish Clergy

At this period there were 63 rectories in rural Herefordshire, representing 31.5% of parishes. Of these 45 (71.4%) had an annual income of £50 or less in 1707.¹⁸ The incumbent therefore earned less than the minimum considered adequate for the parish clergy, and poverty must be added to frailty as a factor which might undermine the ability of clergy to maintain chancels. Clerical incomes, however, are difficult to determine except in approximate terms. They fluctuated from year to year, tied in as they were with tithes and glebe land, although there were changes for the better. Queen Anne's Bounty brought permanent improvements for some, while *ad hoc* improvements were offered to those clergy whose patrons made temporary grants of impropriate tithes.¹⁹

The best evidence for care of a chancel comes from Winforton. Its chancel was repaired in 1682 when the roof was tiled, windows glazed, walls plastered and the floor paved with stone.²⁰ But by 1698 it was "dangerously overhanging" and Joseph Guest, who became rector in 1691, embarked on a thorough restoration, rebuilding the east wall, glazing the east window and stripping the roof. A few years later in 1701 he completed the work with new paving stone for the lower part of the chancel.²¹ The living was worth more than £50 a year, but not much more, and he comments on cost that "I willingly undertook a Charge above my Capacity ... nothing pleasing me more than Safety and Decency in the House of God."²² A comparable restoration took place at Byton, worth £21 a year. In 1716 the churchwardens stated that

18. H.C.A. 7008/1, pp. 481-493, 497, 502.

19. Below pp. 218-219; 238-239.

20. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 124, Weobley Deanery, p. 17; HD7/22/159.

21. H.R.O. F83/4.

22. M.A. Faraday, Herefordshire Militia Assessments of 1663, Royal Historical Society, Camden Fourth Series 10 (1972), p. 88; H.R.O. F83/4.

...our Rector since he came to y^e place hath been at y^e Charge of building up y^e one side of y^e s^d chancel and hath new tiled y^e s^d Chancel at his own cost and charge.

The incumbent had been there 38 years and had slowly restored the chancel in spite of the poverty of the living.²³ But sometimes there were delays that were unacceptable. The rectors of Pudleston and Hampton Bishop were both cited for this reason in the sixteen-seventies and sixteen-eighties.²⁴

At Pixley the chancel was in poor condition in 1682 when the incumbent died, while at Evesbatch in 1713 the chancel was being repaired by the former incumbent's widow.²⁵ But at Brobury (worth £21.12.00) a year, John Stilling died so poor in 1694 that his family could provide nothing for dilapidations and the chancel collapsed.²⁶ At Wigmore complexities arose because Alexander Clogie, who was vicar from 1648 to 1699, farmed the tithes from about 1675.²⁷ Clogie's widow had a dispute with his successor Robert Comyn which lasted until 1704, the year of Comyn's death, by which time the chancel and vicarage were "very ruinous".²⁸ The chancel was subsequently restored at a cost of £40 by Comyn's son and namesake who resigned the living in 1711.²⁹

Detailed evidence about chancel repairs is sparse, but it seems that most of the clergy were conscientious, even if they had to spread work and costs over several years like their parishioners. Others might delay longer than churchwardens or the

23. H.R.O. HD7/42; H.C.A. 7008/1, p. 492.

24. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 103, p.73; HD4/1, vol. 123, p. 106v.; H.C.A. 7002/1/8, pp. 36, 40v., 42.

25. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol 120, p. 102; HD7/41.

26. H.C.A. 7008/1, p. 485; H.R.O. HD4/36, papers in Harris v. Griffith, 11 February 1703/4, 15 November 1705.

27. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 102, p. 76.

28. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 107, p. 24v.

29. H.R.O. HD7/40, letter 23 November 1710.

authorities thought acceptable, and on occasion old age and ill-health, often compounded by poverty, could result in problems for a deceased incumbent's family or his successor. But, in Herefordshire, fewer than a third of chancels were maintained by parish clergy.

Chancels: Ecclesiastical Office Holders

Ecclesiastical office holders owned all the great tithes in 41 parishes (20.5%) and shared them with laymen in a further 18 (9%). Their tithes were usually farmed and only at Bodenham and Madley, where the tithes were divided into four or five portions, did the impropriators repair the chancel themselves. The chancels owned by ecclesiastics, which were out of repair at the Restoration, were repaired or restored promptly.³⁰ But they were not then disregarded. In 1677, after his jurisdiction over the cathedral was confirmed, the Bishop ordered a survey of all the chancels in the Dean's peculiar.³¹ There is no evidence that they were neglected and the survey was probably a means of notifying the Chapter's lessees that they were answerable to the Bishop as well as the Dean. At the episcopal visitation in 1677 all clergy and churchwardens from the Dean's peculiar attended and acknowledged the Bishop's authority in writing.³² But tithe farmers could not be summoned.

Farmers were generally conscientious, although there were inevitably some problems. At Almeley the Bishop's tithes were normally farmed by the owners of Newport, the principal estate, which belonged to the Pembers until 1712 and then to the Foleys.³³ Madam Pember carried out repairs promptly in 1682 and the Foleys restored the windows in 1746.³⁴ But in 1694, when Abraham Godwin was farmer, he carried out repairs only after he was cited for not repairing the roof or windows

30. Above p. 85. 31. H.R.O. AL19/18, pp. 264, 266.

32. H.R.O. AL19/18, pp. 273-276.

33. C.J. Robinson, *A History of the Mansions and Manors of Herefordshire*, (1872), p. 9.

34. H.R.O. HD7/22/384; G73/1, p. 197.

and for boarding up the east window.³⁵ At Preston Wynne the Dean and Chapter farmed the tithe to Richard Poole, who was cited to repair the chancel in 1688 and again in 1689.³⁶ He was cited yet again in 1693 and 1694 and was excommunicated in 1695.³⁷ If this was Richard Poole of Barrs Court he would have been an old man by 1688 and age and illness may have contributed to the delays.³⁸ But the courts at Hereford were strict with tithe farmers as they were at Canterbury.³⁹

Division of tithes was an obvious potential source of delays. At Bodenham the great tithes belonged to the Vicar, the Bishops of Hereford and Gloucester and the Rector of Pudleston.⁴⁰ The chancel was out of repair in 1737, "very bad out of repair" in 1738 and the impropriators were cited in 1739.⁴¹ It was rebuilt according to the Royal Commission about 1750, but it was probably reconstructed as early as 1740, as there are no further references in the act books.⁴² It may have deteriorated because of delays in getting the impropriators to act; but there may have been problems, similar to those at Titley, where the church had to be rebuilt in spite of the parishioners' best efforts.⁴³ At Madley where the tithe was farmed in five parcels, the Dean and Chapter normally

35. H.R.O. HD4/1. vol. 106, p. 48.

36. H.C.A. 7002/1/8, p/ 44v.; H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 105, p. 60v.

37. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 102, p. 76.

38. Robinson, Mansions and Manors, p. 262.

39. J. Gregory, Restoration, Reformation and Reform, 1660-1828. Archbishops of Canterbury and their Diocese (2000), p. 131.

40. Duncumb, Collections, 2 (1812), p. 53-54.

41. H.R.O. HD7/57, 58; HD4/1, vol. 111, p. 164.

42. R.C.H.M. (England), An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Herefordshire, (3 vols, 1931-1934), 2, p. 13; below pp. 157-158.

43. Below pp. 142-144.

undertook repairs themselves.⁴⁴ But in 1715 the chancel was in very bad condition ("magnas ruinas iam patientes") and the new vicar was asked to recommend what should be done.⁴⁵ There is no indication as to why the situation was so bad, but it seems that the Chapter may have tried laying responsibility on the farmers, as "the farmer" was cited to carry out repairs in 1717.⁴⁶ But then they resumed responsibility themselves and an estimate for restoring the windows in 1754 remains in their archives.⁴⁷

Generally ecclesiastical office holders and their lessees seem to have kept chancels in repair, although the evidence is too slight to allow firm conclusions to be drawn. Occasionally farmers were guilty of delay, but the most severe problems were at Bodenham and Madley where the impropriators usually took responsibility themselves, because the tithes were divided either between different owners or different farmers. Whatever the circumstances, delays ranged from about two or three years to about seven.

Chancels: Lay Impropriators and Corporate Bodies

Lay impropriators owned the tithes in 76 (38%) of rural parishes and shared them with institutions or office holders in eighteen. Two corporate bodies also owned tithes. Price's Hospital in Hereford retained the tithe of Mansell Lacy in their own hands and, in addition to occasional repairs, carried out a restoration in 1743.⁴⁸ At Titley Winchester College farmed the tithes to the Greenly family, who had held land there since Henry VII's reign and there is no evidence of neglect.⁴⁹ Nor is it possible to demonstrate widespread or frequent neglect by individuals. But in three parishes repairs were ignored for long periods and there

44. Faraday, Herefordshire Militia Assessments, p. 126. H.R.O. BK52/37; H.C.A. 7031, p. 319.

45. H.C.A. 7031/4, p. 35.

46. H.C.A. 7002/2/1/8, p. 1124v.; 7020/1/2. 47. H.C.L. 3499.

48. H.R.O. HD7/64. 49. Robinson, Mansions and Manors, p. 264.

was little the authorities could do.

At Eardisley it took fourteen years, from 1674 to 1688, to pave, whiten and adorn the chancel to everyone's satisfaction. The manor, great tithe and an aisle belonged to Benhaile Baskerville, who was living in poverty in a gatehouse which was all that was left of the castle.⁵⁰ He was cited several times from 1674 until his death in 1684 to pave, whiten and adorn the chancel and the tithes were sequestered from July 1677 to April 1678.⁵¹ But it was 1682 before the apparitor for Weobley deanery certified that the paving and whitening had been done and 1684 before Philip Biscoe (possibly Baskerville's executor) certified that sentences were completed.⁵² Yet at Easter in 1684 he was cited to adorn and glaze the chancel and work was not completed until 1688.⁵³ The reasons for the confusion and delay are not clear. It is possible that the apparitor had certified the repairs in 1682 without confirming that the parish was satisfied. Or Biscoe may have adorned the chancel without meeting local expectations that an older set of sentences would be restored.

At Much Marcle, where there were two impropriators, the chancel was out of repair from 1688 to 1702. Sir John Kyrle, the resident impropriator, died in 1679 and his estate passed to his grandson, John Kyrle Ernle, born in 1684.⁵⁴ It then transpired that Sir John Kyrle had always repaired the chancel himself, without a contribution from Sir Thomas Duppa, who owned part of the tithe, and

50. C.J. Robinson, A History of the Castles of Herefordshire and their Lords, (1869), p. 47.

51. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 119, pp. 56v., 74, 111v.; vol. 122, p. 98v.; AL19/19 pp. 65v.-66, 79v.

52. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 124, Weobley Deanery, p. 20v.

53. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 124, Weobley Deanery, pp. 41, 47, 51v. 64; HD4/1, vol. 105, p. 26.

54. Robinson, Mansions and Manors, pp. 280-281.

maximum confusion reigned after Duppa also died.⁵⁵ A court decree, about 1702 states that the chancel was "very much ruined" and that for 20 years the impropiators had, illegally, been paying church rate on their tithes. The diocese therefore ordered that the parish should repair the chancel, levying a rate on everyone including the impropiators. But for the future the impropiators were to be responsible in the usual way.⁵⁶

The worst problems were at Bredwardine and lasted nearly 40 years from 1668 until 1707. Until 1660 the chancel had been repaired by the Walwyns, who owned the tithes of grain, and the Vaughans, who were lords of the manor and owned the tithes of hay.⁵⁷ But from 1668 until his death about 1700 Herbert Walwyn refused to repair the chancel; and his heir and namesake, who died in 1705, perpetuated the refusal. Herbert Walwyn senior was regularly cited in the consistory court and regularly excommunicated. But he still refused to carry out repairs. In February 1672 he and Roger Vaughan were cited to repair and the tithes sequestered.⁵⁸ Roger Vaughan died in 1672 and the chancel was repaired by his mother Frances, who was by then married to Edward Cornewall of Moccas. Thomas and Peter Howard of Bredwardine stated in 1688 that about 17 years earlier they had been employed to repair the roof by "Mrs Cornewall of Moccas" who had paid as lady of the manor.⁵⁹ In 1699, Thomas Cood recalled (not quite accurately) that no one had repaired the chancel for 60 years except

55. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 105, p.115; HD4/1, vol. 106, pp. 74v., 52; HD7/30, 31, 35.

56. H.R.O. HD7/34.

57. H.R.O. HD7/32, depositions of Walter and Joyce Hill; Robinson, Mansions and Manors, p. 37.

58. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 100, p. 183; AL19/19, pp. 11-11v.

59. The History of Parliament: the House of Commons 1660-1690, (3 vols, 1983), 2, p. 131; 3 (1983), p. 632; H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 105, p. 32.

Captain Cornewall's wife "and that out of charitie".⁶⁰ This may be a reference to the repair of 1672 by Frances Cornewall of Moccas or to an unrecorded repair by the first or second wife of her son, Captain Henry Cornewall.⁶¹

Frances Cornewall's repairs did not solve the problem. By 1679 further repair was needed, the tithes were sequestered again and the wardens exhibited an account in court in September 1680.⁶² Walwyn appeared in court in 1681, a ruling was made of which there are no details and he remained excommunicate.⁶³ Then in 1688 the case against him was dropped in the light of the evidence from the Howards.⁶⁴ For the next seven years the churchwardens were cited to repair the chancel or to present those responsible, but they failed to present anyone, possibly under pressure from Walwyn. By 1698 the chancel was "very ruinous" and Walwyn was in prison.⁶⁵ No reason for his imprisonment is given, but he may have been handed over to the secular courts for remaining excommunicate. He apparently died soon afterwards, since about 1701 Herbert Walwyn junior was presented to repair the chancel which was "very much out of repair."⁶⁶ He died in 1705 and when Martha Walwyn was cited at Michaelmas the chancel was "ruinous".⁶⁷ By 1707, when Henry Cornewall had bought the tithe of grain, it was "very ruinous".⁶⁸ But then the problems ceased.

Why the Walwyns were so defiant is not clear, but they may have had baptist sympathies. The baptist cause at Hay included members at Bredwardine

60. H.R.O. HD7/32.

61. Henry Cornewall married in 1683. His first wife died in 1691 and he married again in 1695. House of Commons, 1660-1690, 2, p. 131.62.

62. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 122, p. 81v.

63. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 122, p. 51.

64. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 105, p. 32.65. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 106, p. 83.

66. H.R.O. HD7/33.

67. H.R.O. HD7/35; HD4/1, vol. 107, p. 39v. 68. H.R.O. HD7/36.

in 1656.⁶⁹ And in 1680 there was a dispute between the parishioners and the vicar, who complained, among other things, that they had tried to bury an excommunicate anabaptist in the churchyard.⁷⁰ Whatever the reason the Walwyns were alone among impropiators in being deliberately negligent.

By contrast a family might occasionally bequeath money to embellish a chancel, as the Abrahalls did at Foy and Kings Caple. At Foy John Abrahall left assets in 1640 to install a copy of the east window at Sellack. This was certified by Daniel Kerry as complete in 1671, although the datestone was made in 1673 and the stained glass in 1675.⁷¹ The same year, in January, Kerry was cited for not repairing a seat in the chancel at King's Caple or glazing the windows in accordance with the will of Paul Abrahall, and he certified the work complete in October.⁷²

There is evidence of neglect in only three out of the 76 parishes (3.9%) in which laymen owned all the tithe and none for the parishes where they shared tithes with ecclesiastical office holders. In all three cases there was little the diocese could do and there is no evidence of pressure from parishioners. The only practical sanction was to sequester the tithes and arrange for churchwardens to carry out repairs. But there was doubt as to whether it was legal to sequester tithes in lay ownership.⁷³ Imprisonment (if Herbert Walwyn was imprisoned for his defiance) did not remedy the neglect. However, in all three cases, neglect has

69. T.M. Bassett, The Welsh Baptists, (1977), p. 32.

70. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 102, pp. 86v.-89v.

71. N. Pevsner, The Buildings of England. Herefordshire (1963), pp. 133-134; H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. p. 167v.

72. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 101, p. 70v. This is probably Paul, the younger half-brother of John Abrahall, who died in 1654. He had two great-nephews called Paul, of who one died in 1665 aged 15 and the other in November 1675, probably in his thirties. Robinson, Mansions and Manors, p. 124.

73. R. Burn, Ecclesiastical Law (2 vols, 1763), 1, p. 248.

to be set against the eventual restoration of the chancels, at Much Marcle, in unusual circumstances, by the ratepayers and at Eardisley and Bredwardine by new impropiators. It also has to be set against the generosity of families like the Abrahalls who were probably not unique.

Private Aisles

In 1662 it seems there were private aisles in only seven or eight country churches out of 200.⁷⁴ Three of these had been demolished by 1762, but another three had been added in new churches where those who paid for the building could not be buried in the chancel. The five which were privately maintained throughout the century from 1662 to 1762 experienced mixed fortunes. The Baskerville aisle at Eardisley was, like the chancel, neglected for some ten years before Benhaile Baskerville died in 1684.⁷⁵ And in 1722 the Hoskyns chapel at Abbey Dore was presented as very ruinous and not served "these several years".⁷⁶ But no further complaint is recorded, so it was presumably restored by the family, who still had land in the parish.⁷⁷ At Winforton, the Holmans, who were recusants from Northamptonshire, had no use themselves for the north transept which, by 1703, was occupied as a house. But Lady Jane Holman restored the roof and the floor, glazed the windows and put in a ceiling.⁷⁸ There is, however, no evidence of neglect either at Hope-under-Dinmore, where the Coningsbys still used the chapel depicted by James Hill; or at Kingstone where the Parrys of Arkstone maintained the north chapel, although the Parrys were in dispute with

74. One of these, the north chapel at Stoke Edith, may or may not have been maintained by the owners of Stoke Edith Court.

75. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 119, p. 56v.; vol. 122, pp. 98v., 113; vol. 124, Weobley Deanery, pp. 45, 52, 60.

76. H.R.O. HD5/14/1. 77. Robinson, Mansions and Manors, p. 2.

78. H.R.O. F83/4

the Dean's tenant in 1737 about the gutter between their chapel and the chancel.⁷⁹

Private aisles were few and far between in Herefordshire. If they were still used as a place of burial or memorial or as a family pew, they were well-maintained. Otherwise they were left until fairly substantial repair or restoration was required. But the evidence indicates that the obligation to repair was enforced, although the risk of neglect was reduced by allowing demolition. Such chapels existed elsewhere, as visitation returns and surveys show, and their owners were presented if they were out of repair.

Conclusions

The figures given in Table 8 indicate that chancels were almost invariably better maintained than churches.⁸⁰ Hereford archdeaconry in this respect matches the general pattern, but underlying that pattern it is possible to detect characteristic sources of failure. Overall, ecclesiastical office holders and their lessees usually kept their chancels in repair and the clergy were generally conscientious in spite of poverty. The majority of lay impropriators were also conscientious, but the few who failed to meet their obligations left chancels unrepaired for long periods. To this extent they deserve their reputation for negligence, but it has to be stressed that the delinquents were a tiny minority and should not be regarded as typical.

Other factors cut across the distinctions between one category of tithe owner and another. Division of tithes was always a potential source of problems. At Bodenham and Madley division between ecclesiastical office holders and their lessees probably contributed to the difficulties of dealing with the more severe problems; while division between lay impropriators undoubtedly contributed to the confusion at Much Marcle and, possibly, the Walwyn's evasion at Bredwardine. Old age and sickness were factors that affected clergy and laymen

79. James Hill's manuscripts, vol. 1, p. 333; H.R.O. HD7/25.

80. Above p. 95.

alike, but it is to the credit of the Herefordshire clergy that, in spite of the poverty of many livings, they normally gave high priority to chancel repairs.

In Herefordshire it is simply not true that chancels were widely neglected or that lay impropiators were more negligent than clergy or office holders; and it seems not to be true elsewhere. Neglect occurred but was not particularly widespread as an analysis of published evidence shows. In fact tithe owners had a better record than ratepayers. In the county of Hereford there is evidence of serious problems in seven parishes where incumbents maintained chancels; in two where ecclesiastical office holders did so; in four where chancels were in the hands of tithe farmers (including Bosbury where the bishop's tithes had been in lay hands under the Commonwealth); and in three where there were lay impropiators. In the latter negligence extended over long periods and at Much Marcle, where there were exceptional circumstances, the parish paid for the restoration of the chancel. But at Bodenham and Eardisley new lay impropiators remedied the problems created by their immediate predecessors and there, as at Much Marcle, the medieval chancels have survived. A few laymen were genuinely negligent, but their negligence should be put in context alongside the care that their successors took to remedy the situation, and within the wider pattern of good care in most places. In all, a record of serious difficulties in 16 parishes out of 200 over a period of 100 years does not seem bad. Certainly the evidence is very incomplete but the gaps undoubtedly mask achievement as well as failure.

PART TWO. THE CHURCHES

CHAPTER EIGHT. SUBSTANTIAL REBUILDING

We have noe Church or Vickeredge house be[cause it was] burnt by the warres to the ground. (The Churchwardens of Canon Frome)

We have a new bishop, who will I hope make no difficulty ... of granting us all we have to ask in relation to the church and churchyard. So that you will see Shobdon much improved this summer. (Richard Bateman)¹

The care of churches has always entailed rebuilding. Entirely new churches have been provided from time to time to meet pastoral needs. But existing churches have also been replaced, in response to personal and communal aspirations or because older buildings could not be restored. In Herefordshire between 1662 and 1762 all the "new" churches were replacements, but not all of them have been identified up to now, because of the way in which the study of the buildings has been approached. Architectural histories treat only churches built to new designs. Inventories and gazetteers include churches which were partially redesigned, but they record buildings as they now are and only rarely do they refer to earlier rebuilding of which there is now no trace. Conclusions are based on the fabric with occasional reference to secondary sources, but much less attention has been paid to archival sources. This chapter and the next are, in large part, an attempt to remedy this situation and to see what light the documents can shed both on the buildings and on the people who contributed to their rebuilding.

Rebuilding a church entailed a spectrum of activities: new buildings, adaptations and reconstructions. New churches in Herefordshire were erected in 4

1.. H.R.O. HD7/12/70; G39/III/E/110.

several styles, Classical, Gothic Survival and Rococo Gothic. Adaptations involved a combination of old and new fabric with old and new architectural features; while reconstructed churches were apparently rebuilt much as they had been before. But there is no absolutely clear cut dividing line between the categories. In three parishes where new churches were built, the existing tower was retained;² and at Tyberton a Norman doorway was kept as the entrance to an eighteenth-century brick church.³ Similarly the extent of adaptation varied. At Whitney it was largely confined to refashioning the south front when the church was moved.⁴ At Norton Canon, by contrast, although the thirteenth-century windows were retained along with the tower, new walls were built in brick.⁵

Reconstruction apparently entailed few changes, but it is impossible to be certain because of later restoration and demolition. The evidence for reconstructions comes from diocesan records. All traces of early modern work have generally been removed from the fabric. Allensmore, restored in 1880, is dated to the fourteenth century with a fifteenth or early sixteenth century tower.⁶ At Brobury the nave was demolished in 1873, the chancel windows are dated to about 1300 and the roof to the seventeenth century.⁷ At Hope-under-Dinmore it is possible to date the tower to the eighteenth century, but the rest was so drastically restored in 1879 that it can only be tentatively assigned to the fourteenth century.⁸ St. Weonards, extensively restored in 1884, is attributed to the thirteenth century, with early sixteenth-century additions.⁹ All were rebuilt between 1662 and 1762.

2. Monnington-on-Wye, Stoke Edith and Shobdon.

3. R.C.H.M. England, An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Herefordshire (3 vols, 1931-1934), 1, p. 242.

4. R.C.H.M. England, Herefordshire Inventory, 3, p. 203.

5. R.C.H.M. England, Herefordshire Inventory, 3, pp. 153-154.

6. R.C.H.M. England, Herefordshire Inventory, 1, pp. 14-15.

7. R.C.H.M. England, Herefordshire Inventory, 3, p. 26-27

8. R.C.H.M. England, Herefordshire Inventory, 3, p. 67.

9. R.C.H.M. England, Herefordshire Inventory, 1, p. 228.

But, in spite of blurred dividing lines, the three categories of new buildings, adaptations and reconstructions provide a useful framework within which to examine rebuilding. They allow a focus on the varying extent of the work involved; on the question of how far rebuilding was driven by the aspirations of the wealthy and how far it was determined by other factors; and on how it was paid for in different circumstances.

New Buildings

Between 1662 and 1762 five churches and two chapels were totally or almost totally rebuilt: three to meet pastoral needs, one as a family memorial and two as part of long-term schemes which entailed rebuilding country houses and redesigning landscapes. The seventh was in poor condition but, since it was paid for by the principal landowner and stood close to his house, which was later rebuilt, aesthetic considerations may have played a part.

One church and two chapels were rebuilt for pastoral reasons. The first was the church at Canon Frome, "burnt by the warres to the ground" in 1645 and the parishioners "for their Loyalty to his Ma^{tie} reduced to very greate poverty".¹⁰ The brief petitioned for in 1663 seems to have raised little and the main cost was met out of the church rate with the Hoptons, the principal landowners, paying a large share.¹¹ Progress was slow. In 1669 there were preparations to rebuild as quickly as possible.¹² In 1672 or 1673 the churchwardens presented the lack of a bier, a chest and hearse cloth, but

...we the parishioners request that favour of y^e Co by means of the greate charges [of] rebuilding our Church and great plunders that we have suffered ... but when it does please god to give us better abilities we shall provide the necessaries¹³

10. H.R.O. HD7/12/70; R93/LC8239(1).

11. H.R.O. R93/LC8239(1); M.A. Faraday, Herefordshire Militia Assessments of 1663, Royal Historical Society, Camden Series 10 (1972), p. 93.

12. H.R.O. HD7/11/73. 13. H.R.O. HD7/16/520.

Duncumb gives the date of completion as 1680, but there is no evidence to support this; and since the tithes were sequestered in 1675 (no doubt to secure the completion of the chancel), a slightly earlier date seems likely.¹⁴ The church was built in brick, with a wooden tower and gothic windows and appears, with a later brick tower, in a sketch in Froma Canonica.¹⁵

The old chapel at Marston Stannett had been demolished by the sixteen-seventies.¹⁶ A new chapel, paid for by Mrs. Rogers, was completed in 1711.¹⁷ It was built of stone and Bird, in 1851, notes pointed windows and a tablet recording endowments from Mary Rogers, the Rev. James Hodgson and Queen Anne's Bounty.¹⁸ Its later history is uncertain. Duncumb states that it was built and endowed by Mrs. Hurt in 1744 and Robinson that it was restored and re-endowed by her in 1774.¹⁹ It was not a charge on the rates in the parish of Pencombe, so it probably needed attention on both occasions. It is three miles from the parish church and in 1716 had services once a fortnight in the afternoon.²⁰

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14. M.G. Watkins, Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford. In Continuation of Duncumb's History. Hundred of Radlow (1902), p. 40; HD4/1, vol. 116, p. 56.
 15. M[adeline] H[option], Froma Canonica or the History of Canon Frome and the Hopton Family... [1902], p. 173 & sketch facing p. 116.
 16. R. & C. Botzum, The 1675 Thomas Blount History of Herefordshire, no date [c.1996], p. 46.
 17. Leominster Deanery Magazine, 10 No. 112, April 1897, quoting Humber parish register.
 18. C.J. Bird, 'Herefordshire collections, historical, biographical and topographical. Vol. 12 containing an account of the visitation of parish churches', pp. 127-128.
 19. J. Duncumb, Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford (8 vols, 1904-1915), 2, p. 152; C.J. Robinson, A History of the Mansions and Manors of Herefordshire (1872) p. 230.
 20. H.R.O. HD5.14/120.

The chapel at Preston Wynne in the parish of Withington was rebuilt between 1726 and 1730 on ground given by Humphrey Taylor. It cost £392 of which £192 was raised by subscription and £200 was given by the Vicar of Withington, Richard Waring. It is a classical building, with a chancel, nave and west tower, faced with ashlar. The architect is unknown. It was rebuilt on a new site because it was allegedly too decayed to restore and sound foundations could not be dug on the old site, while lack of a burial ground meant the dead were carried two miles to Withington.²¹ Whether it was really beyond repair is doubtful. It was in good order in 1721 and in 1725 there was nothing to present.²² But by November 1726 it was taken down and the ornaments were with the churchwardens and sidesmen.²³ The new chapel was finished in June 1730 and consecrated in August.²⁴ Three factors seem to have combined to achieve rebuilding: concerns over the state of the old chapel, the need for a burial ground and the presence of a generous and energetic vicar who was able to raise the money and supervise the accounting.

The new church at Monnington-on-Wye, built in 1679 and 1680, remains as a memorial to the Tomkins who had owned the manor since the mid-sixteenth century.²⁵ By 1679 Uvedale Tomkins and his wife Mary were both thirty and childless, and the family was about to die out. Their arms are on the east gable of the church and their initials on the porch, the communion table and the font; while they, together with some of their forbears and successors, are buried in the church.²⁶ The medieval tower was retained, but the nave and chancel were rebuilt, possibly to

21. H.R.O. AF27/1; AL19/22, p. 29v. Preston Wynne was assessed with Withington for hearth tax. In 1663, fourteen properties were assessed for the militia, ten being worth £10 or less. Allowing for a few households too poor to be assessed, the population was probably about 75.

22. H.C.A. 4607 xiv; H.R.O. HD7/49. 23. H.C.A. 4608 xxiii.

24. H.C.A. 4612 ii; H.R.O. AL19/22, pp. 29-32.

25. Robinson, *Mansion and Manors*, pp. 211-212.

26. Bird, 'Herefordshire collections', vol. 12, pp. 135-136.

designs by Francis Jones of Hasfield in Gloucestershire.²⁷ The walls are faced with ashlar and the style is Gothic Survival, the most conspicuous features being huge windows with two tiers of round-headed lights.

The church at Stoke Edith was one of two rebuilt as a part of schemes which entailed rebuilding country houses and replanning the landscape.²⁸ It was designed by Henry Flitcroft, in brick and stucco, in a classical style and the recorded cost is just over £552.²⁹ In May 1740 a faculty was granted to Thomas Foley the principal landowner, the rector and churchwardens, who stated that the church was "in a decayed and almost ruinous condition and cannot so effectually be repaired as to secure it at any time from falling down ...".³⁰ The churchwardens' accounts show that in fact it had been regularly maintained and a presentment of October 1738 states that it was in repair.³¹ But some validity may have been given to the claim that it could not be restored by the fact that day work (for which Thomas Foley paid £14.03.10d.) was carried out during the first half of March in 1740; and the contract with the bricklayer specifies that the old walls were to be pulled down and the foundations cleared by day labour.³² It was completed in time for communion to be celebrated there on 20 December 1741.³³

The second church to be rebuilt as part of a larger scheme was Shobdon, one of the best known Rococo Gothic churches in England.³⁴ It was rebuilt for John, Viscount Bateman and it is clear from family letters that the church and alterations to the churchyard were part of a scheme of improvement. The church has always been

27. S.C. Humphrey, ed., Churches and Chapels of Northern England (1991), p. 148.

28. Herefordshire Houses, Parks and Gardens. Notes to Accompany an Exhibition (1964), pp. 5-8.

29. N. Pevsner, The Buildings of England. Herefordshire (1963), p. 292; H.R.O. E12/iv/174/3-7: E12/iv/40.

30. H.R.O. E12/iv/174/2. 31. H.R.O. J72/9; HD7/58.

32. H.R.O. E12/iv/174/1-2. 33. H.R.O. J72/1.

34. Pevsner, Herefordshire, 52, 287-288.

dated to the period between 1752 and 1756, but the letters show that rebuilding was already under consideration before 1746 and that work had started by 1749.³⁵ The identity of the architect remains in doubt. The rebuilding was co-ordinated by Viscount Bateman's uncle, Richard, who managed the Shobdon estate; and the work was supervised at Shobdon by him and by Benjamin Fallowes, the estate agent.³⁶ The west tower was kept and the new church was cruciform with shallow transepts and a very short chancel.³⁷ The Norman chancel arch from the old church and the arches and tympana from the doorways, together with the Norman font, were preserved and set up as an eyecatcher on the hill to the north of the church and the Bateman's mansion.³⁸

Originally, it seems, the Batemans planned to alter rather than rebuild. Plans were revised several times between 1749 and 1751, but something went wrong in 1749 and it was not until March 1752 that work was proceeding well.³⁹ The foundation stone is dated 1753 and when Richard Pococke saw the church in

35. H.R.O. G39/III/E/110, 114, 170, 208, 210, 211, 212, 215, 232, 245, 255, 260, 264, 268, 273, 283, 285, 289, 309, 318, 320, 326, 351.

36. Apart from uncertainty over the architect, two factors complicate study of this church. Firstly, Richard Bateman spent the summer and autumn at Shobdon and the winter and spring in London, so his letters tell only part of the story. Secondly, the calendar changed during the project and this has caused confusion. Dates are incorrectly given in both The Churches of Shobdon and their Builders (1986) and I. Pfuell, A History of Shobdon (1994). Dates in this account have been checked against the original letters.

37. Below p. 152.

38. J.J. Cartwright, The Travels through England of Dr. Richard Pococke... Camden Society New Series 42 & 44 (2 vols, 1888-1889), 2, p. 220.

39. H.R.O. G39/III/E/208, 210, 211, 212, 215, 232, 245, 255, 260, 264, 268, 273, 283, 318.

September 1756 he described it as:

...very finely finished within ...: on each side next the chancel a closet is taken off, which is open to the church, one is built with a chimney, for Lord Bateman's family; the other is to be a burial place and a seat for the servants.⁴⁰

It was completed, it seems, at least ten years after the Batemans first decided to alter it.

Tyberton was rebuilt for William Brydges between 1719 and 1722.⁴¹ It was apparently in poor condition by the second decade of the eighteenth century, although possibly not beyond repair.⁴² The roof was damaged in a gale in 1716, but a new tower had been built about 1655 and the Dean and Chapter, who owned the tithes, queried the need to rebuild the chancel.⁴³ Ultimately it seems the Brydges paid for the chancel, but secured a lease of the tithes at a very low renewal fine, a form of favour which has also been noticed in Canterbury diocese.⁴⁴ The church was close to Tyberton Court, so desire for an elegant, modern building may have influenced the decision to rebuild. It was constructed of brick, with round-headed windows, and the only features retained from the old church were a Norman doorway and monuments to the Brydges.⁴⁵ It is cited by Addleshaw and Etchells as

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40. I. Pfuell, A History of Shobdon (1994), p. 64; Cartwright, Travels of Richard Pococke, 2, p. 220.
41. B.A. Bailey, 'William Brydges and the rebuilding of Tyberton church', T.W.N.F.C. 37 (1961-1963), pp. 210-221.
42. Bailey, 'Tyberton church', p. 210.
43. H.C.A. 4605; 7002/12/8, p. 125; H.R.O. HD7/44.
44. H.C.A. 7031/4, pp. 122, 157, 222; W.J. Gregory, Restoration, Reformation and Reform, 1660-1828. Archbishops of Canterbury and their Diocese (2000), pp. 118, 123.
45. R.C.H.M. England, Herefordshire Inventory 1, p. 242; Bird, 'Herefordshire collections', vol. 12, pp. 48-49.

an example of the eighteenth century practice of following the medieval plan by building a chancel structurally distinct from the nave.⁴⁶ The ground plan was probably determined by old foundations and the result is a church which combines modern design with a traditional layout. The plans were prepared by a surveyor in London and the building done by Robert Pritchard, a mason from the parish of Clehonger.⁴⁷

These new churches and chapels were built at different dates, in different styles and for several different reasons. Canon Frome was rebuilt of necessity and Marston Stannett as a matter of convenience; while Monnington was a memorial to a family on the edge of extinction. At Tyberton there is evidence that the old church was in poor condition, though it is not entirely clear that it would have been impossible to restore. But problems with the fabric coincided with the Brydges' wish for a new church. At Preston Wynne and Stoke Edith there is no evidence of disrepair except in documents relating to the new buildings.⁴⁸ But there were other reasons for rebuilding and, given the support of parish clergy and churchwardens, the bishop sanctioned the work. Only at Shobdon is there evidence of disagreement between the Batemans and Henry Egerton who was bishop until 1746, but this seems to have been resolved under his successor, Lord James Beauclerk.⁴⁹

What is clear is that a completely new church was not something that a country parish or chapelry could normally afford. Five of the seven were paid for by prosperous landowners and Preston Wynne was funded in almost equal parts by subscriptions and by the vicar. Only at Canon Frome does it seem that at least part of the cost came out of the rates, supplemented by a brief, and here 70% of the property in 1663 was in the hands of the principal landowner.⁵⁰

46. G.W. Addleshaw & F. Etchells, The Architectural Setting of Anglican Worship (1948), pp. 48-49.

47. Bailey, 'Tyberton church', p. 211. 48. H.R.O. AF27/1; E12/iv/174/2.

49. H.R.O. G39/III/E/110.

50. Faraday, Herefordshire Militia Assessments, p. 93.

Four churches were adapted using a combination of old and new fabric and features. Of these one was paid for by a landowner, the others partly or wholly by the parishioners, with the cost of the chancel usually falling on the owner of the tithes. How Caple seems to have been rebuilt primarily to commemorate the Gregory family and perhaps to embellish the view from How Caple Court, looking towards the Wye. Whitney was moved to higher ground when its churchyard was washed away, while Titley, and probably Norton Canon, could not be restored.

How Caple (excluding the chancel) was rebuilt between 1693 and 1695 when the parish reported the church "nigh finished".⁵¹ The nave and south porch were reconstructed and refaced; and a new tower and south transept were added. Although the work is partly classical, at least one fourteenth-century window was re-used in the nave, others being copied from this and a chancel window.⁵² The work was done for Sir William Gregory of Hill House, Woolhope who bought the manor of How Caple soon after 1670.⁵³ With it he acquired an estate church where he could create a mortuary chapel.⁵⁴

At Whitney the church had to be moved when it was threatened by floods. The River Wye first encroached on the churchyard in 1707 and remained a threat until 1715.⁵⁵ Then there was a respite until 1734 and eventually, in January 1739, the parish asked leave to move the church because it would be cheaper to rebuild than to construct flood defences.⁵⁶ The land was given by the principal landowner

51. H.R.O. HD7/30.

52. R.C.H.M. England, Herefordshire Inventory, 2, pp. 91-92.

53. Robinson, Mansions and Manors, pp. 150, 310-311.

54. The Gregory memorials are printed in J. Duncumb & W.H. Cooke, Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford, 2 (enlarged edn c.1854), pp. 360-361.

55. H.R.O. HD7/35; HD4/1, vol. 108, Weobley Deanery, Michaelmas 1715.

56. H.R.O. HD7/54; AL19/22, pp. 66-66v.

William Wardour who, according to Duncumb's Collections, rebuilt the church.⁵⁷

But the deed dedicating church and churchyard to the service of God states that it was rebuilt by the inhabitants and landholders "at their own Costs and Charges".⁵⁸ However, here as at Canon Frome, the principal landowner undoubtedly paid a major part of the cost. Much of the old fabric was re-used, but the south doorway and at least one window are Georgian and Pevsner notes traces of others.⁵⁹

There is no evidence as to why Norton Canon was rebuilt, except that the chancel was beyond repair.⁶⁰ It is a large building, consisting of chancel, nave, transepts, vestry, porch and north-west tower. Apart from the thirteenth-century tower the whole building was reconstructed, with late-thirteenth century windows incorporated into new brick walls.⁶¹ The chancel, completed by the autumn of 1705, was paid for by the Dean and Chapter of Hereford; but the body of the church took over ten years from 1706 to 1717.⁶² This is almost undoubtedly an indication that it was paid for largely, if not wholly, out of church rates in a parish where there were several principal landowners.

The rebuilding of Titley is well-documented, but poses a number of problems. Extensive repairs were undertaken in the seventeen-forties and seventeen-fifties.⁶³ But in 1757, after several surveys, it was agreed that the

57. M.G. Watkins, Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford. In Continuation of Duncumb's History. Hundred of Huntington (1897), p. 84.

58. H.R.O. AL19/22, pp. 64v.-66v.

59. Pevsner, Herefordshire, p. 320.

60. H.C.A. 7031/3, p. 553.

61. R.C.H.M. England, Herefordshire Inventory, 3, pp. 153-154

62. H.C.A. 4601 xxvii; 7002/1/8, pp. 78., 214v.; 7020/1/1, accounts for 1703-04, 1704-1705.

63. H.R.O. AB56/31, accounts for 1742, 1749, 1755.

building was dangerous and should be demolished and replaced.⁶⁴ Payments were made for stripping tiles and pulling down the roof, the belfry and seats, but not the walls.⁶⁵ In May 1758 the parish accepted a proposal from the Earl of Oxford (a principal landowner) for "removing and rebuild[ing] the Parish Church", but no details are given.⁶⁶ In November a visitation return confirms that "... the Parish Church of Titley [is] out of Repair, as being taken down to be rebuilt, and y^e Chancel alsoe".⁶⁷ Nothing happened until May 1761 when masons tendered for the new church. The contract was signed in June, the fabric was completed by the end of 1762 and the furnishings in 1763.⁶⁸ Bird, in 1842, describes a "Grecian" east window and irregular fenestration in the nave. There were three round-headed windows, a round-headed door and a square-headed window in the south wall and one square-headed window on the north.⁶⁹ The contract specifies that the front or south side should be faced with freestone, but does not mention the north. This, coupled with the irregular fenestration and the fact that the demolition account does not include walls, suggests that the church was rebuilt with a combination of old and new fabric and features. It was rebuilt again in 1869.

The estimates for the church and "cupola" come to £215.08.00, with furniture and paving bringing the cost to approximately £240. Surveys and demolition added a further £8.07.08. A initial rate of two shillings and sixpence in the pound was authorised in 1761, which would have brought in £60. If this levy was repeated twice, followed by the rate of one shilling and sixpence levied in 1763, it would have raised £216, leaving a shortfall of about £33.⁷⁰ The Earl of

64. H.R.O. AB56/21, 4 December 1757.⁶⁵ H.R.O. AB56/31, accounts for 1757.

65. H.R.O. AB56/31, accounts for 1757.

66. H.R.O. AB56/21, May 1758. 67. H.R.O. HD7/68.

68. H.R.O. AB56/21, 4 May & 18 June 1761.

69. Bird, 'Herefordshire collections', 12, pp. 22-26.

70. H.R.O. AB56/21, 31.

Oxford may have paid the balance

William Gregory's decision to adapt How Caple rather than building a new church may have been due both to admiration for fourteenth-century Gothic and to lack of resources. How Caple Court, like the church, seems to have been partly, not fully rebuilt in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century.⁷¹ But he did pay for the entire rebuilding of the church; whereas at Whitney and Titley the ratepayers met a large part of the cost. At Norton Canon there is no evidence as to who paid for the the body of the church, but since it took so long to complete it seems probable that the money came from the rates. In all cases chancels would normally have been paid for by the tithe owners, but confirmation of this is only available for Norton Canon.

Reconstructions

Reconstructions are known only from documentary evidence, since most early modern work has been destroyed in the churches themselves. Allensmore is dated to the fourteenth and fifteenth or sixteenth centuries.⁷² But it was apparently rebuilt twice in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. A visitation return of 1668 states that

our parish Church is fallen all downe to y^e Ground Tower and all ...

We cannot certify what is wanting till o^f Church [is] put up and in sufficient repair.⁷³

By 1673 the foundations of the tower were laid, but the tower itself was still not finished when a grant of £10 was made out of commutation money by the Bishop of Hereford between 1680 and 1682.⁷⁴ Just over 30 years later, in 1716, the body of the church was again "presented to be fallen down" and the parish was given

71. R.C.H.M. England, *Herefordshire Inventory*, 2, pp. 91-92.

72. R.C.H.M. England, *Herefordshire Inventory*, 1, pp. 14-16.

73. H.C.A. 4591 v.

74. H.C.A. 4594(1) xviii; 4594(2) ii; H.R.O. AL19/20, 137v.

eighteen months to rebuild, an indication that substantial work was required.⁷⁵

The collapse of the nave is confirmed by Hill who visited the church in 1716 when services were being held in the chancel.⁷⁶

At Brobury only the chancel survives, with thirteenth-century windows and a seventeenth century roof.⁷⁷ The churchwardens were cited in 1676 to repair the church " ... presented ... much out of repair and a great part ... fallen down" but it was not certified as finished until 1682.⁷⁸ In the meantime Thomas Aubrey, the rector, was cited to repair the chancel in 1680, as was his successor, John Stilling who carried out the work, in 1682.⁷⁹ However in 1694 or 1695 the chancel fell down and was rebuilt at a cost of £30 by Stilling's successor Benjamin Griffiths.⁸⁰ Since the living was worth £21.12.00 a year, this represented a substantial burden.⁸¹ These endeavours are confirmed by a visitation return of 1695 stating that the church is in good order "having bin not long since rebuilt".⁸²

At Hope-under-Dinmore the tower is eighteenth-century, while the rest, radically restored, is thought to be fourteenth-century.⁸³ But in 1707 the churchwardens were cited to "certify the rebuilding of the church presented to be pulled down and in repairing" and it was completed in 1708.⁸⁴ What was wrong is not known, but in 1703 there was nothing to present.⁸⁵ Some years after the rebuilding the church was adorned by Lord Coningsby. Hill's drawing shows

75. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 109, p.1.

76. James Hill's manuscripts, vol. 3, p. 97.

77. R.C.H.M. England, *Herefordshire Inventory*, 3, pp. 26-27.

78. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 119, p. 107; vol. 214, Weobley Deanery, p. 13.

79. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 124, Weobley Deanery, p. 13.

80. H.R.O. HD 4/36, 11 February 1704, 15 November 1705.

81. H.C.A. 7008/1, p. 485. 82. H.R.O. HD7/30.

83. R.C.H.M. England, *Herefordshire Inventory*, 3, p. 67.

84. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 107, p. 57v.; HD7/38.

85. H.R.O. HD7/34.

long, pointed windows under gable heads on the north side (not unlike those which survive at Sellack) and panelled eighteenth-century doors in the church and north chapel.⁸⁶

For St. Weonards, a thirteenth-century church with sixteenth-century additions, there is slight but unequivocal evidence of rebuilding. A citation for Easter 1710 states that the church and chancel had lately been rebuilt and allows six months for adorning.⁸⁷ This had not been completed by Michaelmas.⁸⁸ No pictorial evidence has come to light, but it seems that St. Weonards, like several others, was reconstructed. The cost of the main church was probably met by the ratepayers, but there is no record of payment for the chancel by the Dean and Chapter of Hereford who owned the tithes.

It is a pity that no relevant parish records survive for these parishes where churches were apparently reconstructed using old materials and architectural features as far as possible. Only documentary evidence could now throw any light on the extent and cost of the work and, perhaps, on the decisions taken.

Conclusions

In all thirteen country churches and two chapels were rebuilt between 1662 and 1762. With two exceptions all were rebuilt on the same site on old foundations, though this did not preclude modifying the ground plan. Five - Monnington-on-Wye, How Caple, Tyberton, Stoke Edith and Shobdon - were rebuilt by wealthy landowners to fulfil personal aspirations to embellish the landscape or to commemorate their families. Canon Frome and Marston Stannett replaced buildings which had been demolished, while Preston Wynne and Whitney were moved for practical reasons. Allensmore was destroyed when the

86. Hill's mss, vol. 1, p. 333; R.C.H.M. England, Herefordshire Inventory, 1, plate 197.

87. R.C.H.M. England, Herefordshire Inventory, 1, p. 228; H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 108, Archenfield Deanery, [Easter] 1710.

88. HD4/1, vol. 108, Michaelmas 1710.

tower fell in 1688 and its nave was rebuilt again in 1716. Brobury and Titley both became too dilapidated to restore and the same was probably true at Hope-under-Dinmore, St. Weonards and Norton Canon.

Major landowners paid for six of the fifteen. Another eight were apparently paid for by ratepayers and tithe owners, with additional help in several cases, from a leading landowner. The brief at Canon Frome appears to have raised little. One chapel, exceptionally, was paid for by the vicar and a long list of subscribers only a few of whom lived in the chapelry.

In order to put the figure of fifteen churches and chapels in perspective, it seems worthwhile to ask how the century from 1662 to 1762 compares with those before and after. Only one church is known to have been rebuilt between 1562 and 1662, at Brampton Bryan where the medieval church was burnt down during the Civil War.⁸⁹ There was also a major restoration in the sixteen-thirties at Abbey Dore.⁹⁰ In the century after 1762 a total of 29 churches were rebuilt and three new ones added for new parishes carved out of old country parishes. But the pace of rebuilding was not even as Table 13 shows. These may be minimum figures if reconstructions have been masked by later restoration, but the huge increase after 1837 raises questions. Was it really necessary to rebuild so many churches because they were beyond repair? Or does it reflect a determination to gothicise?

Table 13. Rebuilding and Building of Churches, 1662-1862.

1662-1762	15 churches/chapels rebuilt
1763-1787	No churches built or rebuilt
1788-1837	7 churches rebuilt
1838-1862	22 churches rebuilt and 3 additional churches built

89. R.C.H.M. England, *Herefordshire Inventory* 3, p. 19.

90. J. Tonkin, 'The Scudamore restoration', in R. Shoesmith and R. Richardson, eds, *A Definitive History of Abbey Dore* (1997), pp. 163-172.

This chapter has added seven to the total of "new" churches listed for Herefordshire in inventories and gazetteers. There is archival evidence for all, and antiquarian evidence for Marston Stannett and Titley; while Canon Frome and Marston are recorded in print. But existing lists are based largely on the buildings alone and do not allowed for three factors. Firstly the medieval practice of re-using architectural features continued, partly for reasons of economy and partly, no doubt, because of attachment to the old buildings. Secondly Victorian rebuilding and restoration has removed much early modern work, including the physical evidence of restoration and reconstruction. Thirdly it seems that a completely new building was something that only the wealthy could afford, except on the very rare occasions when subscriptions supplemented individual generosity. Otherwise churches and chapels were adapted or reconstructed in ways that shaded off into radical restoration. These findings prompt the conclusion that the extent of rebuilding in the century after the Restoration has been underestimated and that not enough credit has been given to parish communities and tithe owners who rebuilt churches, either unaided or in partnership with major landowners. But this is not the full story. As the next chapter shows, in a number of places churches were partially rebuilt.

PART TWO. THE CHURCHES

CHAPTER NINE. PARTIAL REBUILDING.

... the Steple of the Parish Church is in great decay and very Ruingous, and ... is impossible to repair ... and ... will inevitably pull down the tower, and probably crush the Body of the s^d Church ...
(Eardisland vestry minutes)

In memoriam conjugis charissimi Thomae Ross. A.M. Ecclesiae huius nuper Pastoris ... hanc Cancellam posuit vidua ... E.R.
(Memorial to Thomas Rosse, Rector of Tretire)¹

It has been shown in the previous chapter that total rebuilding of a church or chapel was a rare event, affecting only 15 (or c.7%) of about 220 country churches and chapels in Herefordshire between 1662 and 1762. Partial rebuilding was equally rare, affecting a further 17 (or c.8%) of churches and chapels. Nine towers, three bell turrets and three chancels are known to have been rebuilt; two landowners added private aisles to their parish churches and one constructed a burial vault under a church which he had restored and adorned. These enterprises were undoubtedly less expensive than total rebuilding, but they still represented a substantial commitment for those who paid the bills.

Towers and Bell Turrets

The nine parishes where towers were rebuilt between 1662 and 1762 are listed alphabetically in appendix II.A, section 3 and chronologically in appendix

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1. H.R.O. AJ32/58, 14 January 1749/50; C.J. Bird, 'Herefordshire collections, historical, biographical and topographical. Volume 12 containing an account of the visitation of parish churches', p. 35.

II.B. Most were certainly rebuilt of necessity and probably at the cost of the parish. Dating is often problematical, as with other parts of the fabric, because physical evidence has been obliterated and no allowance has been made for reuse of architectural features. In addition the dates assigned in print or by local tradition may conflict with documentary evidence.

For three towers evidence is slight. At Wormbridge the tower has been cautiously assigned to the thirteenth century.² However in 1673 it was about to collapse and was largely taken down. The parish intended to rebuild that year. But winter arrived suddenly, it became impossible to transport slates and rebuilding was not finished until March 1674.³ At Middleton-on-the-Hill there is an eighteenth-century door, together with round-headed bell openings, in a tower dated to the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries.⁴ It was apparently rebuilt about 1725 when the churchwardens were cited to certify the repair of the steeple, which they had presented to be "in building".⁵ The third tower, at Dinedor, was rebuilt or repaired in 1737, when the Dean and Chapter of Hereford made a grant of three guineas for the purpose.⁶ But there is no evidence for the actual extent of the work.

Other towers are better documented. Dilwyn is dated to the twelfth, thirteen and eighteenth centuries.⁷ The bells were recast in 1732, but it seems that the "eighteenth century" work on the tower and spire had been done some forty years earlier.⁸ The parish was cited at Easter 1687 for not repairing the steeple,

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2. R.C.H.M. England, An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Herefordshire, (3 vols, 1931-1934), 1, p. 255.
 3. H.R.O. HD7/17/75.
 4. R.C.H.M. England, Herefordshire Inventory, 3, p. 147-148.
 5. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 109, p. 100. 6. H.C.A. 7031/4, p. 176.
 7. R.C.H.M. England, Herefordshire Inventory, 3, pp. 36, 38-39.
 8. F. Sharpe, The Church Bells of Herefordshire: their Inscriptions and their Founders, (5 vols, 1966-1975), 2, p. 129.

which was very decayed and considered likely to fall, endangering the church.⁹

Work was still in progress in September 1689 when the steeple was not yet fully repaired, but by the summer of 1690 it was finished.¹⁰

At Eardisley in May 1705 the churchwardens reported that the tower was ruinous and that they planned to rebuild it.¹¹ It is thought that the old tower was detached and was destroyed by fire. It may have stood in the north-east corner of the churchyard, where charred wood was found when graves were dug in the nineteenth century.¹² The new tower was finished by May 1708 and the churchwardens asked for time to have the bells recast, as they wished to add a treble to bring the peal to five.¹³ The bells were recast the same year, but it was not until November 1710 that the interior of the bell house was plastered and whitened and everything finished.¹⁴

The new west tower at Byford was completed in 1717, blocking the thirteenth-century west window.¹⁵ The old tower abutted on the chancel. A visitation return of 1716 states that the chancel roof needed repairing because of "the taking down of the steeple which formerly stood on one of its walls".¹⁶ Problems initially came to light in 1701, when the steeple was cracked, and more

9. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 105, p. 18v. 10. H.R.O. HD7/26, 28.

11. H.R.O. HD7/35; HD4/1, vol. 107, p. 53.

12. M.G. Watkins, Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford. In Continuation of Duncumb's History. Hundred of Huntington (1897), p. 47.

13. H.R.O. HD7/38.

14. Sharpe, Herefordshire Bells, 2, pp. 144-145; H.R.O. HD7/40; HD4/1, vol. 108, Weobley Deanery, Easter 1710.

15. R.C.H.M. England, Herefordshire Inventory, 3, p. 30; B.B. Clarke, 'The architecture of Byford church', T.W.N.F.C. (1949), p. 45.

16. H.R.O. HD5/14/190.

problems occurred in 1708.¹⁷ After that the tower remained out of repair until 1715, when it was taken down.¹⁸ The work was well advanced by September 1716, when a grant of five pounds from the Bishop's commutation money was applied to pointing the tower and rebuilding the church and chancel wall.¹⁹

The west tower at Shobdon has been attributed, with some caution, to the thirteenth or fourteenth century.²⁰ But the diocesan archives show that it was built between 1725 and 1730.²¹ The old central tower blew down in 1719 and by December was being rebuilt.²² It is shown in a print of Shobdon Court about 1720, rebuilt as a central tower with a solid parapet and a round-headed window with a keystone.²³ However, it was probably not completed in this form. In March 1724 the church was in good repair "only that we have no steeple". In October the parishioners submitted to the diocese a resolution to build a west tower. This was signed by the minister, churchwardens, Lord Bateman's agent and ten inhabitants.²⁴ But it was not until December 1730 that the bells were hung for ringing; and the parish still needed "time to sett up the weathercock on the stepell and for the white Lime what Is wanting".²⁵

At Canon Frome, as at Shobdon, documentary evidence does not support the date of 1680 usually given for the tower, probably on the basis on Duncumb's

17. H.R.O. HD7/33; HD4/1, vol. 108, Weobley Deanery, Easter 1710.

18. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 108, Weobley Deanery, Easter 1710, Michaelmas 1711, 1712, 1713 & 1715.

19. H.C.A. 7008/1, p. 516.

20. R.C.H.M. England, Herefordshire Inventory, 3, p. 179.

21. H.R.O. HD7/48, 50. 22. H.R.O. HD5/14/89; HD7/44.

23. J. Harris, The South Prospect of Shobdon Court in Herefordshire, c. 1720.

24. H.R.O. HD7/48, 20 March & 18 October. 25. H.R.O. HD7/50.

date for the church.²⁶ The accounts for the brick tower date from 1730 and open with an entry for "pulling down bells and wooden steeple". Like the addition of an aisle and the beautifying of the church, the tower was paid for by the Hoptons and was probably built as an embellishment, since the church is right beside Canon Frome Court. The accounts appear to be incomplete, but the recorded expenditure amounts to £75.18.10.²⁷

Although the tower at Eardisland is undoubtedly eighteenth-century, there are discrepancies between local tradition, the published date and surviving documentary evidence. A recent oral history of Eardisland records that "the original church tower fell (probably in the great gale of 1703)" and shattered the existing bells.²⁸ The Royal Commission attributes the tower to 1728 when the bells were recast, as does Norman Reeves.²⁹ The parish book opens in 1734, but the first reference to spire and tower is not until January 1750 when it was stated that the spire was 'Ruingous' and would bring down the tower and probably crush the nave unless it was demolished. The churchwardens were instructed to get permission to take it down, but it was still there in January 1758 when the vestry ordered that the spire and battlements were to be taken down before they fell and the order to get permission was reiterated. The tower (without a spire) was rebuilt

26. M.G. Watkins, Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford. In Continuation of Duncumb's History. Hundred of Radlow (1902), p. 40; R.C.H.M.England, Herefordshire Inventory, 2, p. 44.
27. H.R.O. R93 LC8351; below p. 159.
28. Eardisland Oral History Group, Eardisland. An Oral History. The Life and Times of a Herefordshire Village, Compiled from the Memories of the Inhabitants (1995), p. 53.
29. R.C.H.M.England, Herefordshire Inventory, 3, p. 46; N.C. Reeves, The Leon Valley. Three Herefordshire Villages. Kingsland, Monkland and Eardisland (1980), p. 136.

in 1760 by Thomas Hooper of Yarpole for £155.³⁰ The parish was cited in court four times, from Michaelmas 1758 to November 1760, to certify the repair of the steeple and at Easter 1761 to certify the rehanging of the bells, which they did in July.³¹

Resolving the discrepancies in the evidence is difficult. It seems unlikely that the tower would have needed rebuilding in 1760 if it had been rebuilt in 1728. Moreover, if the tower and bells were destroyed as early as 1703 and the rebuilding and recasting were not completed until 1728, it is most improbable that the parish would not have been cited to repair them in the consistory court. Yet there are no references to tower or bells in the act books. In addition the surviving visitation returns for the years from 1708 to 1726 do not record any defects except an uneven floor in 1719.³² It is possible that the storm damaged both tower and bells and that underlying weaknesses took time to come to light. The bells may have been recast of necessity. But it is also possible that they were recast to enlarge the peal for change-ringing.

At first sight it is difficult to see why the spire was not demolished for eight years if it was in danger of damaging the tower and nave in 1750. But some light on the procedures involved comes from documentation for Weston-under-Penyard. The spire there and part of the tower were struck by lightning in 1738 and the church could not be used unless the spire was taken down. The parish wished to re-roof the tower without the spire and a commission of three local clergy and three laymen was appointed to inspect the building. They were informed that the Bishop was inclined to comply with the parishioners' wishes provided that "the Beauty, Fashion or Strength of the Fabric be not defaced...". The commissioners reported in detail on what was proposed for the battlements

30. H.R.O. AJ32/58. The first entry (under the old calendar) is dated January 1749.

31. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 110, pp. 112v., 117v., 120, 121; HD4/1, vol. 111, p. 348.

32. H.R.O. HD7/38, 39, 41, 43, 44, 48, 49; HD5/14/64.

and roof, and expressed the view that the work would be "handsome, substantially well-proportioned and in all Respects suitable to the other parts of the said Church."³³ The spire was then taken down, although work may not have been postponed until 1750, the date given by the Royal Commission.³⁴ At Eardisland there is no evidence of a commission, but it seems probable that there was disagreement over the condition of the spire. It is also possible that the parish put forward proposals for repairing the tower which were not acceptable.

Although towers are common in Herefordshire, quite a number of churches had bell-turrets, less imposing than towers but substantial enough to hold several bells. Three of these were rebuilt between 1662 and 1762. Brampton Abbots has a shingled turret, holding three bells, with a pyramid roof now supported on modern posts and framing within the west end of the church. A visitation return of 1663 states that the church is well repaired and the "tower" newly and sufficiently built. Further work on the west wall, and possibly on the turret, was carried out in 1686 when the churchwardens inserted a datestone.³⁵ But there is no evidence to show what was done.

At Llanrothal the turret is dated by the Royal Commission to 1680. It is square, with a west wall partly built of coffin lids, and timber framing on the other three sides.³⁶ Its date is substantially confirmed by an act book entry for Easter 1682 citing the churchwardens to rehang the bell, which was done by August.³⁷ At Croft the turret is said to have been rebuilt after a fire in the early eighteenth century.³⁸ It was almost certainly paid for by the Croft family, since the church stands close beside Croft Castle and was effectively an estate chapel. The only

33. H.R.O. AL19/22, pp. 63-64.

34. R.C.H.M. England, Herefordshire Inventory, 2, p. 210.

35. R.C.H.M. England, Herefordshire Inventory, 2, p. 23; H.R.O. HD7/5/68.

36. R.C.H.M. England, Herefordshire Inventory, 1, p. 171.

37. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 121, p. 125.

38. R.C.H.M. England, Herefordshire Inventory, 3, pp. 33-34.

clue as to the date of rebuilding comes from the bells of which there are three: two belonging to the clock and one for services. One of the clock bells is dated 1809. The other clock bell and the third bell are dated 1682, so it is possible that the rebuilding took place then rather than later, unless the fire was too slight to damage the bells.³⁹

Nine towers were rebuilt between 1662 and 1762, of which six are recorded in print. Archival evidence supplies three more, at Wormbridge, Middleton-on-the-Hill and Dinedor. It also indicates the need for re-dating others: Dilwyn from the eighteenth century to 1690; Shobdon from the middle ages to the third decade of the eighteenth century; and Canon Frome from 1680 to 1730. One turret, at Brampton Abbots has been added and dated to 1663, although the west wall carries a date of 1686; ; and the evidence of the bells at Croft may point to rebuilding in the late seventeenth century rather than a little later. As with churches, these results underline the importance of using archival evidence, particularly for buildings that have been heavily restored and in which the practice of reusing older fabric recurs. Except at Canon Frome it seems that all the towers and turrets were rebuilt of necessity, although there is no evidence on this point at Middleton, Brampton Abbots or Llanrothal. And except at Canon Frome and, probably, at Croft, it seems that the cost was met out of church rates.

Chancels

Three chancels are known to have been rebuilt between 1662 and 1762 in parishes where there is no record of serious problems with the church. In two instances the chancels were not in good condition, although it is not clear that they were beyond restoration. At Staunton-on-Wye the chancel was cited as "not sufficiently repaired" in 1715.⁴⁰ It was rebuilt during the spring and summer of

39. Sharpe, *Herefordshire Bells*, 1, pp. 122-123.

40. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 108, Weobley Deanery, [Michaelmas 1715].

1716 and was finished by December.⁴¹ The work was done for the rector, Timothy Markham, whose wife's family owned the Over Letton estate.⁴² Judging by Bird's description medieval windows were reused and, apart from a deep coved ceiling, there was nothing very radical about the rebuilding. The chancel contained memorials to Timothy Markham, two of his sons and his wife's parents, so he may have rebuilt it as a memorial chapel. The owner of the principal estate in the parish was Mary Tomkins, widow of Uvedale Tomkins of Monnington-on-Wye, who with her husband had rebuilt Monnington-on-Wye and the porch at Staunton-on-Wye in 1679.⁴³

The chancel at Bodenham was out of repair in 1737, "very bad out of repair" in 1738 and the impropiators were cited to repair it in 1739.⁴⁴ Duncumb states that it had been "lately rebuilt" and the Royal Commission assigns a date of 1750. But since it disappears from the act books after 1739 it may have been rebuilt as early as 1740. Whatever the date it was shortened by a bay.⁴⁵ But a sketch made in 1835 shows a low, pointed chancel arch and a decorated east window so it would seem to have been adapted rather than completely rebuilt.⁴⁶ There is no indication as to why it was shortened, but shortening of chancels was not unusual at this time. Many were too large for the number of communicants in

41. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 109, p. 11v.; HD5/14/207; HD7/42.

42. C.J. Robinson, A History of the Mansions and Manors of Herefordshire (1872), p. 256.

43. Bird, 'Herefordshire collections', vol. 12, pp. 132-133.

44. H.R.O. HD7/57/58; HD4/1, vol. 111, p. 164.

45. J.Duncumb, Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford, (8 vols, 1804-1915) 2, p. 55; R.C.H.M. England, Herefordshire Inventory, 2, p. 13.

46. H.R.O. AG3/31.

At Tretire the chancel was rebuilt as a memorial to her husband by the widow of Thomas Rosse, who was rector from 1710 to 1723. They may have planned the work before his early death, but his memorial plaque records that he built a number of cottages in the neighbourhood, to which his widow drew attention as a finer memorial than the chancel. This was classical in style with round-headed windows in the north and south walls, three "Grecian panels" over the communion table and a Grecian chancel arch.⁴⁸ It was demolished in 1856 when the church was rebuilt.⁴⁹

In the light of the evidence from Bosbury, Much Marcle and Bredwardine, it seems unlikely that the chancels of Staunton-on-Wye and Bodenham could not have been restored. If so, then it is possible that personal considerations came into play. At Tretire the evidence is clear-cut. The rector's widow rebuilt the chancel in his memory.⁵⁰ At Staunton-on-Wye the rector, Timothy Markham, had a living worth £80 and had married the daughter of a leading landowner in the parish.⁵¹ At Bodenham the living was held by George Coningsby who had married a cousin of the patron Margaret, Countess Coningsby. He held Bodenham, valued at £50, with Pencombe which was worth £100.⁵² Decisions to rebuild rather than restore may, therefore, have been prompted by a combination of money and personal aspirations. Of these three chancels one was paid for by a rector with a good living, one by a rector's widow and one probably by ecclesiastical office holders and the vicar.

47. W.M. Jacob, Lay People and Religion in the Early Eighteenth Century (1996), p. 211; B.F.L. Clarke, The Building of the Eighteenth-Century Church (1962), pp. 117-121.

48. Bird, 'Herefordshire collections', vol. 12, pp. 34-35.

49. Pevsner, Herefordshire, p. 301.

50. Bird, 'Herefordshire collections', vol. 12, p. 35.

51. H.C.A. 7008/1, p. 486; Robinson, Mansions and Manors, p. 256.

52. H.C.A. 7008/1, pp. 484, 487; Robinson, Mansions and Manors, p. 232.

Private Aisles and Vaults

Money and personal choice probably determined the extent to which private individuals built aisles and vaults to serve as memorial chapels and burial places. By this period only a few families maintained older aisles or included new ones when churches were rebuilt.⁵³ And only three added aisles or vaults to existing churches. At Llangarron the building of the north aisle is known from the monument to its builder, Thomas Rawlins of Kilreege, who died in 1677. It was rebuilt in 1841 and he is the only member of his family now commemorated there.⁵⁴ At Aconbury James, Lord Chandos, who died in 1714, repaired and adorned the church, put up communion rails and built a vault where he was buried. His family acquired property in Aconbury when Mary daughter of John Pearle, married Sir James Brydges in 1627. But the family's connection with the parish was not maintained. Aconbury, with other properties, was sold to the Governors of Guy's Hospital in 1732 and James, Lord Chandos and his father-in-law were the only members of the family to be buried in the vault.⁵⁵

The best documented of the private aisles is at Canon Frome. It was built, with a vault, by the Hoptons, about forty years after the new parish church. The delay was almost certainly due to the family's financial difficulties after the Civil War and the aisle may have replaced a family chapel in the old church. As at Aconbury the entire church was repaired and adorned; a task which included glazing old windows; paving, plastering and whitening the chancel; and the expenses of two men for 113 days "finishing seats". Most of the work was completed between February 1717 and October 1719, but the Hoptons also paid for painting and gilding the font in 1720 and for painting the royal arms in 1723. The total cost was £171.06.03.⁵⁶

53. Above pp. 129-130.

54. R.C.H.M.England. Herefordshire Inventory, 1, p. 168.

55. Robinson, Mansions and Manors, p. 4.

56. H.R.O. R93 LC8351.

Only a few very wealthy families could afford to build and maintain private aisles and those families did not always survive in the parishes where they hoped to establish a dynasty. But their aisles and vaults were part of the fabric of parish churches. The families therefore contributed to the care of churches or to their neglect and were often generous in repairing and adorning the church when they made additions.

Conclusions

Partial rebuilding was undertaken by both communities and individuals. Communities rebuilt towers and turrets only, it seems, when it was strictly necessary because of the cost. Clergy and their relatives, who rebuilt chancels, evidently had money at their disposal, like the families who built aisles and vaults. As with fuller rebuilding of churches and chapels both communal needs and personal wishes played a part. The evidence for these activities is usually slight, difficult to find and difficult to interpret. Physical evidence has been heavily modified or destroyed and archival evidence is incomplete. Some work is recorded only in the notes of local antiquaries or on memorials. But it has to be sought out to achieve a balanced evaluation of the contribution made by communities, families and individuals to the care of churches.

The kind of partial rebuilding which took place between 1662 and 1762 also occurred in the preceding century and the following one, but the evidence is again difficult to find and difficult to interpret. To the period 1563 to 1662 it is only possible to attribute the tower at Bacton, the bell-turret at Huntington near Kington, and the corridor linking the tower to the church at Garway. In the period from 1763 to 1862 seven or eight towers are known to have been rebuilt, two bell-turrets, the nave at Pudleston, built in 1813 and extended with two aisles in 1851 and one north aisle (table 14). But allowance needs to be made for the possibility that some work has been swept away by restoration and further rebuilding,

Table 14. Partial Rebuilding/Building, 1563-1862.

Date	No. of churches	Sections rebuilt/built
1563-1662	04	2 towers, 1 bell turret and 1 corridor
1663-1762	17	9 towers, 3 turrets, 3 chancels, 2 aisles & 1 vault
1763-1787	14	1 tower ?
1788-1837	during	5 towers, 1 nave, 1 north aisle
1838-1862	100 years	2 towers, 2 bell turrets, 2 north aisles & 1 south aisle

particularly since no one has examined the relevant archives.⁵⁷

Archival evidence for the century from 1662 to 1762 has made it possible to add three towers (Wormbridge, Middleton-on-the-Hill and Dinedor) and one bell turret (Brampton Abbots) to the number known to have been rebuilt. It has confirmed and provided more detail about the rebuilding of towers at Eardisley and Byford and a bell-turret at Llanrothal. It has also allowed revised dating of towers and spires at Dilwyn, Shobdon, Canon Frome and Eardisland and points to a slightly earlier date for the new chancel at Bodenham. Its value is therefore twofold in remedying the limitations of church fabrics as evidence. Archives reveal that there was more partial rebuilding than has been realised and they also allow preciser dating in some places. But the archival evidence itself is very incomplete, so any tally of partial rebuilding must still be viewed as too low.

How far the patterns of complete and partial rebuilding which emerge in Herefordshire are characteristic of the Anglican church as a whole it is impossible to say for lack of research. Rebuilding by those who could afford to pay for a modern building is attested by the county lists for England in Whiffen; while work on Lancashire has shown that the Church of England built and rebuilt

57. Figures in this paragraph are based on R.C.H.M. England, Herefordshire Inventory (3 vols, 1931-1934).

churches and chapels in the countryside as necessary.⁵⁸ Partial rebuilding is recorded in inventories and gazetteers where the physical evidence has survived. But until more systematic use is made of diocesan archives, antiquarian notes and local histories, the picture will remain a partial one. And even then gaps in all forms of evidence mean that it will be necessary to acknowledge that any figures are probably an underestimate.

58. M. Whiffen, Stuart and Georgian Churches. The Architecture of the Church of England outside London, 1603-1837 (1948), pp. 107-112; M. Smith, 'The reception of Richard Podmore: Anglicanism in Saddleworth 1700-1830', in Walsh, J., Haydon, C. & Taylor, S., eds, The Church of England c. 1689-1833. From Toleration to Tractarianism (1993), p. 115.

PART TWO. THE CHURCHES

CHAPTER TEN. FURNITURE: THE LITURGY

For like as men are well refreshed and comforted, when they find their houses having all things in good order ... so when Gods house, the Church, is well adorned, with places convenient to sit in, with the Pulpit for the Preacher, with the Lords Table for the ministration of his holy supper, with the Font to Christen in, and is also kept clean, comely and sweetly, the people are more desirous, and more comforted to resort thither, and to tarry there the whole time appointed to them.¹

There have been two major studies of the way in which Anglican churches were ordered after the Restoration.² Both have taken a national perspective, with an emphasis on legal requirements, liturgical centres and European influences.³ But neither they nor anyone else has looked at the relationship between national expectations and what was done locally. This chapter examines that relationship in terms of liturgical centres and the ordering of churches in Herefordshire.

A church exists for a purpose. In it a congregation gathers for public worship: to hear the word of God, to receive sacraments, to thank God for his

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1. 'Homily for repairing and keeping clean, and comely adorning of churches' in Certain Sermons or Homilies Appointed to be Read in Churches ... and Now Thought Fit to be Reprinted by Authority from the Kings Most Excellent Majesty (1673), p. 163.
 2. G.W.O. Addleshaw & F. Etchells, the Architectural Setting of Anglican Worship (1948); N. Yates, Buildings, Faith and Worship. The Liturgical Arrangement of Anglican Churches 1600-1900 (1991, rev. edn 2000).
 3. Above p. 20.

blessings and to give alms to the poor.⁴ It has therefore to be appropriately furnished; and responsibility for providing and maintaining furniture and fittings, in both chancel and nave, fell on the parish. Unless furniture was given, it was paid for out of church rates, except in the case of privately allocated pews and seats, which were maintained by those who had "a right of kneeling".

Communities furnishing churches had to conform to a range of requirements, conventions and expectations. Basic requirements are set out in canon law, but after the Reformation new constitutional and liturgical conventions exerted considerable influence. The break with Rome changed the relationship between the Church of England and the Sovereign as Head of the Church and Defender of the Faith. Subsequently differing traditions within the church led to controversy over how the chancel should be ordered and divergence over the ordering of the nave. There was also an expectation, expressed in the Book of Homilies, that a church should be clean, comely and sweet, implying that the building and its contents should be in good order.

These were the ecclesiastical and constitutional expectations, which are discussed in this chapter. But at parish level, they combined with social conventions and practical needs (discussed in Chapter 11) to produce many complexities. And it is these complexities, as well as costs, which go a long way to explaining why many churches had furniture and fittings of different periods and why change was often piecemeal.

How far furniture in Herefordshire churches was well cared for it is impossible to say. References to furniture and fittings in parish records are few and far between. In the twelve parishes where there are long runs of accounts there are three references to chancel screens, three or four to alms boxes, four to communion tables, six to reading desks, eight to fonts or font covers, thirteen to biers and sixteen to parish chests. This could be taken as evidence that furniture and fittings were neglected. It can equally be seen as evidence that they were

4. 'Homily for repairing ... churches', p.162.

well made, of durable materials and that both furniture and churches were effectively cared for. But simply keeping furniture and fittings in repair was the least of the churchwardens' problems and their accounts give little idea of the demands that furnishing a church could make on a parish.

Law and Convention

The Canons of 1603(1604) specify that every church must have a communion table, pulpit, reading desk, font and alms chest.⁵ The communion table had to stand in its own set place ("suoque certo loco") except at communion, when it might be moved elsewhere in the chancel, so that the minister might be heard more easily and so that more people could communicate conveniently.⁶ The table became a subject of controversy in the sixteen-thirties, over whether it should be placed altar-wise at the east end or table-wise in the centre of the chancel and over whether it should be railed or not. Practice still varied after the Restoration, although the wider introduction of rails meant that, increasingly, the table stood at the east end and communicants knelt at the rails, instead of kneeling before the table in rows, gathering round it or remaining in their seats.⁷

The pulpit had to be conveniently placed, with the ordinary asked to resolve difficulties. And a reading desk had to be provided for the minister to read services.⁸ In Herefordshire a surprising number of parishes did not have both. But no action was taken until Philip Bisse's primary visitation in 1716, when 24 places were cited to build either a pulpit or a desk. Five pleaded lack of space and a decision on these and one other was deferred in court until the

5. 'The Canons of 1603(1604)' in G. Bray, The Anglican Canons 1527-1549, Church of England Records Society 6, (1998), Canons 81-84.

6. 'Canons of 1603 (1604), Canon 82.

7. Addleshaw & Etchells, Anglican Worship, pp. 112-132; Yates, Buildings, Faith and Worship, pp. 31-32.

8. 'Canons of 1603 (1604)', Canons 82 & 83.

Bishop' return.⁹ There is no record of his decisions, but in December 1717 one incumbent was still explaining that he could not install a desk without depriving parishioners of a seat, which they were "very unwilling to part with, unless compelled to it".¹⁰ Later several other places were later found to lack one or the other and Aylton, cited in 1719, was given a dispensation because the church was so small.¹¹ Yet at Moreton-on-Lugg, another very small church, the prebendary of the peculiar ruled in 1721 that a reading desk should be placed on the north side of the chancel and the chancel re-ordered to accommodate it.¹²

The font had to be of stone, but not all Herefordshire parishes complied.¹³ Aston Ingham still has a large lead font dated 1689. Hentland in 1667 listed a pewter basin for christenings and did not record a font as well until 1705.¹⁴ Titley, too, probably had a pewter bowl. When the new church was completed in 1763 the parish bought "a wrought iron stand for the font"; and Bird, in 1842, found what he describes as a "pewter barber's basin" on a wrought iron stand.¹⁵ Some fonts were damaged or destroyed during the Civil War, but it is impossible to say how many. Only six parishes are recorded as repairing or replacing fonts

9. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 109, pp. 1-27.

10. H.R.O. HD7/43, letter from the rector of Bredenbury, 18 December 1717.

11. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 109, p. 45v.

12. James Hill's manuscripts, vol. 1, p. 179; H.R.O. HD7/18/310.

13. 'Canons of 1603 (1604)', Canon 81. 14. H.R.O. N13/1.

14. 'Homily for repairing ... churches', p.162.

15. H.R.O. AB56/21; C.J. Bird, 'Herefordshire collections, historical, biographical and topographical. Volume 12 containing an account of the visitation of parish churches', p. 25.

The final requirement of canon law was an alms chest, with three keys, held by the minister and churchwardens, who were required to distribute the money given for the poor.¹⁷ Alms chests do not feature in contemporary visitation articles and there is only one unequivocal reference in a Herefordshire churchwarden's account, at Whitbourne in 1678, when new keys were provided and the locks, hinges and hasps repaired.¹⁸ There are more ambiguous references to "boxes", at Whitbourne in 1709, and at Edwin Ralph in 1731 and 1741.¹⁹ But there seems no way of establishing whether alms chests were still a normal part of the furniture of a parish church.

After the Reformation parishes had to take account of the Sovereign's new status as Defender of the Faith and Head of the Church of England and also of changing liturgical practice. A Protestant liturgy, with a strong bias towards teaching and preaching, superseded the Roman liturgy in which the sacrament of the mass was central. More specifically, in England and Wales, the communion service itself became a focus of controversy in the early seventeenth century. Disagreement over the position of the communion table was linked with a dispute over altar rails, which stemmed fundamentally from differences over how communion should be received by the congregation and how far reverence was due to the holy table. Developments therefore centred round the royal arms and the communion table.

Royal and episcopal directives in the fifteen-sixties decreed that chancel

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16. Brinsop, H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 115, Weston Deanery, 24 January 1662/3; Eaton Bishop, R.C.H.M. England, An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Herefordshire (3 vols, 1931-1934) 1, p. 60; Lugwardine, H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 99, p. 44v.; Mordiford, HD7/4/92, 126; Sutton St. Michael, H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 99, pp. 211-212, 268v.; vol. 100, p. 95; Wormbridge, H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 100, p. 5v.
17. 'Canons of 1603(1604)', Canon 84.
18. H.R.O. AL92/1. 19. H.R.O. AL92/1; N20/2.

screens should be retained, with the royal arms replacing the rood loft. Functionally the screen separated the chancel, reserved for the eucharist, matrimony and the churching of women, from the nave used for morning and evening prayer, sermons and baptisms.²⁰ In Herefordshire screens were probably the norm in medieval churches, but they were not always installed in the new churches of the eighteenth century. Royal arms were first given prominence in churches under Henry VIII and were a reminder of the sovereign's position as head of the church on earth and an expression of loyalty.²¹ Their symbolic nature is perhaps underlined by the fact that they were not necessarily repainted on the accession of a new monarch. But the symbolism was potent. Belief in the divine right of kings might be shot through with ambiguities by the eighteenth century, but it remained "embedded in the popular consciousness in that grey area where folklore and popular religion joined"; and there was some shift towards a perception of allegiance to the Crown rather than the individual monarch.²² In Herefordshire the royal arms were repainted from time to time, but it is not always certain that they were updated.²³ The surviving arms at Monnington and Tyberton are those provided when the churches were completed in 1680 and 1722 respectively.²⁴ But later versions may have been painted on the walls, as they

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- 20. Addleshaw & Etchells, Anglican Worship, pp. 37-41; Yates, Buildings, Faith and Worship, p. 31.
 - 21. Addleshaw & Etchells, Anglican Worship, pp. 35, 101-102.
 - 22. J.C.D. Clark, English Society 1688-1832. Ideology, Social Structure and Political Practice during the Ancien Regime (1st ed., 1985), p. 162; W. Gibson, The Church of England, 1688-1832. Unity and Accord (2001), pp. 41-42.
 - 23. At Pencombe in 1687 & 1717, H.R.O. L33/7; Whitbourne in 1714, H.R.O. AL92/1; Eaton Bishop in 1714, H.R.O. N25/30; and Edwin Ralph in 1750, H.R.O. N20/2.
 - 24. N. Pevsner, The Buildings of England. Herefordshire (1963), pp. 255, 302.

were at Abbey Dore, where the arms of Charles I surmount the screen and traces of the arms of Queen Anne survive on the north wall of the nave.²⁵

Altar rails were introduced under Elizabeth, but were particularly recommended by Archbishop Laud to protect communion tables from casual use and from being fouled by dogs. But by the sixteen-thirties they had become a cause of fervent dispute, not least because of the intransigent attitudes of the contestants.²⁶ Eventually, from the late seventeenth century, they were slowly accepted, because, as a contemporary commentator put it,

Since the Restoration no positive determination being made, in the review of the Common Prayer, the dispute has very happily died; and tables have generally been set altar-wise and railed in, without any opposition thereto; the generality of all parishioners esteeming it a very decent situation, they coming of themselves to a good liking of it, which they could not be brought to, by the too rigid methods heretofore used.²⁷

As rails were not compulsory they do not feature in visitation articles, but their introduction in Herefordshire can be traced to some extent over a period of about 50 years. The earliest reference is at Whitbourne in 1685, where they were made of timber given by the Bishop of Hereford who had a summer palace there.²⁸ The latest is at Westhide in 1748, where they were paid for by the rector of Stoke Edith.²⁹ Elsewhere they were given by lay people and parish clergy or paid for

25. J. Tonkin & D. Monger, 'The wall paintings and texts', in R. Shoesmith & R. Richardson, eds, A Definitive History of Dore Abbey (1997), pp. 182-183.

26. Addleshaw & Etchells, Anglican Worship, pp. 121-122, 128-133; Yates, Buildings, Faith and Worship., pp. 31-32.

27. W. Nicholls, Commentary on the Book of Common Prayer (1710), quoted in Addleshaw & Etchells, Anglican Worship, p. 155.

28. H.R.O. AL92/1. 29. H.R.O. AA69/2.

The setting of the communion table could be enhanced by stained glass, an altar piece or a ceilure. Only the wealthy could afford stained glass or an altar piece. The Scudamores led the way with stained glass and an altar piece at Abbey Dore in 1634 and an east window at Sellack in 1640.³¹ Later the same traditions continued. At Foy an east window, copied from Sellack, was installed in the chancel in 1675; at Tyberton an altar piece was installed in 1728 and Shobdon had contemporary stained glass in 1756.³² Croft still has a ceilure attributed to the early eighteenth century and possibly provided by the son of Herbert Croft, the bishop.³³ But by this period ceilures were going out of use. In 1737, the churchwarden at Kingstone presented "The Ancient boarded Cielling that was like Wainscott fixt to y^e roof, over y^e Communion Table, to be decaide and Rotten & part of it fallen down & much out of Repaire, but whose ... it is to repair I cant tell ...".³⁴ No decision is recorded and it was probably doubts like

30. At Titley in 1678 and Eaton Bishop in 1709 out of the rates, H.R.O. AB56/24, AH50/2; at Winforton in 1701 by Lady Jane Holman, H.R.O. F83/4; and at Yarkhill in 1740 with a contribution from Thomas Foley, H.R.O. E12/iv/40.
31. M. Gibson, A View of the Ancient and Present State of the Churches of Door, Home Lacy and Hempstead, endowed by the Right Honourable John, Lord Viscount Scudamore ... (1727), pp. 37-38; J. Hillaby, 'Beauty of holiness': the east window' in Shoesmith & Richardson, eds, Dore Abbey, pp. 188-194.
32. Pevsner, Herefordshire, p. 302; R.C.H.M. (England), Herefordshire Inventory, 2, pp. 65-66; J.J. Cartwright, The Travels through England of Dr. Richard Pococke ... Camden Society New Series 42 & 44 (2 vols, 1888-1889), 2, p. 220.
33. R.C.H.M. (England), Herefordshire Inventory, 3, p. 34; C.J. Robinson, A History of the Mansions and Manors of Herefordshire (1872), p. 82.
34. H.R.O. HD7/57.

these, as well as a changed liturgical emphasis, that led to their disappearance.

The evidence, to some extent, reveals how far legal requirements relating to furniture were strictly enforced, but there are only indications as to how Herefordshire followed conventions affecting the royal arms and the communion table. It is, however, possible in a few places to discover how the chancel and nave were ordered and, therefore, to gain further insight into the influence of contemporary doctrine and practice.

The Arrangement of Furniture

The arrangement of furniture in post-Reformation churches was determined by the division of the church into two rooms: the chancel used first and foremost for communion and the nave for preaching and for morning and evening prayer. Morning and evening prayer and the litany were always read from a desk in the nave, but uncertainty surrounded the reading of altar prayers and the question of when the communicants went up into the chancel. The rubric at the beginning of the communion service in the Book of Common Prayer directs the priest to stand at the north side of the table, and the Laudians took the view that this position was to be adopted for altar prayers. But the Puritans disliked the practice and by the eighteenth century, if not earlier, altar prayers were usually taken from the reading desk.³⁵

In the Prayer Book of 1549 a rubric directs communicants to move into the chancel at the offertory and to remain there. This was dropped in 1552 and in 1559, but the practice continued. Seats for the communicants were placed either round the communion table or along the walls of the chancel, and mats or rushes laid on the floor.³⁶ The table was usually placed table-wise in the middle of the chancel, an arrangement regularised by the Canons of 1604.³⁷ But the practice caused problems when large numbers gathered round an unprotected table; and it

35. Addleshaw and Etchells, *Anglican Worship*, pp. 69, 72-73.

36. Addleshaw and Etchells, *Anglican Worship*, pp. 113, 175.

37. Yates, *Buildings, Faith and Worship*, p. 31.

offended Puritans who preferred to receive communion in their pews. But the Puritan practice, too, caused inconvenience and aroused suspicions of irreverence.³⁸

The Laudian solution was to place the table at the east end of the chancel, preferably behind a rail, and to bring the communicants into the chancel for the communion itself when they knelt at the rails or, before an unrailed altar, along the chancel steps, where mats might be laid.³⁹ Initially this solution provoked objections. It was well suited to churches where the chancel was full of tombs or where it was small, whether in a medieval or an auditory church. But it carried the disadvantage that a screen or pulpit and reading pew at the head of the nave could prevent people from seeing the consecration. After the Restoration practice varied, with some parishes holding more frequent communion services in order to reduce the number of communicants on each occasion.⁴⁰

The ordering of the nave was not as controversial as that of the chancel, but there were choices to be made. The font was usually, though not invariably, at the west end.⁴¹ The pulpit and reading desk might stand at the east end of the nave, either to one side or in the centre; or they might be placed somewhere on the north or south wall. Sometimes they were combined in one piece of furniture, sometimes they were separate and might be placed on opposite sides of the church; while in auditory churches they might be at the east end on either side of the communion table. Generally speaking parishioners were free to choose an arrangement, with the ordinary empowered to settle any "questions".⁴²

In Herefordshire there is evidence for the contemporary ordering of both

38. Addleshaw and Etchells, *Anglican Worship*, pp. 119-120.

39. Addleshaw & Etchells, *Anglican Worship*, pp. 122-123.

40. Addleshaw & Etchells, *Anglican Worship*, pp. 177-178.

41. Yates, *Buildings, Faith and Worship*, pp. 34-35; Addleshaw and Etchells, *Anglican Worship*, pp. 64-68.

42. Addleshaw and Etchells, *Anglican Worship*, pp. 68-88, 179-200; 'Canons of 1603(1604), Canon 83.

nave and chancel in only six churches, two medieval and four early modern. There is also evidence for the ordering of one of the two churches which, in 1662, would have provided obvious local models. At Abbey Dore part of the Cistercian church was restored in 1634 by John, Viscount Scudamore, a close friend of Archbishop Laud.⁴³ At Brampton Bryan the church was rebuilt in 1656 by Sir Robert Harley, a notable Puritan.⁴⁴ The chancel at Abbey Dore is separated from the nave by a screen surmounted by the royal arms. The communion table, backed by a carved altar piece with stained glass windows above, stood at the east end behind rails running north and south. Otherwise the chancel was empty except for the reading desk and the minister's pew. The pulpit, font, pews and gallery stood west of the screen.⁴⁵ The chancel provided a significant model, but since the nave consisted of the crossing and transepts of the abbey church, its arrangement remained unique in Herefordshire (plate 1a). Unfortunately the Puritan furnishings at Brampton Bryan have gone, but it was rebuilt as an auditory church and was possibly furnished on the lines of St. James Piccadilly (plates 1b & c).⁴⁶ It may, however, have followed the plan adopted at Rug Chapel near Corwen in 1637, where a canopied pulpit and pew flanked the table at the east end.⁴⁷

Of the six churches where there is evidence for the ordering of both nave and chancel between 1662 and 1762 four have long chancels and two have

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- 43. J. Hillaby, 'Calvinists and anti-Calvinists', in Shoesmith & Richardson, eds, *Dore Abbey*, pp. 157-162.
 - 44. J. Eales, *Puritans and Roundheads. The Harleys of Brampton Bryan and the Outbreak of the Civil War* (1990), pp. 10, 38, 53-60.
 - 45. I. Atherton, 'Viscount Scudamore's 'Laudianism': the Religious Practices of the First Viscount Scudamore', *Historical Journal*, 34 (1991), p. 586; M. Gibson, *Door, Home Lacy and Hempstead; ... (1727)*, pp. 37-38.
 - 46. Addleshaw & Etchells, *Anglican Worship*, pp. 53-56.
 - 47. Addleshaw and Etchells, *Anglican Worship*, p. 180.

shallow ones. All have western towers and no aisles, except Much Marcle, which has a central tower with north and south aisles embracing the tower. At Monnington the new church of 1680 has a Laudian chancel with the table at the east end behind straight rails. At one time there were two settles in the chancel and the arms of Charles II surmounted the screen.⁴⁸ The pulpit and reading desk stand at the south-east corner of the nave and the font is at the west end. At Winforton, with a long chancel, the medieval church was re-ordered between 1701 and 1707. A new communion table and three-sided rails were given for the chancel, while in the nave the pulpit and reading desk were moved to the middle of the south wall. Box pews were placed east and west of the pulpit and, possibly, on the north wall as well, and windows altered to improve the light.⁴⁸ There is no mention of a screen or furniture in the chancel but given the arrangements in the nave, it seems likely that there was a screen and a pew for the rector's family.

Much Marcle in 1716 exhibits an unusual ordering of space in a very large medieval church (plate 2). The screen was placed half way down the chancel. East of the screen was an "alter" with three-sided rails and seats lining the screen and part of the north and south walls. The outer part of the chancel was filled with pews facing the pulpit, reading desk and clerk's seat, grouped together at the north-east angle of the crossing, with the font at the west end. Thus, by incorporating the western half of the chancel into the nave and filling it with pews, the parish had created a central pulpit while retaining its traditional place at the head of the nave.⁵⁰ Six years later, in 1722, the new church at Tyberton was completed with a long Laudian chancel. The communion table is enclosed within an apsidal altar piece behind straight rails and the rest of the chancel is empty. There is no screen and the royal arms were placed over the arch. The nave is

48. Bird, 'Herefordshire collections', vol. 12, p. 136.

49. H.R.O. F83/4.

50. Hill's mss. vol. 3, inserts between pages 144 & 145 and at the end of the volume.

arranged with pews facing the pulpit at the east end and the font at the west end.

It is probably coincidence that the two churches built in 1680 and 1722 on a medieval ground plan are Laudian, while the two older churches for which evidence survives are not. But it is impossible to deduce trends from four examples alone and the evidence from other parishes is too scanty to provide much clarification. The slow introduction ~~introduction~~ of altar rails suggests that the east end became the accepted place for the communion table, but it tells us nothing about how chancels were ordered before the introduction of rails. There is, however, evidence, that as late as 1721 the table at Moreton-on-Lugg was set tablewise in the centre of the chancel. When the church was re-ordered to include to include a reading desk, the desk was put in the chancel and the table moved to the east end to stand "endways north and south".⁵¹

At Dilwyn in the sixteen-eighties, the pulpit stood two bays west of the screen on the north side and the desk one bay west on the south side. Most of the pews faced east, but there were pews for the principal households facing west and north in front of the screen and in the south aisle (plate 3).⁵² This arrangement reflects those at Winforton and Much Marcle; but by contrast pulpits were moved back to the east end at Stretton Grandison in 1664 and at Almeley in 1743. At Stretton Grandison the pulpit was moved from the north wall, almost opposite the main door, to the south-east end of the nave, displacing an unlicensed pew and part of the rood loft which was placed under the chancel arch with the royal arms.⁵³ At Almeley a faculty was granted to move the pulpit from "an ill situation" to the north-east end of the nave and to place two pews adjoining the

51. H.R.O. HD7/18/310.

52. J.G. Nicholls, History from Marble. Compiled in the Reign of Charles II by Thomas Dingley, Gent., Camden Society Old Series 97 (1868), p. cclvi.

53. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 99, pp. 211-212.

chancel screen where the pulpit had stood.⁵⁴

By the time Almeley was re-ordered, the new church at Stoke Edith had been completed and plans were probably in hand to rebuild Shobdon.⁵⁵ In both churches the number of liturgical centres is reduced in accordance with post-Restoration trends.⁵⁶ But the practice was probably not new in the county. It had almost certainly been followed at Brampton Bryan in 1656. Stoke Edith is an auditory church of five bays with Tuscan columns separating the end bays from the centre of the church. The communion table below the east window has three-sided rails and the three-decker pulpit stands at the east end of the nave close to the table, with the font at the west end. Shobdon is cruciform with a shallow chancel and shallow transepts where the Batemans and their servants sat.⁵⁷ The communion table is under the east window and the chancel is separated from the crossing by straight rails. A three-decker pulpit stands at the north-east corner of the crossing, with the font on the south side before the Bateman's pew. Neither church has the royal arms but, conceivably, by the mid-eighteenth century, major landowners could ignore the convention with confidence. Nor is there any indication of texts.

The Herefordshire evidence scant though it is, appears to show that both medieval and Protestant traditions continued to exist, subject to the influence of newer ideas; and that both clergy and laity understood that they had freedom to choose. How far there was dissension over the ordering of individual churches it is impossible to say, but the authority of the diocese was invoked to move the pulpits at Stretton Grandison, Winforton and Almeley, which suggests that not everyone was happy with the new arrangements. Other factors, too, may have come into play. The growth of literacy and the availability of cheaper bibles and prayer books allowed more people to follow services in print; while larger

54. H.R.O. AL19/22, pp. 98v.-99.

55. Above pp. 137-139.

56. Addleshaw & Etchells, *Anglican Worship*, pp. 179-182.

57. Cartwright, *The Travels of Richard Pococke ...*, 2, p. 220.

windows improved light and reduced wall space for texts. Simultaneously changes in burial practice resulted in wall monuments replacing ledger stones. The ordering and decor of churches may therefore reflect social as well as liturgical and architectural trends; with landowners determining what happened in the churches they rebuilt, and clergy and ratepayers taking decisions in the older churches.

Conclusions

It seems that the legal requirements relating to church furniture were generally respected, although it took nearly a decade for some parishes to acquire a font after the Restoration. But a significant minority of parishes did not have both pulpit and reading desk until Philip Bisse enforced stricter standards in 1716. The churchwardens who had failed to present this deficiency were arguably negligent. But they would undoubtedly have been acting in accordance with the wishes of the communities they represented, which were probably influenced by difficulties stemming from lack of space, lack of money and the need to respect pew allocations. And, as with the fabric, the clergy and the courts did not think it appropriate to intervene and assume the legal responsibilities of the wardens. None one, however, apparently questioned Bisse's right to demand compliance with canon law and it is a pity there is not fuller evidence about the parishes which demurred.

The exact arrangement of furniture was governed not by law, but by varying influences within the Church of England, some deriving from Europe. Yates sets out a chronology of conservatism, experiment and a return to older traditions.⁵⁸ But the Herefordshire evidence is too limited to allow any firm deductions to be made about local trends, something which would probably apply elsewhere. Documentary evidence is sparse and the post-Restoration arrangements were largely destroyed by the Victorians. What seems clear is that communities and individuals alike knew they had choices and expected to make

58. Yates, *Buildings, Faith and Worship*, pp. 223-123.

them. So it would be rash to assume that communities were necessarily indifferent or negligent in ordering their churches, particularly since lay people collectively and individually made gifts of furniture.⁵⁹ The reality of debate may be evident, too, in the faculties to move the pulpits at Stretton Grandison, Winforton and Almeley. More remarkably, when the chancel was re-ordered at Moreton-on-Lugg in 1721, the prebendary of the peculiar and his registrar travelled some five miles from Hereford to hold a court in the parish church, so that the community could be present when decisions were made.⁶⁰

Nicholls' comments on altar rails are also more widely relevant.⁶¹ The Anglican Church seems to have realised that lay people were more likely to take a constructive interest in the ordering of parish churches if they were allowed to take their own decisions with the minimum of official intervention. Significantly, too, the very vagueness of the rubrics in the Book of Common Prayer and the Canons of 1603(1604) suggests that the authorities saw no need to provoke trouble or create practical problems by rigid enforcement of any particular arrangement. Stepping back from conflict was a matter of good pastoral care and common sense rather than a matter of negligence. Differing traditions therefore continued side by side, with some of the new ideas re-inforced by the introduction of auditory churches where there was a stronger integration of nave and chancel and a tendency to group rather than separate liturgical centres. On the other hand these developments were constrained locally by the fact that most congregations continued to worship in churches with a medieval ground plan.

In spite of detailed use of diocesan and parish records, it has proved impossible to find more than a little evidence as to how churches in Herefordshire were ordered. But it seems that lay people enjoyed considerable autonomy. This was nothing new. Lay assertiveness vis-a-vis the church hierarchy can be

59. Below pp.241-243; 259-261.

60. H.R.O. HD7/18/310.

61. Above p.169.

discerned far back in the middle ages; and the way in which lay people built on that tradition has been traced by Claire Cross down to the Restoration and its immediate aftermath.⁶² In such an environment lay people made full use of their freedom to order churches as they wished. The result was considerable variety.

62. C. Cross, Church and People, 1450-1669. The Triumph of the Laity in the English Church (1976); J. Spurr, The Restoration Church of England, 1646-1689 (1991), pp. 42-67.

PART TWO. THE CARE OF CHURCHES.

CHAPTER ELEVEN. FURNITURE: SEATING

A Peiw is a certain place in church incompassed with wainscott, or some other thing, for several persons to sitt togeather. A seat or kneeling (for in this case they are the same) in such part of a Peiw, as belongs to one families or person. And a peiw may beelong whoaly to one family or it may beelong to two or three familieys or more. The disposall of Seates in the body of the Church does beelong to the ordinary, and no man can claime a right to a seate without prescription or some other good reason, ... A peiw or seat does not beelong to a person or to land, butt to an house, therfore if a man remove from an house to dwell in another, hee shall not retaine the seat belonging to the first house.¹

Church seating has been the province of local rather than ecclesiastical historians and their studies have looked, in particular, at the way in which seating reflected the social hierarchy and social tensions.² There has been only one full-scale study of seating arrangements and disputes which has shown that disputes were concerned with the building and maintenance of pews, as much as with rights of ownership and occupancy; and that they were characteristic of certain periods, areas and ranks within society.³ For the ecclesiastical authorities seating was of

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1. R. Gough, The History of Myddle, (Penguin edn, 1977), p. 77.
 2. N. Allderidge, 'Loyalty and identity in Chester 1540-1640', in S. Wright, ed., Parish, Church and People (1988), pp. 85-124; A. Flather, the Politics of Place: A Study of Church Seating in Essex, c. 1580-1640 (1999).
 3. K.B. Dillow, 'The social and ecclesiastical significance of church seating arrangements and pew disputes, 1500-1740,' unpubl. D. Phil. thesis, University of Oxford, 1990, pp. 190-210.

secondary importance. The paramount consideration in furnishing churches was compliance with the legal requirements relating to liturgical centres, coupled with due regard for constitutional and liturgical tradition.

But the Book of Homilies draws attention to the need for "seats convenient to sit in" as an inducement for people to attend and stay throughout the services.⁴ And custom decreed that pews and seats should reflect the social hierarchy, displayed primarily in the position of pews in relation to the pulpit, so that moving the pulpit had significant implications.⁵ But there were many who had no right to a seat, for whom the parish made provision: servants, the poor, children and musicians. There were, too, practical problems to solve, which had nothing to do with parish custom or the social hierarchy, but which contributed considerably to the convenience of seating and which therefore had an influence.

Provision of Seating

Seating was paid for by the ratepayers, except for pews which were privately maintained. The right to allocate seats belonged to the ordinary, who was specifically responsible for assigning the principal seat in the chancel, usually reserved for the rector, lay or clerical. In the nave churchwardens generally made the arrangements in accordance with local practice.⁶ Strictly speaking local hierarchies were not the concern of the diocese and when seats were allocated at Stoke Edith in 1585 the aim of avoiding controversy over the

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4. 'Homily for repairing and keeping clean, and comely adorning of churches', in Certain Sermons and Homilies Appointed to be Read in Churches ... and Now thought Fit to be Reprinted by Authority from the Kings Most Excellent Majesty (1673), p. 163.
 5. Gough, Myddle, p. 77; D. Hey, ed., The Oxford Companion to Local and Family History (1996), pp. 90, 348.
 6. Gough, Myddle, p. 77; R. Burn, Ecclesiastical Law (2 vols, 1763), 1, p. 254.

upper seats was condemned as "a point of mere folly and vaine Glory."⁷ But more than a century later communal expectation had prevailed; and when the Chancellor of the Diocese appointed a commission to allocate seats at Orleton in 1722 he instructed its members to pay due regard to the quality of the persons and the value of the estates.⁸

Controversies which were insoluble at parish level seem to have been rare. A dispute over the two seats allocated to Court of Showle at Stoke Edith, in 1680, was settled by the Bishop.⁹ But a convoluted dispute over a seat at Much Marcle was apparently settled without official intervention.¹⁰ However apprehension of disputes was real and it was for this reason that the parish of Orleton asked the Diocese to allot new seats in 1722.¹¹ Part of the problem stemmed from the fact that at Orleton, and also at Little Hereford in the same year, there were ratepayers who had no seat although they contributed to the maintenance of the church.¹² At Little Hereford, too, the pulpit had been moved, as it was at Winforton in 1707 and at Almeley in 1743.¹³

Another pressure facing parishes was the need for extra seating, whether for ratepayers or for others. One way of creating additional seats to rebuild all the pews out of the rates.¹⁴ When there were surplus seats, they were probably occupied by those without a seat.¹⁵ But it was common practice was to provide

7. H.R.O. AL19/19, p. 154v. 8. H.R.O. AL19/21, p. 94.

9. H.R.O. AL19/19, pp. 154v.-157; J72/9.

10. James Hill's manuscripts, vol. 3, inserts between pages 144 & 145 and at the end of the volume.

11. H.R.O. AL19/21, p. 93v.

12. H.R.O. AL19/21, p. 93v.; H.C.A. 4464/18.

13. H.C.L. 4464/18; H.R.O. F83/4; AL19/21, pp. 93v.-95.

14. As at Orleton H.R.O. AL19/21, p. 93v. and Little Hereford H.C.A. 4464/18 in 1722.

15. Stoke Edith had 17 vacant seats in 1680, including 12 in a block at the back of the church. H.R.O. J72/9.

benches.¹⁶ If there were enough pews some would be set aside for servants, with priority being given to the servants of the principal households and the parishioners' maids.¹⁷ Some parishes set aside seats for children. At Titley in 1736 there was a single bench.¹⁸ At the other extreme Holme Lacy, in 1663, reserved seats for children in almost all the pews assigned to householders, as well as forms in and before the north chapel.¹⁹

Another way to extend seating was to build galleries. As with the movement of pulpits, it is not clear (a) that faculty was essential for building a gallery. No faculty survives for the gallery first mentioned at Titley in 1705 or for the private gallery erected at Eaton Bishop in 1715 with the "Unanimous Consent of the parishioners".²⁰ But faculties for private galleries were granted at Whitchurch in 1726 and at Bodenham in 1728;²¹ and for parish galleries at Garway in 1744, Lyonshall in 1755 and Orleton in 1756.²² The gallery at Garway was for general use and that at Orleton for singers, servants and those without seats, a significant indication that the new pews built for the ratepayers in 1722 did not meet seating requirements indefinitely. The gallery at Lyonshall was for singers, as was a gallery erected at Kingstone about 1720.²³ And there is still an early eighteenth century gallery at Clodock, with a musicians' table which is

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16. Brampton Abbots 1679, H.R.O. AA15/18; Whitbourne 1680, H.R.O. AL92/1; Winforton 1708, H.R.O. F83/4; Eaton Bishop 1736, H.R.O. N25/8; Madley 1753, H.R.O. BK52/39.
17. Holme Lacy B.L. Add. Mss 11044, pp. 270-273.; Stoke Edith, J72/9; Much Marcle, Hill's mss vol. 3, inserts between pp. 144 & 145 and at the end of the volume; Little Hereford H.C.A. 4464/18.
18. H.R.O. AB56/30. 19. B.L. Add. Mss 11044, pp. 270-273.
20. H.R.O. AB56/24; N25/10.
21. H.R.O. AL19/22, p. 14v.; AL19/22, p. 24.
22. H.R.O. AL19/22, pp. 101v.-102; AL91/22, p. 158; AL19/23, p. 8.
23. H.R.O. HD7/57.

If the parishioners could agree over the siting of a gallery, it seems they could avoid the expense of a faculty.²⁵ But the problems which occurred at Kingstone show all too graphically what might happen if a faculty was not obtained. Those who subscribed to the gallery there did not consult the parish before putting it up; it blocked the south and west windows and the stairs encroached on a pew. By 1737 it had sagged, blocking the west door so that corpses could not be carried in for funerals. The churchwarden was also afraid that it might collapse when full of people at a festival.²⁶ In August 1737 the churchwardens were ordered "to remove several obstructions which are prejudicial to the church". But in November a decision about the gallery was deferred and the case disappears from the act book in October 1738 with no decision recorded.²⁷

Similar problems could occur with private pews. The authority of the diocese was invoked to remove unlicensed private pews at Stretton Grandison in 1664 and Madley in 1716;²⁸ while later in the eighteenth century the bishops' registers contain a growing number of licences reserving the exclusive use of a pew to one or, more rarely, two households.²⁹ It is not clear whether these were new pews or existing ones. But the licences probably reflect pressure on space, as much as social tensions. The floor area of the pews is always carefully specified. It was also the case that gentry families were contracting or dying out;

24. R.C.H.M. England, An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Herefordshire, (3 vols, 1931-1934), 1, p. 180.

25. The faculty for rebuilding Stoke Edith church in 1740 cost £3.08.05, as much as some parishes raised annually in church rates. H.R.O. E12/iv/174/3.

26. H.R.O. HD7/57. 27. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 110, p. 15v.

28. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 99, pp. 211-212; HD4/1, vol. 109, p. 5v.

29. H.R.O. AL19/21-23.

and their properties were sometimes bought by people from the market towns, who were wealthier than their new neighbours, but not very different in their social origins.³⁰

Measuring the extent to which parishes provided seats for everyone is exceedingly difficult, especially since levels of attendance were undoubtedly reduced by sickness, frailty and the care of very small children.³¹ There is also the evidence from Kingstone that congregations were larger at festivals, an indication that some people attended church sporadically. But it is possible to draw limited conclusions by comparing lists of seats with the Hearth Tax of 1671 (table 15).

Table 15. House and Household Numbers

Parish	Houses 1671			H'holds with Seats	
	Charged	Exempt	Total	No.	Date
Holme Lacy	34 (63%)	20	54	56	1663
Stoke Edith	26 (52%)	24	50	46	1680
Little Hereford	37 (61%)	24	61	72	1722
Orleton	56 (64%)	32	88	106	1722

At Holme Lacy the number of households on the seating plan of 1663 exceeds the total number of houses in 1671 by two. At Stoke Edith in 1680 it is smaller than the number of houses in 1671 by four, but five of the seats allocated in 1585 are empty. These figures suggest that the aim in the late seventeenth century was to accommodate all householders, including the poorest. But at Orleton and Little Hereford by 1722 the population had outgrown the churches. At Little Hereford there were 72 households entitled to a kneeling by prescription or by virtue of paying rates, in a parish where 61 houses were recorded in 1671. At Orleton,

30. C.J. Robinson, A History of the Mansions and Manors of Herefordshire (1872).

31. J.H. Bettey, Church and Parish. An Introduction for Local Historians (1987), p. 90.

which had 88 houses in 1671, 106 households received seats in 1722 and a gallery for a musicians, servants and others was added in 1756. Clearly the population and the number of households was increasing and older seating arrangements were no longer adequate.

Limited though the evidence is, it does indicate that parishes made an effort to provide seating for everyone. It is perhaps surprising that there are not more faculties for galleries. But this may be because parishes were able to agree on the installation of galleries without invoking the authorities and incurring expense. The increase in licences for private pews was probably due to both lack of space and social tensions. And those tensions sprang from the expectation that the allocation of pews would reflect a hierarchy of households which inevitably could not remain static.³²

Seats and the Social Hierarchy

By 1662 the practice of assigning seats to properties in accordance with the hierarchy of houses was well-established, as the evidence from Stoke Edith confirms.³³ But there were complexities. The hierarchy shifted over time and new properties were added. In addition local hierarchies were specific to each parish and, even in the country side, not entirely simple.³⁴ In these circumstances it is not surprising to find that different parishes adopted differing approaches. At Stoke Edith, Little Hereford and Orleton the seating corresponded to a complex hierarchy in detail; at Holme Lacy and Winforton the arrangements reflect a less structured approach; while at Winforton and Much Marcle the problems of hierarchy were partially solved by allocating seats to only a minority of households (table 16). At Stoke Edith and Little Hereford the leading gentry alone had their own pews, with additional pews or seats for their servants. For

32. J. Maltby, Prayer Book and People in Elizabeth and Early Stuart England (1998), p. 198.

33. Allderidge, 'Loyalty and identity', pp. 94-97; H.R.O. AL19/19, p. 154v.

34. Allderidge, 'Loyalty and identity', pp. 94, 97; Gough, Myddle, p. 83.

households with two or three seats, those seats were in different pews so that adults from the same household sat apart. At Little Hereford this was formalised into a division between men and women, with pews for men at the front, pews for women in the middle of the nave and pews (but not seats) for men and women intermingled at the back.³⁵ At Orleton, by contrast, the parishioners asked that men and their wives should sit together. The pews there were of varying sizes

Table 16. Numbers of Houses with Pews & Seats

Parish & Date	Pews	Seats			Total Houses
		3-5	2	1	
Stoke Edith 1680	1	1	11	33	46
Little Hereford 1722	2	6	32	32	72
Orleton 1722	41	7	34	24	106
Holme Lacy 1663	3	44	9	0	56
Winforton 1707	1 ¹	1	11	0	13
Much Marcle 1716	8 ²				8

1. The tenant of the manor paid for 12 seats.

2. There were also about 35 pews to which various families "pretended" a title.

with two, three or five seats in each, so that 41 houses had their own pews and households with two or three seats had all their seats in the same pew.³⁶

At Holme Lacy and Winforton social differences were not so precisely reflected. At Holme Lacy the Scudamores, their steward and the vicar's wife had pews, while the majority of householders had three seats each, in a pew with six seats, one being reserved for a child.³⁷ At Winforton there was a levy of two shillings and sixpence for two seats for each household, with the men sitting "above" the pulpit and the women "below". Eleven families paid the basic levy

35. H.R.O. J72/9; H.C.A. 4464/18.

36. H.R.O. AL91/21, pp. 93v.-95.

37. B.L. Add. Mss 11044, pp. 270-273.

and two paid more.³⁸ As Winforton had a total of 59 houses in 1671, of which only 30 paid hearth tax, there was not only a flat hierarchy but only a minority of houses possessed seats in the church.³⁹ The same was true at Much Marcle. Eight households had pews and kneelings for themselves, their servants and tenants in a parish where 105 out of 158 houses had paid hearth tax in 1671. But there were about 35 other pews in which "families of the parish" laid a firm, if informal, claim to kneelings.⁴⁰

The status of households was expressed not only in terms of whether they occupied a pew or seats, but in terms of how close they sat to the pulpit. There are also a few hints that a clear view of the chancel was valued; a significant factor in parishes where the communicants went into the chancel for communion itself and not at the offertory. At Holme Lacy the pulpit apparently stood at the south-east end of the south aisle and the Scudamore family, in pews at the head of the nave, had an uninterrupted view into the chancel (plate 4).⁴¹ At Stoke Edith each pew had five seats with the first next to the wall. Court of Showle had two seats in the pew next to the pulpit on the south side, the first by the wall, the second next to the aisle. But in 1679 its owner, who hailed from another parish, objected to the arrangement. The parish refused to make any change and he withheld his rates. The Bishop then decided that the numbering should be reversed in that pew only, so that the first seat for Court of Showle was next to the aisle and the second next to the wall, while the occupants of seats two and four changed places.⁴² It may also be significant that when faculties for galleries were granted they were never at the east end of the nave, although galleries in this

38. H.R.O. F83/4.

39. M.A. Faraday, 'The hearth tax in Herefordshire', *T.W.N.F.C.*, 41 (1973), p. 84.

40. Hill's mss vol. 3, inserts between pp. 144 & 145 and at the end of the volume.; Faraday, 'Hearth tax', p. 83.

41. B.L. Add. Mss 11044, p. 271.

42. H.R.O. AL19/19, pp. 154v.-157; J72/9.

The Herefordshire evidence clearly shows that parish hierarchy was to a considerable extent paramount in allocating seats and that seating was potentially a source of disputes. It is, therefore, perhaps surprising that there are only three lists of seats officially promulgated by the authorities. There are three possible explanations. Firstly the old seating arrangements continued to hold good. Secondly the seating lists for Little Hereford and Orleton, both made in 1722, may have been based on unstated principles, which were then disseminated informally in the diocese; and their preservation may have been dictated by the bishop.⁴⁴ Thirdly there were probably more parishes, like Winforton and Much Marcle, where only a minority of households owned seats.

The links between a concern with parish hierarchies and the care of the church are undoubtedly tenuous. But it was at the Sunday services that most of the community which cared for the church came together regularly to fulfil the principal purpose for which the church existed. The status of leading families could be underlined by their use of separate entrances, The Batemans had their own entrance at Shobdon; while several families shared the south door of the chancel at Much Marcle (plate 2). Ordering the seating to reflect the parish hierarchy defined the framework of communal relationships. It acknowledged status, but it also acknowledged the heavier burden carried by those who paid a major share of the rates and served as parish officers. In addition it reduced the risk of disputes among the congregation, which could lead to neglect and disorder as happened at Llanwarne and Kingstone.⁴⁵ A proper ordering of the congregation in their seats can be seen, too, as an aspect of the concern with convenient seating, although this was primarily a question of resolving practical difficulties which interfered with effective participation in worship.

43. For example at Much Marcle, Fownhope and St. Margarets.

44. Below p. 207. 45. Above p. 91.

Practical Problems

Three practical problems affected the convenience of seating: draughts, poor light and the irregular size of pews. Draughts affected clergy and laity alike. At Winforton, after the pulpit had been moved to the south wall, the rector had "a whole, warm, decent Pew" made for himself after what he describes as "A Winter's Experience of the Inconveniency of an open Pew so near the great Door."⁴⁶ At Fownhope, instead of altering seats, the parishioners moved the main door in the north wall of the church to the west end

... in Order to prevent cold and Stormy Weather entering at the North Door into the Body of the said Church to the Annoyance and Prejudice of the Health of the Minister in performing and many of the Parishioners in hearing of divine Service and Sermon ...⁴⁷

The links between draughts, inconvenience and ill-health are explicitly made and undoubtedly reflect the view that convenience should include a due regard for the welfare of clergy and their congregations, as well as underlining the belief that convenience was an incentive for people to attend and stay throughout the services.

Poor light was also a problem. The practice of enlarging windows and adding new ones goes back to the middle ages; and it was continued in the early modern period. Many of the new windows were dormers which have since

46. H.R.O. F83/4.

47. H.R.O. AL19/22, p. 121v. The faculty as copied into the Bishop's register does not make sense. It describes the new door at the west end as opening into the tower and allowing easier access to the belfry and an adjacent gallery. But the Fownhope tower is central. The copyist possibly omitted a phrase specifying a second new door on the outside of the north-east stair turret. A "modern" external door to the staircase still exists, giving access the belfry and to an old door for a gallery or loft.

been removed by the Victorians. But contemporary prints and drawings show how widespread they were. Occasionally there is written evidence specifically linking new or enlarged windows to a need for better light. At Winforton in 1710 a window was enlarged to improve light for the new seats.⁴⁹ At Kimbolton a new window was much needed in 1727 for "enlightening" the pulpit and reading pew on the north side.⁵⁰ Windows might also be reset to light galleries like the fifteenth century window at Clodock which lights the gallery and the musicians' table.⁵¹ But galleries not only required lighting. They could also block light, which was one reason why a faulty might be desirable. One of the complaints made about the gallery at Kingstone in 1737 was that it blocked windows so that the minister could hardly see to read at the font and could not see who was in church on dark days.⁵² Good light was very important. It was achieved in older churches by keeping windows free of obstructions, putting in new windows and enlarging or resetting others; and keeping the walls white and clean. In new churches it was achieved not only by white walls, but by uniformly large windows.

A third preoccupation was with the installation of uniform sets of pews. This was partly a question of ensuring that pews of different heights were not built up so high that they made it difficult for some of the congregation to see as well as to hear. It was also a question of ensuring that individual pews did not take up too much floor space, and that variations in the size of pews were kept

48. New windows were installed, for example, at Pipe and Lyde in 1678 H.R.O. G20/3; Brampton Abbots in 1709, H.R.O. AA15/18; and Winforton in 1707, H.R.O. F83/4.

49. H.R.O. F83/4. 50. H.C.A. 7008/1, p. 520.

51. R.C.H.M. England, Herefordshire Inventory, 1, p. 178.

52. H.R.O. HD7/57.

within an orderly norm.⁵³ "Uniform" pews were installed at Winforton, Little Hereford, Orleton and Almeley.⁵⁴ And uniformity was probably achieved at Stoke Edith when the seats were "wainscotted" in 1680.⁵⁵ Uniformity may never have been universal, but it was increasingly usual. The example set in new churches, in Herefordshire as elsewhere, gradually spread to medieval churches, as surviving sets of pews indicate.⁵⁶ Many such pews (especially those with doors) were swept away in the nineteenth century. But their introduction suggests a concern with the appearance and convenience of church seating, which in turn suggests a concern for good care of church buildings.

Conclusions

Historians have tended to treat church seating in the early modern period as primarily a matter of allocating seats according to the social hierarchy. There has also been some recognition of the problems caused by draughts and excessively large pews.⁵⁷ But only recently has there been acknowledgement of the efforts made to accommodate everyone, including new ratepayers and the

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53. For example at Stoke Edith most of the pews above the cross aisle had five seats, those below had four. At Orleton there were pews with two, three or five seats respectively.
54. H.R.O. F83/4; H.C.A. 4464/18; H.R.O. AL19/21, pp. 93v.-96; AL19/22. 98v.99.
55. H.R.O. J72/9.
56. Uniform sets of box pews still survive in medieval churches at Hatfield, Kings Capse and Richards Castle; and uniform seating in early modern churches survives at Monnington, Tyberton, Stoke Edith and Shobdon.
57. Allderidge, 'Loyalty and identity', pp. 94-97; Hey, ed., Local and Family History, p. 348; Bettey, Church and Parish, pp. 91-93, 115-117.

poor.⁵⁸ The Herefordshire evidence shows a continuing concern with the need to provide seating for most, if not all, of the population. Up to 1722 there is also evidence of a respect for the expectation that the social hierarchy would determine the allocation of pews. After this date evidence is lacking, perhaps because agreed guidelines within the diocese allowed parishes to resolve difficulties themselves. In addition, after this date, the diocese took more trouble to register faculties and licences for galleries and private pews, thus reducing the risk of disputes and difficulties

Providing seats in a church was not a simple matter. It entailed expenditure of time and trouble by all concerned and of money by the congregation. Parishes needed to accommodate the population, meet social expectations and to aim for an ideal of convenience, while the authorities were drawn in to settle or prevent disputes. Disputes over precedence seem to have been most prevalent in towns and pastoral areas, among gentry and yeomen and during the last forty years of the seventeenth century.⁵⁹ Rural Herefordshire, however, was predominantly an area of mixed farming, and although there were problems and failures, disputes were characteristically rare. They were dealt with (sooner or later) and the surviving evidence, although limited, does suggest that proper provision and ordering of the seats was an integral part of the wider pattern of good care of parish churches.

58. M. Smith, 'The reception of Richard Podmore: Anglicanism in Saddleworth 1700-1830', in J. Walsh, C. Haydon and S. Taylor, eds, The Church of England c.1689-c.1833 (1994), pp. 116-117; W.M. Jacob, Lay People and Religion in the Early Eighteenth Century (1996), pp. 214-217.

59. K.B. Dillow, 'Church seating', p. 229.

PART TWO. THE CHURCHES

CHAPTER TWELVE. CONCLUSIONS TO PART TWO

Parish churches are communities made stone.¹

It has been pointed out that the Anglican church in the eighteenth century worked within a tight-knit hierarchy which is reflected in the system of visitations and courts, the rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer and contemporary handbooks for clergy. The system also reflected an assumption that people lived in small communities where there would be much face-to-face contact and inequalities mitigated by the common interests of the community.² It was therefore within a closely integrated society of hierarchies and communities that people undertook the care of their churches.

The different elements in that care, as practised in Herefordshire, have been discussed in the previous seven chapters, which have covered maintenance and restoration, rebuilding and furnishing. Attention has been given to the oversight exercised through visitations and ecclesiastical courts, the endeavours of local communities and tithe owners, and the generosity of private individuals. It seems clear enough that churches were not widely neglected and that belief in neglect stems partly from limitations in the way in which archival evidence has been used. The evidence of the buildings also needs to be cross-checked and more allowance made for the fact that all forms of evidence are incomplete.

Victorian restoration has destroyed much early modern fabric, together with furnishings, painted texts and figures on the walls of churches.

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1. S. Jenkins, 'Sermons in the stones', Historic Churches Preservation Trust Review 14 (1998), p. 3.
 2. W.M. Jacob, 'Clergy and society in Norfolk, 1707-1806', unpubl. Ph. D. thesis, University of Exeter (1982), p. 435.

Occasionally, too, early modern buildings were demolished and replaced in the nineteenth century and are unrecorded in gazetteers and inventories. In addition, historians have not appreciated the extent to which architectural features, particularly windows and doorways dating from the middle ages, were reused in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Such reuse is obvious at Norton Canon, where thirteenth-century windows and doorways were inserted in brick walls and at Tyberton, where a brick church is entered through a Norman doorway. But it is not now obvious at Allensmore, St Weonards or Hope-under-Dinmore; in the chancel at Brobury; or in the tower at Shobdon. At Marston Stannett the chapel is no longer used and is not recorded by the Royal Commission; while at Titley the eighteenth-century church was demolished in the nineteenth century, as were the seventeenth-century nave and chancel at Canon Frome, the seventeenth-century nave at Brobury and the eighteenth-century chancel at Tretire. Altogether, as a result of using archival and earlier printed evidence, it is possible to add six churches and a chapel to the number recorded in inventories and gazetteers as rebuilt between 1662 and 1762, as well as three towers, a bell-turret and a chancel (table 17a).

Documentary evidence also indicates a need to reconsider the dating of several towers and spires, and a chancel within this period (table 17b). The chancel at Bodenham, the spire at Dilwyn and the upper stages of the tower at Weston-under-Penyard should probably be re-dated by approximately ten to twenty years; while the towers at Canon Frome and Eardisland are later than was thought by about fifty and thirty years respectively. At Canon Frome the tower was thought to be co-eval with the church dated by Duncumb to 1680 and Madeline Hopton's account has been overlooked. At Eardisland it has been assumed that the rebuilding of the tower, carried out in 1760, coincided with the recasting of the bells in 1728.³ But this is not necessarily a valid assumption, as

3. Above pp. 152-155.

Table 17. Rebuilding and Redating. Written Evidence**17a. Rebuilding Not Recorded in Inventories and Gazetteers****Churches & Chapels**

Allensmore:	nave & tower 1668-c.1682; nave c.1716
Brobury:	nave 1676-1682; chancel 1694-1695
Canon Frome:	nave & chancel c.1669-1674; private aisle & vault 1717-1723; brick tower 1730
Hope-under-Dinmore:	nave c. 1708
Marston Stannett:	chapel c.1711
St Weonards:	nave c.1710
Titley:	church 1757-1762

Turrets, Towers & Chancels

Brampton Abbots:	bell-turret 1663
Dinedor:	tower? 1737
Middleton-on-the-Hill:	tower c. 1725
Tretire:	chancel 1723
Wormbridge:	tower 1674

17b. Redating from Written Sources

	New Dates	Old Dates
Bodenham chancel	c.1740	1750
Canon Frome tower	1730	1680
Dilwyn spire	1687-1690	18th C
Eardisland tower	1760	1728
Shobdon tower	1725-1730	13th C?
Weston-under-Penyard	c.1738?	1750

evidence from Whitbourne, Eaton Bishop and Winforton shows.⁴ Shobdon tower presents a particularly pertinent example of how dating can gradually go awry. The Royal Commission attributes the windows in the upper storeys to the thirteenth or fourteenth century.⁵ Pevsner attributes the tower itself tentatively to

4. H.R.O. AL92/1, Whitbourne in 1717; F83/4, Winforton in 1722; N25/8 & 10, Eaton Bishop in 1725.

5. R.C.H.M. England, An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Herefordshire (3 vols 1931-1934), 3, p. 179.

the thirteenth century, while the Blue Guide describes it as "A 13thC W tower".⁶

The diocesan archives reveal that it was rebuilt between 1725 and 1730.⁷

Claims that the building and rebuilding of churches was neglected after the Restoration are not well-founded. Figures for Herefordshire show that there was more rebuilding from 1663 to 1763 than in the preceding century, or in the ensuing 74 years, even allowing for the probability that some rebuilding is unrecorded. It was only after Queen Victoria's accession that the pace of rebuilding gathered momentum (table 18). Lack of research makes it impossible to know whether Herefordshire was characteristic in the amount of rebuilding done from 1662-1762, but there seems no reason why it should be eccentric, except that the population may have grown faster elsewhere so that completely new churches and chapels were built, as in Lancashire.⁸

Table 18. No. of places where rebuilding occurred 1563-1862

	Substantial	Partial
1563-1662	1	4
1663-1762	15	17
1763-1837	7	8
1838-1863	22 & 3 extra	6

Analysis of churchwardens' accounts shows that money was regularly spent on maintenance, that programmes of restoration were carried through and bells recast. Figures for Herefordshire and for other areas show that generally

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6. N. Pevsner, The Buildings of England. Herefordshire (1963), p. 287; A. Barlow & K. Kissack, 'Herefordshire' in S.C. Humphrey, ed., Churches and Chapels. Northern England (1991), p. 149.
 7. H.R.O. HD7/48, 49, 63.
 8. M. Smith, 'The reception of Richard Podmore: Anglicanism in Saddleworth 1700-1830' in J. Walsh, C. Haydon & S. Taylor, eds, The Church of England c.1689-c.1833. From Toleration to Tractarianism (1993), pp. 113-115.

churches were reasonably well maintained, although personal inspections by the clergy reveal a significantly higher level of default than visitation returns.⁹ Most surprisingly the evidence shows that, contrary to established belief, chancels were usually better maintained than churches. In Herefordshire it is true that there was some serious negligence, but this was the exception, not the rule. Evidence for the furnishing of churches is disappointingly sparse. But it seems clear that the proper provision of liturgical centres and of seating was, with few exceptions, taken seriously. Yet whatever the doctrinal inclinations of individual communities, lack of money and the size and ground plan of the church imposed constraints.

The view that churches were not neglected in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has been supported by work on individual counties and dioceses.¹⁰ But until recently, this work has hardly affected the attitudes of historians working at a national level. If, however, it is true that churches were generally well maintained, in spite of problems and occasional failures, such a conclusion presupposes effective co-operation between all concerned, founded on common consent as to what was expected.

Basic expectations are set out in The Book of Homilies and the Canons of 1603(1604). A church should be well repaired, clean and comely, furnished with the necessary liturgical centres, with a reading desk and seating for everyone. But the key concept, which recurs time and time again in contemporary writing and in documents is that of "decency", an ideal traced by George Herbert to St Paul's injunction 'Let all things be done decently and in order' [I Cor.xiv.40].¹¹ It is expressed in visitation articles, for example in the query '[are] all things decently

9. Above p. 95. 10. Above pp. 94-96.

11. G. Herbert, 'A Priest to the Temple or, the Country Parson, his Character and Rule of Holy Life' (1652), Chapter 13, in L.L. Martz, ed., George Herbert and Henry Vaughan (1986), p. 208.

ordered, as becometh the house of God?'.¹² The term is used by clergy of all ranks: by Edmund Gibson as Bishop of London in 1724 and by Archdeacon Green of Canterbury in 1715,¹³ In Hereford Thomas Bisse, the brother of the bishop, preached three sermons on decency and order in public worship. In his use of the word 'decency' he focuses, like the Canons, mainly on the conduct of the congregation, but he also discusses the care of church buildings.¹⁴ Similarly Joseph Guest, rector of Winforton from 1691 to 1721, in recording the restoration and refurnishing there, writes of 'nothing pleasing me more than Safety and Decency in the House of God'.¹⁵

Lay people also employed the term. In Sussex, in the seventeenth century, it was used by churchwardens to describe pews.¹⁶ In Herefordshire, in the eighteenth century its was used of 'ornaments' as well as pews. James Hill, the antiquary, wrote of Castle Frome church that 'its inward ornaments are regular

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12. 'Articles of Visitation and Enquiry within the Diocese of Lincoln' in E.R.C. Brinkworth, Episcopal Visitation Book for the Archdeaconry of Buckingham 1662, Buckinghamshire Record Society [6] (1947). p. 86.
 13. M. Cross, 'The church and local society in the diocese of Ely, c. 1630-1730', unpubl. PH. D. dissertation, University of Cambridge (1991), p. 207; W.J. Gregory, Restoration, Reformation and Reform, 1660-1828. Archbishops of Canterbury and their Diocese (2000), p. 281.
 14. T. Bisse, Decency and Order in Public Worship Recommended in Three Discourses, Preached in the Cathedral Church of Hereford (1723), pp. 6, 111-114; 'The Canons of 1603 (1604)' in G. Bray, ed., The Anglican Canons 1529-1947, Church of England Record Society 6 (1998), Canon 18.
 15. H.R.O. F83/4.
 16. K.B. Dillow, 'The social and ecclesiastical significance of church seating arrangements and pew disputes, 1500-1740', unpubl. D. Phil. thesis, University of Oxford, pp. 183.

and decent which are owing to the bounty of Robert Unett Esq of this Parish'.¹⁷.

At Orleton a public meeting agreed that the pews should be made 'more uniform and decent'; while at Little Hereford the parishioners considered their old seats to be 'irregular and indecent'.¹⁸

Decency was a modest ideal and one that to a later age lacks glamour. But it was biblical and consistent with a situation in which only modest resources were available to most of those who paid for the upkeep of churches and chancels. This ideal was set before members of the Anglican church from childhood and was therefore shared by all ranks of society, and by clergy and laity alike. With rare exceptions, it informed the efforts of all those whose contribution to the care of churches is discussed in parts three and four of this thesis.

17. James Hill's manuscripts, vol. 3, p. 359.

18. H.R.O. AL19/21, p. 93v.; H.C.A. 4464/18.

PART THREE. THE CLERGY

CHAPTER THIRTEEN.

THE HIGHER CLERGY AND THEIR OFFICIALS

It is taken notice of, you know, if things about me are not as they should be.¹

The higher clergy of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries have had a very mixed reputation over the past seventy years, and there has been a serious lack of research on archdeacons and cathedral chapters.² As recently as 1989 the Anglican church has been condemned for its medieval structures and only very recently has it been pointed out that medieval structures were not incompatible with energy and modernity of spirit.³ But whatever their merits and demerits, bishops remained leading members of society, under an obligation to dispense both hospitality and charity on a generous scale; although those with wealthy sees

1. Richard Hurd, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, quoted in D.R. Hirschberg 'Episcopal incomes and expenses' in R.O'Day & F. Heal, eds, Princes and Paupers in the English Church 1500-1800 (1981), p. 222.
2. E.G. Rupp, Religion in England, 1688-1791 (1986), pp. 507-511; J. Walsh & S. Taylor, 'Introduction: the church and Anglicanism in the 'long' eighteenth-century' in J. Walsh, C. Haydon & S. Taylor, eds, The Church of England, c. 1689-1833. From Toleration to Tractarianism (1993), pp. 4-5; J. Gregory, Restoration, Reformation and Reform, 1660-1828. Archbishops of Canterbury and their Diocese (2000), p. 3.
3. P. Virgin, The Church in an Age of Negligence. Ecclesiastical Structures and Problems of Church Reform, 1700-1840 (1989), pp. 1, 195, 258; Gregory, Restoration, Reformation, p. 8.

walked a tightrope between generosity and perceptions of extravagance.⁴

Between 1660 and 1762 eight men occupied the see of Hereford (appendix X.A). Two, Henry Egerton and Lord James Beauclerk, belonged to aristocratic families and were in their mid-thirties on appointment. Their predecessors from less exalted backgrounds came to the bishopric later in life. Three hailed from well-connected gentry families: Nicholas Monck (whose brother became Duke of Albermarle), Herbert Croft and Humphrey Humphreys. The others, Gilbert Ironside, Philip Bisse and Benjamin Hoadly, were the sons of clergymen. The deans of Hereford and the cathedral clergy (including the two archdeacons) were of slightly more modest origins; the only dean with aristocratic connections being John Egerton, son of Henry Egerton and a grandson of the Earl of Bridgewater (appendix X.B & C). The others were the sons of gentry, clergy and other professional men.

The chancellors of the diocese came from a similar background (appendix XI.A). Timothy Baldwin and his nephew Charles, who succeeded him, belonged to a gentry family from Shropshire; while Edward Wynne was a son of the Earl of Anglesey. Joseph Browne was of humbler origins, but attained considerable distinction as Professor of Natural Philosophy at Oxford, Provost of Queen's College and Vice-Chancellor.⁵ Of the notaries who served under them as registrars and deputy registrars of the diocese, a few came from the ranks of the local gentry (appendix XI.B). Pauncefoot Walls, Griffith Reignolds and Tamberlaine Hords all belonged to minor gentry families, while Herbert and

4. Hirschberg, 'Episcopal incomes', pp. 221-222; Rupp, Religion in England, pp. 507-508

5. For the fathers of most of the higher clergy and the chancellors of the diocese see J. Foster, Alumni Oxonienses: the Members of the University of Oxford 1500-1714 (4 vols, 1891-1892, reprinted 1968); J.& J.A. Venn, Alumni Cantabrigienses. A Biographical List of All Known Students, Graduates and Holders of Office ... Part 1. From the Earliest Times to 1751 (4 vols, 1922-1927).

Thomas Croft were probably from a cadet branch of the Crofts of Croft Castle, the family of Herbert Croft the bishop.⁶ They were, in fact, very similar in their connections to Henry Prescott, deputy-registrar of Chester diocese from 1686 to 1719.⁷

The income of the senior clergy varied enormously between dioceses and from year to year. The Bishop of Hereford's income, reckoned at £900 in 1707,

Table 19. Incomes of the higher clergy in Hereford diocese, c. 1707

Office	Reputed value in £s
Bishop	900
Dean of Hereford	70
Archdeacon of Hereford	30

was apparently £1000 three years later. This placed the bishops of Hereford in the middle rank of bishops in terms of income. The Dean's income was much lower at £70, and between 1692 and 1736 three deans in succession held the office in conjunction with the bishopric of Llandaff, valued at £300 in 1710. The Archdeaconry of Hereford was worth only £30 and was augmented by a living and the Archdeacon's income as a canon residentiary (table 19).⁸

Whatever their incomes, it seems that those at the heart of the diocesan hierarchy came from a level in society at which men expected to take responsibility and to contribute to society through professional work and public office. All of them were concerned with the care of churches as part of their official duties and would have been drawn, on a personal basis, into the range of charitable projects which were a conspicuous part of seventeenth and eighteenth

6. C.J. Robinson, A History of the Mansions and Manors of Herefordshire (1872), footnote on p. 307, pp. 194, 138, footnote on p. 299.
7. J. Addy, The Diary of Henry Prescott, LL.B; Deputy Registrar of Chester Diocese (3 vols, 1987-1997), 1, Records Society of Lancashire and Cheshire 127, pp. vii-xii.
8. Hirschberg, 'Episcopal incomes', pp. 211-216; H.C.A. 7008/1, p. 77.

century life. In addition bishops and cathedral clergy, as landowners and tithe owners were, both directly and indirectly, contributors to the care of church buildings.

Jurisdiction

Under the Commonwealth ecclesiastical courts were suspended and parishes left to discharge their responsibility for church buildings unsupervised. At the Restoration the church courts were re-established, the dean of Hereford was holding visitations in 1661 and the diocesan courts were in operation no later than 1662 when Herbert Croft held his primary visitation.⁹ As far as the care of churches is concerned, supervision seems to have been in the hands of the bishop in Hereford diocese. There are no surviving records of inspections by archdeacons. Nor is there any indication that the chancellor or the diocesan registrar took the initiative as they did in some matters in Chester diocese.¹⁰ Hereford followed the pattern in Worcester where the bishop determined policy, which the chancellor and the registrar then implemented.¹¹ Yet the respectful tone of many of the letters addressed to the diocesan registrars and deputy registrars suggests that officials might exert considerable influence.¹²

The two bishops who contributed most to the care of churches in Hereford diocese were Herbert Croft and Philip Bisse. Herbert Croft was strict over chancel repairs in the decades after the Restoration. He did not tolerate undue delay and occasionally sequestered tithes. Clerical tithes were sequestered at Wigmore in 1675 after the vicar failed to complete repairs within six months; and

9. H.C.A. 4589; H.R.O. HD7/4.

10. Addy, *Diary of Henry Prescott*, 1, p. xxvii.

11. P. Morgan, *Inspections of Churches and Parsonage Houses in the Diocese of Worcester in 1674, 1676, 1684 and 1687*, *Worcestershire Historical Society* 12 (1986), pp. 5-6.

12. H.R.O. HD7/4-67 diocesan registrar's files.

at Pixley in 1682 after the death of the incumbent.¹³ Tithes in lay ownership were also sequestered, although there was doubt over the legality of doing so.¹⁴ But in some cases there were clear reasons for action. The tithes of Canon Frome were sequestered in 1675 when the new church was being built, probably to secure the completion of the chancel.¹⁵ The tithes of Eardisley were taken when Benhaile Baskerville had failed for several years to repair the chancel.¹⁶ And at Bredwardine the tithes were assigned to the churchwardens for chancel repairs from 1679 to 1680.¹⁷ But sequestration was only a temporary solution and rarely invoked. Nonetheless Croft was determined to insist that tithe owners repaired chancels promptly, no doubt as part of his wider campaign to restore Anglican practice in his diocese to a high standard.

Philip Bisse had a strong interest in architecture and in the furnishing and adorning of churches. He refashioned the bishop's palace, refurnished the choir of the cathedral and encouraged the beautifying of churches in Hereford.¹⁸ But his major contribution to the care of churches in Herefordshire stemmed from his primary visitation in 1716. Although standards had already improved, he set himself to improve them again and, in particular, to insist that all churches should comply with the canonical requirement for both pulpit and reading desk.¹⁹ His efforts were supported and, in part, commended by his brother Thomas, who was

13. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 102, pp. 76, 102-103.

14. R. Burn, Ecclesiastical Law (2 vols 1763), 1, p. 248.

15. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 116, p. 58; above p. 135.

16. H.R.O. AL19/19, pp. 65v.-66; 79v.; above p. 125.

17. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 122, p. 81v.

18. R.W.D. Fenn & J.B. Sinclair, The Bishops of Hereford and their Palace (1990), pp. 25-26; B. Willis, A Survey of the Cathedrals of York, Durham, Carlisle, Chester, Man, Lichfield, Hereford, Worcester, Gloucester and Bristol (1727), p. 530; P. Iles, 'Music and liturgy since 1600', in G.E. Aylmer & J. Tiller, eds, Hereford Cathedral. A History (2000), p. 408.

19. Above pp. 88-90.

chancellor of Hereford cathedral from 1716 to 1731.²⁰ In three sermons preached before his brother, Thomas Bisse commended the churches in "Cities and opulent Towns ... which in most of these places have been preserved in order, and many ornamented and beautified". He then condemns the "generality of parishes" for a universal neglect. Superficially this is at variance with the evidence that Philip Bisse and his predecessors had successfully improved the condition of churches. The key seems to lie in Thomas Bisse's emphasis on ornamentation and beautifying. Later in the same sermon he says this.

... no external means can be devised so effectual to keep up a sense of reverence and warmth of devotion upon our minds, as the decency and dignity of the place of worship; ... that it may appear in very deed the house of God. The Church of *Rome* knows the force of this and in this lies her chief force, that she spares no cost in enriching, nor skill in adorning her Churches; whereby she keeps up the minds of her people to the height of superstition; whereas among us, some by neglecting, others by decrying these advantages, have sunk the minds of our people below any tolerable degree of devotion.²¹

In other words he believed in imagery as an aid to devotion and was not satisfied with the canonical provision of texts. Nor did he show any feeling for the financial strains that adorning a church imposed on a country congregation.

It may seem surprising that an Anglican clergyman should express even a tempered admiration for Rome at a time when Jacobite invasions and plots were still a reality. But his comments confirm Mather's view that Laudian and Caroline

20. Aylmer & Tiller, eds, *Hereford Cathedral*, p. 640.

21. T. Bisse, *Decency and Order in Public Worship Recommended in Three Discourses, Preached in the Cathedral Church of Hereford* (1723), pp. 111, 114.

practices survived into the early Georgian period.²² They suggest that this was a period of debate over church interiors, and is an early and significant example of how an allegation of negligence may stem from a personal standpoint rather than reflecting neglect of basic requirements. Nor does it reflect what had happened in a number of country churches in Herefordshire. The adorning of Abbey Dore in the early eighteenth century included figures of Jehovah and David with a harp, as well as (quite probably) Death and Time;²³ while Eaton Bishop in 1718 asked for Death and Time.²⁴ Little Hereford was adorned in 1721, presumably in accordance^{with} the views of Thomas Bisse, since as chancellor of the cathedral he held the peculiar of Little Hereford and Ashford Carbonell.²⁵ In addition the nobility and gentry had recently adorned the churches at Aconbury, Castle Frome, Hope-under-Dinmore and Canon Frome, probably in a lavish style if not always as Thomas Bisse thought proper.²⁶

Philip Bisse died in 1721, but his brother survived him by ten years to serve under Benjamin Hoadly and Henry Egerton. Hoadly spent only two years in the see, but it may not be coincidence that two of the three pew allocations in the diocesan and cathedral archives date from the year of his primary visitation in 1722. They may reflect a view on his part that such things were best put in writing centrally in case of later disputes. Egerton succeeded Hoadly in 1724, and showed some concern for appearances when Weston-under-Penyard wished

22. F.C. Mather, 'Georgian churchmanship reconsidered: some variations in Anglican public worship 1714-1830', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 36 (1985), pp. 257, 261, 282.

23. J. Tonkin & D. Monger, 'The wall paintings and texts' in R. Richardson and R. Shoesmith, eds, *A Definitive History of Dore Abbey* (1997), pp. 181-182.

24. H.R.O. N25/10. 25. H.C.A. 7008/1, p. 517.

26. James Hill's manuscripts vol. 1, p. 333; vol. 3, pp. 8, 52, 359; H.R.O. R93/LC8351; above p. 112.

to take down its spire and re-roof the tower. He instructed his commissioners to comply with the request, provided that "The Beauty, Fashion or Strength of the Fabric be not defaced"²⁷ However he earned opprobrium for demolishing a Norman chapel in the grounds of the bishop's palace and this may account for his firm, but unexplained opposition to the plans for rebuilding the Norman church at Shobdon.²⁸

Only two bishops, Herbert Croft and Philip Bisse, can be shown to have adopted specific policies in relation to the care of churches, although policy may be guessed at in the case of Hoadly and Egerton. But three of them, unlike their fellow bishops, allocated commutation money to churches. This was paid by those sentenced to do penance, but allowed to commute the penalty for a fine, which was then dispensed by the Bishops for the archdeaconry of Hereford and the peculiar of Little Hereford and by the Dean for his own peculiar. Out of this Croft made grants of £10.10.00 for chancel repairs at Stretford and for the tower at Allensmore.²⁹ Bisse allocated £5.5.0. in 1716 to Byford where it was used to point the new tower and make good damage done by demolishing the old one. And in 1721 he allowed Little Hereford £5.5.0. for a pulpit cloth and cushion to complete the redecoration of the church.³⁰ Under Egerton Little Hereford received £3.3.0. towards a pew in the chancel for the vicar and for catechising, and Kimbolton was given £4 towards a new window.³¹ But the largest contributions from the commutation money were those made towards the rebuilding of the chapel at Preston Wynne which received £5.5.0. from the diocese and £20 from the Dean's peculiar.³² The commutation money was the only source of official grants. They were few and far between and sometimes, as at Little Hereford and Kimbolton in the late seventeen-twenties, linked to

27. H.R.O. AL19/22, pp. 63-64.

28. Fenn & Sinclair, *Bishops of Hereford*, p. 29; H.R.O. G39/III/E/110.

29. H.R.O. AL19/19, p. 44v.; AL19/20, p.7v.

30. H.C.A. 7008/1, pp. 516-517. 31. H.C.A. 7008/1, pp. 518, 520.

32. H.C.A. 7008/1, p. 521; H.R.O. AF27/1.

commutations made by offenders in the parishes concerned. However exceptionally in 1737 the Dean and Chapter allocated three guineas to repairing or rebuilding the steeple at Dinedor.³⁴

Apart from the grant to Preston Wynne no commutation money was forthcoming in the Dean's peculiar or in Moreton-on-Lugg or Bullingham. But there is evidence that the prebendaries who held Moreton-on-Lugg (a small parish with a small church about five miles from Hereford) took trouble over the church there. Normally the churchwardens attended visitations in the cathedral. But in 1682 the prebendary held his visitation in the parish church when the steeple and chancel pavement were out of repair, presumably so that he could discuss remedies with the rector and the parishioners.³⁴ Then in May 1721, the prebendary and his registrar held a court there to make arrangements for the south side of the roof to be stripped and tiled, and for the chancel to be re-ordered to accommodate a reading desk.³⁵ On both occasions clergy and laity, the hierarchy and the community, came together to achieve a common end.

Very occasionally there were court cases affecting the care of a church which went beyond the standard routine of citation and submission of a certificate when the work was finished.. Winforton decided in 1721 to recast its bells, but before the work was finished the rector, who had kept the parish accounts for sixteen years, died. The senior churchwarden was illiterate and there was confusion in the accounts. To resolve the problems the churchwardens brought a fictitious suit against Richard Fewtrell who collected and accounted for the money needed, which was paid into court. The case is an interesting example of the care and ingenuity with which the authorities responded to an unusual crisis. It entailed close co-operation between the diocese, the parish and the craftsmen employed, principally the bellfounder Abraham Rudhall.³⁶ There was a similar

33. H.C.A. 7031/4, p. 176. 34. H.R.O. HD7/18/258.

35. H.R.O. HD7/18/310.

36. H.R.O. F83/4; HD4/1, vol. 47, 4 October 1723 to 8 April 1725 [no pagination]

case affecting Bodenham in 1665, when a churchwarden died in office before his accounts were written up.³⁷

Landownership

The bishopric and the cathedral were the oldest landowners in Herefordshire. They possessed, like other ecclesiastical office holders, extensive estates, advowsons and tithes. As landowners they were not only locked into the agricultural economy from which, like the majority of people, they derived their income; but into an economic relationship with members of the laity.³⁸ Directly, or indirectly through their tenants, they paid church rate and tithes, so that their engagement with the care of churches extended beyond the exercise of jurisdiction. They also played a role through the choice of clergy for livings in their gift, by augmenting those livings and by selecting men who would promote the good care of parish churches. But above all they and their lessees were responsible, as tithe owners and farmers, for the care of chancels.

Ecclesiastical office holders in Herefordshire held tithes in 41 (20.5%) of the 200 country parishes and shared them with the laity in 18 (9%). These tithes were usually let on long leases which had originated as leases for lives, of which many were converted to lease for years.³⁹ Calculations have shown that even with leases for years the farmers enjoyed a considerable profit, as in the case of the Duke of Chandos.⁴⁰ Yet from a contemporary perspective such leases were an improvement. Herbert Croft wrote in the sixteen-seventies that

37. H.R.O. HD7/8/34.

38. Gregory, Restoration, Reformation, pp. 111-126.

39. F. Heal, 'Archbishop Laud revisited: leases and estate management at Canterbury and Winchester before the Civil War', in O'Day & Heal, Princes and Paupers, pp. 129-151.

40. D. Marcombe, 'Church leaseholders: the rise and fall of an elite', in O'Day & Heal, Princes and Paupers, pp. 257-259; H.C.A. 7031/4, p. 144.

[In] my long experience ... in several churches, as Worcester, Windsor, Hereford ... we clearly found that the profits arising from leases for years was (sic) seven times greater than from leases for lives,⁴¹

Whatever the balance of profit, the obligation to repair the chancel lay with the farmers of the tithes and with very rare exceptions they met that obligation. But significantly, perhaps, there were serious problems in 1715 at Madley where the tithes were farmed in five parcels and there seems to have been confusion over whether the Dean and Chapter or the farmers would carry out repairs. There was also a delay of at least three years in rebuilding the chancel at Bodenham where two bishops and two parish clergy shared the great tithe.⁴² Rebuilding chancels remained the responsibility of the tithe owner. The dean and chapter of Hereford rebuilt Norton Canon and, when the Brydges rebuilt Tyberton, they were rewarded with a lease of the tithes on exceptionally favourable terms.⁴³

Ecclesiastics and their tenants were responsible for a significant number of chancels in rural Herefordshire. Inevitably there were problems, undoubtedly aggravated by division of tithes and delay in attending to repairs. But there is no evidence of widespread negligence and even in the more problematical places the situation was always remedied in the end.

Charity

In the absence of accounts evidence of personal gifts from senior clergy and their officials has to come from the records of the recipients which are rare. Herbert Croft gave timber for communion rails at Whitbourne where the Bishops of Hereford had their summer palace. This was a significant gift since it marks the beginning of a period when communion rails were gradually introduced in the

41. H.C.A. 1152 quoted in H. Tomlinson, 'Restoration to reform 1660-1832' in Aylmer & Tiller, eds, Hereford Cathedral, p. 110.

42. Above p. 123. 43. Above pp. 139, 142.

diocese.⁴⁴ More extensive evidence of gifts from the senior clergy comes from the subscription list for Preston Wynne. Contributors included the Archbishop of Canterbury, three bishops and Mrs Emma Robinson, widow of the Bishop of London. The bishops were Henry Egerton, Bishop of Hereford; Benjamin Hoadly, Bishop of Salisbury and formerly Bishop of Hereford; and John Tyler, Bishop of Llandaff and Dean of Hereford, in whose peculiar the chapel lay. Contributions came, too, from nine prebendaries of Hereford; three in Peterborough where Richard Waring, the vicar of Withington and Preston Wynne, had relatives; from the Dean of Durham, John Montagu; and from William Tyler, prebendary of Llandaff who may have been related to John Tyler. The Dean's registrar also contributed. Between them they gave a sum of £35.14.00 which amounted to 18.6% of the money raised by subscription and 9.1% of the total cost; with a further 13% of the subscription, amounting to 6.3% of the total, supplied from commutation money. Officially and personally, therefore, the higher clergy and the courts paid over 15% of the total.⁴⁵ Beyond this there is no way of knowing what other gifts they made to churches within or outside the diocese of Hereford. But like the parish clergy and the laity they belonged to a church which encouraged charity.

Conclusions

The main contribution made by the higher clergy and their officials to the care of churches was an unspectacular one. They maintained, year after year, the sequence of visitations and courts through which churches were monitored and problems corrected. In addition the bishops and the chapter were responsible, wholly or partly, for approximately 30% of rural chancels in the county. This chapter has been more concerned with the personal contributions made by bishops through policy, the cathedral clergy through small jurisdictions and participation in the debate on adorning of churches, and with gifts and grants. On

44. H.R.O. AL92/1.; above pp. 169-170. 45. H.R.O. AF27/1.

the basis of the figures for church and chancel repairs given in Chapter Five, it can be argued that the church nationwide maintained effective oversight and that bishops and cathedrals, as impropiators, contributed to the good care of chancels.⁴⁶ It has been shown, too, by Marshall, that the bishops of Oxford and Hereford, on the whole, fulfilled their spiritual functions to a high standard and he draws attention to the work of Norman Sykes and a number of other historians who, in studies of individual bishops, have argued for a more favourable view of the church after 1660.⁴⁷ Warne, also, in his study of Devon, endorses this view for the eighteenth century.⁴⁸ Shuler, too, has shown that the archdeacons of Northumberland, played an active part in the administration of their jurisdiction.⁴⁹

More research would be needed to determine how far senior clergy and their officials engaged in debate over the ordering and interior decoration of churches or how far the pattern of charity revealed is characteristic. But an analysis of Thomas Secker's expenditure for 1757 in Oxford shows that 8.8% of his income that year went on charity, exclusive of gifts towards medical expenses.⁵⁰ As far as churches were concerned, their fabric was "a matter very close to his heart" and as rector of Cuddesdon he set his parishioners a generous example.⁵¹ But more research is needed, too, on the role of archdeacons, rural deans and cathedral chapters, chancellors and diocesan registrars.

46. Above p. 95.

47. W.M. Marshall, 'Episcopal activity in the Hereford and Oxford diocese 1660-1760' *Midland History* 8 (1983), pp. 118, 120.

48. A. Warne, *Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century Devon* (1960), p. 34.

49. J.C. Shuler, 'The pastoral and ecclesiastical administration of the diocese of Durham 1721-1771, with particular reference to the archdeaconry of Northumberland', unpubl. Ph. D. thesis, University of Durham (1975).

50. D.R. Hirschberg, 'Episcopal incomes' p. 221.

51. A.P. Jenkins, *The Correspondence of Thomas Secker, Bishop of Oxford 1737-1758*, *Oxfordshire Record Society* 57 (1991), pp. xxv, 25.

The most important contribution of the higher clergy and their officials to the care of churches in Hereford diocese was made through the system of oversight. Occasionally they were directly involved in the rebuilding or restoration and repair of chancels and occasionally they made donations. It is true that the volume of business in the courts declined.⁵² But this was not necessarily due to negligence. Where the care of churches is concerned it reflects a genuine improvement in standards. Otherwise it may have been due to a more pastoral emphasis in dealing with problems.⁵³ Hereford diocese did not apparently make use of the innovations of the period: full-scale inspections by bishops, archdeacons or commissions of clergy; or visitation articles addressed to parish clergy by the Bishop. But a real improvement in the condition of churches was achieved, even before Philip Bisse showed what could be done by using a primary visitation to promote policy. The framework of ecclesiastical administration was still a medieval one. But contemporary office holders and their officials, between 1662 and 1762, showed that they could both build on and use that framework to good effect. Their contribution to the care of churches should not be overlooked because it consisted mainly in the fulfilment of their legal obligations.

52. H.R.O. HD4/1, vols 107-110.

53. J. Gregory, 'The eighteen-century reformation: the pastoral task of Anglican clergy after 1689' in J. Walsh, C. Haydon & S. Taylor, eds, The Church of England c. 1689-c.1833. From Toleration to Tractarianism (1993), p. 70.

PART THREE. THE CLERGY

CHAPTER FOURTEEN. THE PARISH CLERGY

They left no books
Memorial to their lonely thought
In grey parishes;¹

The parish clergy of the years between 1662 and 1762 have had the same mixed reputation as their superiors where the care of churches is concerned. Two local studies have approached the clergy from different perspectives and present different assessments. Pruett finds an improvement in the overall status of the clergy and a reasonably satisfactory standard of care.² Spaeth, by contrast, pays less attention to status and examines relations between clergy and laity with an emphasis on points of conflict. He finds many problems.³ Contemporary opinion was polarised, partly because of the gulf between the unlettered and the more sophisticated.⁴ Yet even Wesley recognised an improvement in clerical standards.⁵

The country clergy, in truth, are difficult to study. They lived unobtrusive lives and, all too often, appear in the records only when they failed to meet the standards appropriate to their profession. These standards derive fundamentally

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1. R.S. Thomas, 'The country clergy' in Collected Poems, (1993), p. 82.
 2. J.H. Pruett, The Parish Clergy under the Later Stuarts. The Leicestershire Experience (1978).
 3. D.A. Spaeth, The Church in an Age of Danger. Parsons and Parishioners, 1660-1740 (2000).
 4. W.M. Jacob, Lay People and Religion in the Early Eighteenth Century (1996), pp. 50-51.
 5. W.J. Gregory, Restoration, Reformation and Reform, 1660-1828. Archbishops of Canterbury and their Diocese (2000), pp. 100-101.

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from the Canons of 1603(1604), which cover the qualifications, duties, dress and conduct of the clergy, although they say nothing specifically about their responsibility for church buildings.⁶ Fuller ideals are set out in Herbert's Country Parson. In addition to pastoral duties, Herbert suggests that the parson should be both a lawyer and a physician in his parish.⁷ He stresses that the country parson "has a special care of his church" and depicts him constantly advising his churchwardens.⁸ He suggests, too, that in certain respects his life should reflect that of his flock. He should not be unduly concerned with wealth because country people lived extremely frugal lives. And he should be scrupulous in keeping his word, since country people "esteem their word" and, as Herbert points out "neither will they believe him in the pulpit whom they cannot trust in conversation".⁹

The main function of the clergy was pastoral and liturgical, with an emphasis on teaching and preaching.¹⁰ But they were also valued for their role in local government and for help in times of crisis.¹¹ These roles are supported by the Herefordshire evidence. Resident clergy usually attended vestry meetings and were active in levying rates and allocating poor relief.¹² Incumbents, with churchwardens, were the normal trustees for parish charities and, in some

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6. 'The Canons of 1603 (1604)' in G. Bray, ed., The Anglican Canons 1529-1947, Church of England Record Society 6 (1998), Canons 31-76.
 7. G. Herbert, 'A Priest to the Temple or The Country Parson', Chapter 23, in L.L. Martz, ed., George Herbert and Henry Vaughan (1986).
 8. Herbert, 'Country Parson', Chapters 13 & 29.
 9. Herbert, 'Country Parson', Chapter 3.
 10. W.M. Jacob, 'Clergy and Society in Norfolk, 1707-1806', unpubl. Ph. D. thesis, University of Exeter (1982), p. 451; Jacob, Lay People p. 21.
 11. Spaeth, Age of Danger, p. 19.
 12. H.R.O. N25/10; AB56/21.
 13. H.R.O. J72/1; F83/4.

parishes, kept the parish accounts.¹³ Clergy signed testimonials for surgeons and midwives and for parishioners accused of sexual misconduct. They provided marriage and baptism certificates for young couples moving to other parishes and wrote letters for those in trouble with the ecclesiastical courts.¹⁴ They might also write wills.¹⁵

James Newton, rector of Nuneham Courtney in Oxfordshire from 1736 to 1786, probably lived a typical clergyman's life. He took services, catechised, visited his parishioners and helped them with gifts of money, food and drink. He cultivated his glebe, his garden and his orchard, like any other farmer.¹⁶ But he was, perhaps, less typical in being well-off. Gregory King estimated in 1688 that eighty per cent of the clergy had an ordinary income of £50, well below the minimum of £80 required by a gentleman.¹⁷ By 1762 clerical incomes had risen, but many clergy had modest earnings and their status was not greatly improved by supplementary occupations like teaching and tenant farming. These were the men who exercised pastoral care in country parishes and who shared responsibility for the care of churches with the laity.

Herefordshire Clergy

Not much is known about clergy serving in the diocese of Hereford between 1662 and 1762. To a great extent they were local. In 1680, of those whose geographical origins are known, 48.9% came from within the diocese,

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- 13. H.R.O. J72/1; F83/4.
 - 14. H.R.O. HD7/4-67.
 - 15. M. Spufford, Contrasting Communities. English Villagers in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries (1974), pp. 325, 329, 333; Jacob, Lay People, p. 41.
 - 16. G. Hannah, ed., The Deserted Village. The Diary of an Oxfordshire Rector. James Newton of Nuneham Courtenay 1736-88 (1992).
 - 17. G. Holmes, Augustan England Professions, State and Society 1680-1730, p. 19.

while in 1759 the figure was 54.2%. Socially they came from a variety of backgrounds with a shift towards the gentry over time. Of those whose social origins are known, 60% of those in the archdeaconry of Hereford in 1680 were of plebeian origin, with only 8.3% drawn from the gentry. By 1760 the figures had changed, with 42.3% coming from plebeian backgrounds and 38.14% from the gentry.¹⁸

The majority were not well off (table 20).¹⁹ In 1707 their average income

Table 20. Value of Herefordshire Livings. c.1707.¹

	No.	Average	Median
All "livings" ²	148	£40	£31.10.00
All rectories	61	£52.10.00	£42
Key "livings" ³	28	£46	£48
Key rectories ³	15	£57.10.00	£50

1. These figures are taken from a valuation made for Queen Anne's Bounty as amended by local commissioners. H.C.A. 7008/1, pp. 224-239; 477-493, 497, 502.
2. Includes perpetual curacies, "curacies" and "chapelries".
3. The valuation for Winforton, not a "poor" living, has been calculated at £51, not £30 as given in H.C.A. 7008/1, p. 487.

was below the clerical poverty line of £50, while that of rectors was not much above it. The averages in the key parishes are rather higher, with six incumbents out of 28 (21.4%) earning £60 or upwards. But of the remaining twenty-two only the rector of Winforton had more than £50 and the median values, both for the county and for rectors in key parishes, paint a bleaker picture.

18. W.M.Marshall, 'The administration of the dioceses of Oxford and Hereford 1660-1760', 'unpubl. Ph. D. thesis, University of Bristol (1978), pp. 96, 98.

19. H.C.A. 7008/1, pp. 224-239, 477-493, 497, 502.

Their income, too, fluctuated from year to year, derived as it was from tithes, glebe, surplice fees and Easter offerings, but it rose over time. The only parish for which detailed figures are available is Whitchurch, which was valued at £45 in 1707.²⁰ Daniel Renaud, who was rector from 1730 to 1766, achieved an average of just over £103, with a minimum of £74.15.0¾ in 1735 and a maximum of £130.06.09½ in 1757.²¹ This rise can be compared with valuations for four other livings at the same period taken from the diocese books (table 19).²² The improvements in value between 1707 and the middle of the eighteenth century

Table 21. Herefordshire Livings. Improved Values 1707-1757

R = Rectory. V. = Vicarage

Parish	Value: 1707	Later Value	Date
Brampton Abbots R	£80	£120	1742
Byford R	£50	£90	1745
Eardisley V	£45	£140	1754
Whitchurch R	£45	£103+ average	1730-1766
Wigmore V	£16.10.00 ¹	£80	1757

1. As valued by the local commissioners. The original list gives £30.00.00 exclusive of the chapelry of Leinthall Starks valued at £16.00.00. H.C.A. 7008/1, pp. 230, 493.

are no more consistent than those between 1536 and 1707. But it is noticeable that the vicarages of Eardisley and Wigmore had improved more than the rectories, which may have been due in part to Queen Anne's Bounty and in part, perhaps, to a restitution of some of the great tithes to the vicar. The improvement in rectories, however, was considerable and, because it derived partly from tithe income, such improvement would have been enjoyed by lay rectors too. It may therefore have been a factor in the sustained good care of chancels which

20. H.C.A. 7008/1, p. 490. 21. H.R.O. A98/1, pp. 46-47.

22. H.R.O. HD9/1, pp. 9, 13, 23, 68.

becomes evident from about 1720.²³

If the clergy played a significant role in caring for chancels and in advising communities in the care of their churches, then it is pertinent to wonder whether their efforts were undermined by non-residence. This was very common in the eighteenth century, if not earlier. But in many instances the incumbent was living close to his benefice, or the cure was served by a resident curate. Occasionally, too, "non-residents" were living in their own houses within the parish boundary because there was no parsonage.²⁴ In Hereford archdeaconry the extent of non-residence in 1716 can be estimated from returns for Philip Bisse's primary visitation.²⁵ In 52 out of 103 places (50.4%) there was no resident incumbent. This included five places where there was a resident curate, three where the minister resided some of the time and one where there was a vacancy (table 22). The main reason given for non-residence was lack of a parsonage. Of 39 places where neither minister or curate was resident 20 (51.2%) had no

Table 22. Levels of Non-Residence in 1716. ¹

	No.	Percentage
Non-resident	44 ²	42.7%
Semi-resident	03	2.9%
Vacancy (death)	01	0.9%
No indication of residence	04	3.8%

1. The figures include perpetual curacies, "curacies" and "chapelries".

2. Five places had a resident curate.

parsonage, in one the parsonage was out of repair and in three more it was being repaired or rebuilt. The underlying cause was probably poverty. Allowing one

23. The diocesan acts of office show that it was most unusual for more than one or two chancels to be cited at any one time and quite often there were none. H.R.O. HD4/1, vols 109 & 110.

24. W.M. Jacob, 'A practice of a very hurtful tendency', Studies in Church History 16 (1979), pp. 317-320.

25. H.R.O. HD5/14/40-216.

Table 23. Distance between cure and residence of minister or curate in 1716.

	No.	Percentages	
		out of 39	out of 103
Less than 1 mile	10	25.6%	9.7%
1-2½ miles	10	25.6%	9.7%
3-5 miles	04	10.2%	3.8%
Next parish	03	07.6%	2.9%
Totals	27	69.2%	26.2%
30 miles or more	07	17.9%	6.7%
No indication of distance	05	12.8%	4.8%

incumbent to serve two livings while maintaining a single parsonage was one way of alleviating the problem. Many non-residents, however, lived close at hand (table 23). In the 39 parishes where neither minister nor curate was resident,, the incumbent or curate lived no more than five miles away in 27 (69.7%). In only seven places is there clear-cut evidence that the incumbent resided 30 miles or more from his living, including Bishopstone and Bridge Solers held jointly by a blind man who lived with his daughter in Gloucestershire.²⁶ If the incumbent or curate lived within five miles, it seems that the cure could be served to the satisfaction of the parishioners. At Pixley an incumbent residing four or five miles away came "constantly on all occasions to do his duty".²⁷ Curates, who might well be the incumbents of neighbouring parishes, could be equally conscientious. Sellack, held by the headmaster of the free school at Shrewsbury, was "diligently served" by a curate.²⁸

The effect of non-residence on the care of churches can be gauged to some extent from the same returns relating to nearly 56% of parishes in the archdeaconry of Hereford.²⁹ Overall the figures are a little lower than those derived from the act books, but when they are broken down for parishes with and

26. Marshall, 'Oxford and Hereford', p. 103. 27. HD5/14/121.

28. HD5/14/69

29. HD5/14/40-216..

Table 24. Levels of disrepair in 1716: Hereford Archdeaconry

	Church	Chancel	No Pulpit/Desk
All parishes (184) ¹	23.3%	5.9%	14.0%
All parishes (103) ²	21.3%	3.8%	11.6%
"Resident" ³ clergy(59) ²	23.7%	1.7%	6.7%
Non-residents (39) ²	17.9%	7.6%	17.9%

1. Figures from the acts of office.

2. Figures from visitation returns.

3. Includes 3 semi-residents.

without resident clergy, there are contrasts. Parishes with a resident incumbent or curate were less likely, on average, to have a chancel out of repair or to lack both pulpit and desk, whereas in the case of non-residents the opposite was true. This suggests that resident clergy were better placed to repair chancels promptly and to alert impropriators and farmers to the need for repairs. They also seem to have been better able to press for both a pulpit and a desk. On the other hand, for what the figures are worth, the churches seem to have been better maintained where the clergy were not resident; perhaps an indication that the laity in these parishes were more self-reliant and took the initiative in maintaining their churches well. The figures, however, are very superficial and for a fuller picture of clerical contribution to church maintenance it is necessary to look more closely at places where clergy repaired chancels; at their extra-parochial contribution; and at a few places where there is evidence for their role in caring for the nave and for furniture.

The Care of Chancels

Sixty-three incumbents out of 200 with rural livings (31.5%) were rectors. On the whole they kept their chancels in reasonable repair, the main problems being delays in carrying out work, which were characteristic of the sixteen-seventies and sixteen-eighties and chancels needing repair on an incumbent's death. Delays, which brought incumbents before the courts, occurred at Wigmore in 1675, Pudleston from 1678 to 1684 and at Hampton Bishop in 1685, where

the rector took two years to remedy serious problems.³⁰ But then the expectation of prompt attention to repairs was apparently established.

Age was certainly a factor in causing neglect. The incumbents of Pixley, Brobury and Wigmore all died between 1680 and 1700 leaving chancels in poor repair. At Pixley the tithes were sequestered to pay for repairs before a new rector was appointed and the wisdom of this course was borne out by what happened at Wigmore and Brobury. When Alexander Clogie, who had been vicar of Wigmore since 1648, died in 1699 the chancel was in bad repair, but a dispute between his widow and his successor Robert Comyn, who died in 1704, prevented any work being done and it was Comyn's son and namesake who finally restored the chancel.³¹ At Brobury, in spite of repairs in 1680 and 1682, the chancel collapsed after John Stilling's death in 1693 and was rebuilt by his successor, since Stilling's family were too impoverished to pay.³² But in the eighteenth century there is only one recorded case of disrepair at the end of an incumbency. At Evesbatch Robert Hathway died after 28 years in the parish and his widow undertook the repairs.³³

Problems caused by delays and the death of the incumbent disappear after 1713 and a high standard appears to have been achieved. It might be argued that this impression is due to laxity in the courts, but chancels' repairs were still presented and sometimes cited. The difference is that cases did not drag on. Good standards had been set, helped quite possibly by a rise in clerical incomes and the entry of more gentlemen's sons into the profession most, if not all of them, with money of their own. In the key parishes there is no evidence of problems, perhaps because their rectors were a little better off.

30. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 102, p. 76; HD4/1, vol. 103, p. 73; HD7/21/224, 230; HD4/1, vol. 123, p. 106v.; H.C.A. 7002/1/8, pp. 36, 40v, 42.

31. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 102, pp. 102-103; H.D.4/1, vol. 107, p. 24v.; HD7/40 letter 23 November 1710.

32. H.R.O. HD4/36, 11 February 1704/5, 15 November 1705.

33. H.R.O. HD7/41.

Although evidence of clerical neglect is hard to find, it is even harder to find evidence of achievement. The only incumbent to record what he did was Joseph Guest, rector of Winforton from 1691 to 1721. In spite of thorough repairs in 1682, by 1698 his chancel was 'dangerously overhanging'. Here therefore rebuilt the east wall, glazed the east window, stripped and reconstructed the roof and, a few years later, relaid the floor. His comment on the cost was that he 'willingly undertook a charge above my Capacity'.³⁴ Robert Comyn, by contrast, left no details of his restoration at Wigmore, but recorded a cost of £40.³⁵ At Byton it was the churchwardens who revealed in 1716 that their rector had, since his arrival 38 years earlier, built up one side of the chancel and retiled it.³⁶

Three rectors rebuilt their chancels. Benjamin Griffiths at Brobury had to do so;³⁷ and the same may have been true of Timothy Markham at Staunton-on-Wye, since the chancel there was 'not sufficiently repaired' the year before he built it in 1716.³⁸ But Markham married the daughter of a major landowner in the parish, the chancel later contained monuments to him, two sons and his wife's parents, and the living was valued at £80 in 1707.³⁹ So he may have wished to create a gentleman's memorial as much as a chancel. At Tretire the chancel was rebuilt in 1723 as a memorial to Thomas Rosse, rector from 1710 to 1723. Rosse

34. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 124, Weobley Deanery, p. 17; HD7/22/159; F83/4.

35. H.R.O. HD7/40, letter 23 November 1710

36. H.R.O. HD7/42.

37. Above p. 145.

38. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 108, Weobley Deanery, [Michaelmas 1715]; HD4/1, vol. 109, p. 11v.; HD5/14/207; HD7/42.

39. Robinson, Mansions and Manors, p. 256; Bird 'Herefordshire collections', 12, pp. 132-133; H.C.A. 7008/1, p. 486.

himself was a great builder. He built cottages for the poor;⁴⁰ and planned to rebuild the parsonage, although it seems he adapted it, rather than building completely.⁴¹

Most of the evidence for chancels comes from the diocesan records which, with exceptions, relate to disrepair. Yet it is impossible to find more than a few instances of neglect. By contrast, few clergy could afford to rebuild chancels unless they had to, and most took care that neither they nor their successors needed to do so. Most quietly maintained and restored their chancels as the need arose and, in the light of Joseph Guest's comment at Winforton, probably spent more than they could readily afford.

Wider Responsibilities

The wider responsibilities of the parish clergy, unlike those of the senior clergy, were intermittent. In Herefordshire commissions of clergy were not sent to inspect churches in the late seventeenth century as they were in Worcestershire in the sixteen-seventies and sixteen-eighties, in Sussex in 1686 and in Leicestershire in 1692.⁴² But they did serve, with the laity, on other commissions. Each of the deanery commissions established to value livings for Queen Anne's Bounty was composed of several laymen, several clergymen and often a notary. A similar practice was adopted for the care of churches. The commission for

40. C.J.Bird, 'Herefordshire collections, historical, biographical and topographical. Vol. 12 containing an account of the visitation of parish churches', pp. 34-35.

41. H.R.O. HD5/14/70; R.C.H.M. England, An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Herefordshire (3 vols, 1931-1934), 1, p. 240.

42. P. Morgan, Inspections of Churches and Parsonage Houses in the Diocese of Worcester in 1674, 1676, 1684 and 1687, Worcestershire Record Society 78 (1994); W.K. Ford, Chichester Diocesan Surveys 1686 and 1727, Sussex Record Society 78 (1994); Pruett, Leicestershire Clergy, p. 119;

allocating seats at Orleton consisted of four laymen and four clergymen; that for viewing the tower at Weston-under Penyard of three laymen and three clerics.⁴³ In this way the clergy contributed to the care of churches outside their own parishes, in co-operation with the laity, following the model set out in canon law.

Occasionally, too, the parish clergy might contribute to the care of other parish churches through subscriptions. Sixteen incumbents, including fourteen from Herefordshire, contributed £12.15.06 (or nearly 7% of the cost) to the rebuilding of Preston Wynne.⁴⁴ But it seems that their connections with this project were personal not official. Only three held livings in the Dean's peculiar where the chapel was situated and only two were presented by the dean and chapter of Hereford. In this they differ from most of the higher clergy whose gifts were directed to places with which they had official connections. Their more important contribution to the care of churches (as distinct from chancels) was probably in fulfilling the commitments of their office within their parishes.

'A Special Care of His Church'

George Herbert was not alone in expecting that clerical responsibility should extend beyond legal obligations. William Nicolson, visiting Cammerton in the diocese of Carlisle in 1704, found the curate suffering from depression and "unable to assist, and wanting the Authority to influence, the Churchwardens in the execution of their Office".⁴⁵ The clergy were expected to foster good care of churches by the community. Sometimes it is clear that they failed because they could not foster peace and goodwill. At Kingstone the incumbents could do nothing about the quarrels that prolonged problems with the gallery and the clock.

43. H.R.O. AL19/21, p. 93v.; AL19/22, pp. 63-63v.

44. H.R.O. AF27/1.

45. R.S. Ferguson, Miscellany Accounts of the Diocese of Carlisle, with Terriers Delivered to Me at my Primary Visitation [1704] by William Nicolson, Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society, Extra Series [1] (1877), p. 85

The churchwarden complained in 1737 that the parishioners had agreed to move the gallery but had done nothing, although the minister threatened to present it.⁴⁶ Even when the minister did make a presentment (also in 1737) all he said was that "things were not much more out of order than usual."⁴⁷

At Llanwarne where the roof nearly fell in on the incumbent and a leading parishioner in 1747, the rector wrote a letter asking for an order to move the pulpit, rather than making a presentment.⁴⁸ Similarly at Bredenbury, when both pulpit and reading desk were required in 1716, the rector wrote to say that he could not have a desk except by depriving parishioners of a seat against their wishes.⁴⁹ In all these cases the problems had to be solved by the diocese, but no one was admonished. The Church recognised that there were limits to what could be achieved if lay people refused to co-operate, and that there was nothing to be gained from penalising them.

But, though there were failures, there were also occasions when the clergy supported the laity and contributed to fabric and furniture. At Wormbridge in 1673 the churchwarden was cited because the new tower was not finished. The minister wrote him a letter to take to court in May 1674 pointing out that he had been illegally presented by an apparitor, that the tower had not been finished because "ye winter came suddenly upon us and the waies for carriage of tile were impassible" and that the warden was too old and frail to travel about twenty miles to Leominster in winter. He also confirmed that the tower had been finished in March 1674.⁵⁰ At Eaton Bishop the rector joined the leading parishioners in paying for a new communion table and rails in 1709;⁵¹ while the rector of Winforton made several contributions to the restoration of the church between 1699 and 1708.⁵² At Westhide the church clock was paid for in 1728 by the

46. H.R.O. HD7/57, Churchwardens' presentment, 10 August 1737

47. H.R.O. HD7/57, 10 August 1737. 48. H.R.O. HD7/65.

49. H.R.O. HD7/43. 50. H.R.O. HD7/17/75.

51. H.R.O. AH50/2. 52. Below p. 229.

minister, curate and inhabitants; while at Fownhope the vicar joined the parishioners in moving the north door since he, like them, suffered from draughts in stormy weather.⁵³ In these instances clergy and laity acted together, but the clergy could and did act alone. At Westhide, (a chapelry of Stoke Edith) the rector in 1754 gave a reading desk and paid to move the pulpit to a better light.⁵⁴

The incumbent who contributed most in any single parish was Richard Waring, vicar of Withington and its chapelry, Preston Wynne. Waring was a wealthy pluralist, who held the livings of Preston-on-Wye and Blakemere from 1715, together with Withington and Preston Wynne from 1723, until his death in 1769.⁵⁵ He was a prebendary of Llandaff from 1736 and a vicar choral at Hereford for 60 years.⁵⁶ His father was precentor and master of the grammar school at Peterborough and his grandfather a draper in Shrewsbury.⁵⁷ His livings are not included in the valuation of 1707, but it is unlikely that any were good ones and he devoted some of his wealth to augmenting them. At Withington and Preston Wynne alone his generosity was substantial. He contributed £200 to augment the living and spent £300 rebuilding the vicarage.⁵⁸ But his major contribution was to the rebuilding of the chapel.⁵⁹ He gave £200 towards the cost

53. H.R.O. AA69/2; AL19/22, p. 121v. 54. H.R.O. AA69/2.

55. Bannister, *Institutions*, pp. 66, 70, 102.

56. J. & J.A. Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses. A Biographical List of all Known Students, Graduates and Holders of Office...Part 1. From the Earliest Times to 1751* (4 vols, 1922-1927), 4, p. 337; P.L.S. Barrett, 'The College of Vicars Choral' in G.E. Aylmer & J. Tiller, eds, *Hereford Cathedral. A History* (2000), p. 454.

57. Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses to 1751*, 4, p. 338.

58. J. Duncumb, *Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford* (8 vols, 1804-1915), 2, p. 255; R.C.H.M. England *Herefordshire Inventory*, 2, p. 217.

59. Above p. 136.

himself and raised the balance of £192 from a subscription, mainly from among the gentry and clergy in Herefordshire.⁶⁰ In this way he made it possible for the people of Preston Wynne to have a new chapel with a burial ground.

Richard Waring was apparently unique among the Herefordshire clergy of his time in his generosity. But, although few served parishes where a church or chapel was rebuilt, all were likely to be involved in restoration schemes, if only because this could entail temporary arrangements for services. But they might also be more directly drawn in. Winforton was extensively restored between 1693 and 1708, with the rector paying for the chancel; the lady of the manor, Lady Jane Holman, for the north chapel and some of the furniture; and the parishioners and others for the nave and more furniture. Subscriptions were raised towards a clock and new pews. The rector, Joseph Guest, contributed to the clock, paid for a new window in the nave and gave two benches. In addition he kept a record of what was done, drew up accounts for the clock and pews, negotiated with the joiner from Pembridge who made the pews and rebuilt the pulpit, and provided his meals at the rectory. All this entailed effort. There were problems with the clock; and in tribute to Lady Jane Holman when she died, he wrote that 'I hope that she is reaping an everlasting Reward in that eternal Temple that needs no Ornament or Repair.'⁶¹ Joseph Guest was unusual in recording this work in detail. But he may not have been so unusual in supporting his parishioners through a long restoration. Clergy were involved, too, in encouraging the repair, improvement and building of churches in the diocese of Canterbury and, if Herbert's advice was followed, such co-operation may have been widespread.⁶²

60. H.R.O. AF27/1. 61. H.R.O. F83/4.

62. Gregory, Restoration, Reformation, p. 173; W.J. Gregory, The Speculum of Archbishop Thomas Secker Church of England Record Society 2 (1995), pp. xxii-xxiii.

Many Herefordshire livings were poor. The diocesan valuation for 1707 records 119 out of 148 (80%) of the "livings" as worth £50 or less; and the figures given by Virgin show that there were a great many clergy elsewhere in the same predicament.⁶³ On the other hand only 20% of Herefordshire clergy received £60 or more in 1707, as against 60.7% in Leicestershire.⁶⁴ Yet the care of chancels, like that of churches, improved between 1662 and 1762.⁶⁵ In Herefordshire there were still delays in completing work in the sixteen-eighties and disrepair at the end of an incumbency is recorded as late as 1713. Generally though standards were good, but it is difficult to know how good because of a problem with sources. Few clerical diaries or account books exist and they are usually silent about chancel repairs. A single reference has come to light in the diary of George Woodward, rector of East Hendred in Berkshire, who spent several days with workmen in 1753 repairing steps and "patching up holes about the chancel".⁶⁶

However overall Herefordshire conformed to the general pattern of good care and in this the clergy played a part. Their role outside their parishes was limited and it has been suggested that clerical commissions of inspection were abandoned as not particularly effective.⁶⁷ They had two disadvantages. They were not part of the system of visitation provided by canon law and they were exclusively clerical, whereas in canon law the laity played a key role. But within

63. P. Virgin, The Church in an Age of Negligence. Ecclesiastical Structure and Problems of Church Reform 1700-1840 (1989), pp. 274-275. Virgin, using the records of Queen Anne's Bounty gives 91 livings worth up to £50 in Hereford diocese. The discrepancy is probably due to the fact that only rectories and vicarages were legally classed as benefices.

64. Pruett, Leicestershire Clergy, p. 84.

65. Above pp. 84-90.

66. D. Gibson, A Parson in the Vale of White Horse. George Woodward's Letters from East Hendred, 1753-1761 (1983), p. 45.

67. Morgan, Worcester Inspections, p. 8.

their parishes the clergy could do much towards maintaining, restoring and embellishing churches. Few could go as far as Richard Waring. But Joseph Guest probably spoke for most rectors when he recorded that he had spent more than he could afford on his chancel: and for many clergy when he wrote that nothing pleased him more 'than Safety and Decency in the House of God'.⁶⁸

68. H.R.O. F83/4.

PART FOUR. THE LAITY

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

MAJOR LANDOWNERS AND LAY IMPROPRIATORS

[Sir Roger de Coverley] being a good churchman, has beautified the inside of his church with several texts of his own choosing.¹

Principal landowners have been associated by historians with two very different aspects of the care of churches: the building and redecoration of churches and the neglect of chancels.² They are, in particular, closely associated with the image of the fictitious Tory squire, Sir Roger de Coverley, adorning his parish church. But their relationship with the established church was very much more complex than this, and was intertwined with an expectation that they would take a lead in society, maintain a lifestyle appropriate to their station and contribute to the community. Nationally, in parliament, major landowners exercised considerable influence in church affairs and, after the Restoration, the Commons were principally responsible for undermining the ideal of comprehension.³ Locally they had relatives in the upper echelons of the church hierarchy and in ecclesiastical administration, and they enjoyed a profitable economic relationship with the Church as lessees of ecclesiastical property. At parish level they had privileges and obligations as owners of tithes and advowsons and shared, with

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1. A. Ross, ed., Selections from the Tatler and Spectator (1982), p. 229.
 2. F. Heal & C. Holmes, The Gentry in England and Wales, 1500-1700 (1994), pp. 226, 231, 236, 336-337; B.F.L. Clarke, The Building of the Eighteenth Century Church (1963), pp. 46-89
 3. C. Cross, Church and People, 1450-1660. The Triumph of the Laity in the English Church (1976), p. 222; J. Spurr, The Restoration Church of England, 1646-1689 (1994), p. 49.

other lay people, the obligation to pay tithe and church rates. They supplied a growing number of parish clergy; and many churches held their monuments and hatchments, and their gifts of plate and bells. Sometimes parish life was clouded by their quarrels with each other and with the clergy.⁴ But the model of parish life which places major landowners at the centre of that life was not the only one. There were parishes with no principal landowner, where the community was led by farmers and craftsmen. And there were intermediate models in which farmers and craftsmen headed the parish hierarchy, subject to the influence of a principal landowner living in a nearby parish; or where they led the community in conjunction with minor landowning families.

Relations between the clergy and landowners varied. There were quarrels, but influential laymen also relied on the clergy for spiritual counsel and offered them support in hard times.⁵ During the decades after the Restoration both Puritan and Non-Juring landowners gave refuge to fugitive clergy.⁶ That they could do this, and with impunity, is a significant indication of their confidence and their standing in the church, as well as a testimony to their support for the clergy. They also acted independently on many occasions in the care of churches, both in discharging their responsibilities as impropriators and in their voluntary contributions. It is the object of this chapter to see what they achieved in Herefordshire.

Herefordshire Landowners 1662-1762

The landowners of Herefordshire consisted almost entirely of local gentry, including a number enobled during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries:

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4. Heal & Holmes, *Gentry, 1500-1700*, pp. 333-334, 337.
 5. Heal & Holmes, *Gentry 1500-1700*, p. 343-5; H.M. Margoliouth, 'Thomas Traherne's handbook to felicity' in Thomas Traherne *Centuries* (1960), pp. v, vii.
 6. Heal & Holmes, *Gentry 1500-1700*, p. 376; D. Douglas, *English Scholars* (1939), p. 101; G. Rupp, *Religion in England 1688-1791* (1986), p. 16.

notably John Viscount Scudamore of Holme Lacy, Thomas Earl Coningsby of Hampton Court in the parish of Hope-under-Dinmore, Robert Harley Earl of Oxford, whose principal seat was at Brampton Bryan, and James Brydges Duke of Chandos, who was born in Herefordshire and later bought the Mynde at Much Dewchurch as his residence in the county. These wealthy and influential men were joined from 1670 onwards by the Foleys of Stoke Edith and the Knights of Downton, Croft and Wormesley who had industrial fortunes, and the Batemans of Shobdon who were bankers. Other leading families died out, including the Tomkyns of Monnington-on-Wye and the Baskervilles of Eardisley. Families therefore came and went from the ranks of landowners and their distribution from parish to parish varied over time. Their religious allegiances covered the whole spectrum of Anglicanism. Viscount Scudamore was a Laudian;⁷ while Susanna Hopton of Kington and Bishops Frome was a well-known devotional writer of non-juring sympathies.⁸ On the Puritan wing the Harleys were one of the leading families in the borders, and after the Restoration they and the Foleys were part of a network of Puritan families stretching across the Midlands with links in Norfolk and Cornwall.⁹ Conspicuous among them in the early eighteenth century was Edward Harley, younger brother of the first Earl of Oxford, a prominent supporter of religious societies and a promoter of education.¹⁰

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7. I. Atherton, 'Viscount Scudamore's 'Laudianism': the religious practices of the first Viscount Scudamore', Historical Journal, 34 (34), 1991, pp. 567-596; J. Hillaby, 'Calvinists and anti-Calvinists', in R. Shoesmith & R. Richardson, eds, A Definitive History of Abbey Dore (1997), p. 160.
 8. W.M. Jacob, Lay People and Religion in Eighteenth Century England, 105-106; D.N.B. (63 vols, 1885-1900), 27, p. 350; C.J. Robinson, A History of the Mansions and Manors of Herefordshire (1873), p. 27.
 9. J. Eales, Puritan and Roundhead: the Harleys of Brampton Bryan and the Outbreak of the Civil War (1990); J.T. Cliffe, The Puritan Gentry Besieged, 1650-1700 (1993), pp. 75-76.
 10. Jacob, Lay People, p. 134; Robinson, Mansions and Manors, p. 270.

Below the county families came the upper echelons of the parish gentry: families like the Unetts of Castle Frome and the Abrahalls of Foy, some of whom intermarried with the county.¹¹ And below them again were the minor parish gentry, like the Carwardines and Carpenters of Madley and the Gwillyms of Llangarron, who shaded off into the ranks of yeomen farmers.¹² These families, like the county gentry, both flourished and declined; and throughout the hierarchy of gentry families the pattern of interrelationships was considerably complicated by the remarriage of widows and widowers.

Links between landowners, the diocese and the cathedral were sometimes close. Herbert Croft of Croft Castle, himself a local landowner, became Dean and then Bishop of Hereford.¹³ His distant cousin, Viscount Scudamore, was chief steward to the Dean and Chapter and gave £100 after the Restoration for repairing the cathedral.¹⁴ Herbert Aubrey of Clehonger became one of the two diocesan registrars from 1697;¹⁵ and from the Restoration onwards a number of the notaries came from landowning families, including the Crofts, the Walls, the Reignolds and the Hords. Such families also provided recruits for the parish clergy, including Robert Scudamore, rector of Stoke Edith from 1662 to 1684 and Thomas Aubrey vicar of Bredwardine from 1671 to 1680; while three of four rectors of Pencombe between 1693 and 1766 were related by blood or marriage to their patrons, the Coningsbys.¹⁶ The clergy married into landowning families and their sons might join the gentry. Timothy Markham, rector of Staunton-on-Wye from 1714 to 1733, married into the Kyrwood family who owned one of the

11. Robinson, *Mansions and Manors*, pp. 63, 124-125.

12. Robinson, *Mansions and Manors*, pp. 183, 192.

13. *D.N.B.*, 13, p. 105.

14. Atherton, 'Scudamore's 'Laudianism'', p. 575.

15. H.R.O. AL19/20, pp. 192v.-193v.

16. A.T. Bannister, *Diocese of Hereford. Institutions Etc. A.D. 1539-1900* (1923), pp. 33 47; 38, 44; 54, 66, 92; Robinson, *Mansions and Manors*, pp. 148, 230 footnote.

principal estates there;¹⁷ while Sir William Gregory, who bought the manor of How Caple and rebuilt the church there, was the son of a vicar of Fownhope.¹⁸

But if there was integration, there were also tensions. At How Caple in 1662 the principal landowner, Edward Caple pursued a vendetta against the incumbent, which affected the care of the church because he was also the principal churchwarden; and the dispute apparently dragged on until about 1674.¹⁹ At Stretton Grandison Thomas Cooke was in trouble in 1664 for putting up an unlicensed pew, detaining part of the glebe and ploughing up landmarks, not having his children baptised, not receiving communion and behaving irreverently in church.²⁰ The problems over the glebe were resolved out of court, the pew was taken down and the children baptised before the end of the year.²¹ Another of the Cooke family, Younger Cooke, was in dispute with the churchwardens at Stoke Edith in 1679 over the allocation of seats to his property, Court of Showle. He refused to pay church rate or take communion and the dispute was referred to the Bishop.²²

The problems with the Cooke family were fairly swiftly resolved, but at How Caple the same deficiencies in the church and its furnishings remained for twelve years and there were even lengthier disputes involving Herbert Walwyn of Bredwardine who succeeded his father in 1668 and died about 1700. He neglected the chancel and had a recurrent dispute with the vicars over tithes, the

17. C.J. Bird 'Herefordshire collections, historical, biographical and topographical. Volume 12, containing an account of the visitation of parish churches', p. 132; Bannister, *Institutions*, pp. 65, 76.

18. *D.N.B.*, 23, pp. 104-105.

19. H.R.O. HD/7/7/158; HD7/5/5; HD4/1, vol. 117, p. 15v.; HD7/17/7; above chapter 5, p. 2.

20. H.R.O. HD4/1. vol. 99, pp. 211-212, 231.

21. H.R.O. HD4/1. vol. 99, pp. 236-236v., 264v-265v., 283.

22. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 118, pp. 85v., 87v., 91; AL19/19, pp. 153v.-154; above p. 188.

first phase of which lasted from 1668 to 1673.²³ It flared up again in 1680 and more seriously in 1695, culminating in an incident when Walwyn disrupted divine service while excommunicate. He was sentenced to do penance before the vicar and churchwardens after evensong and the tithe dispute ended.²⁴ The length of these two disputes suggests that the church, for whatever reason, was unable to discipline the gentry who defied ecclesiastical law, just as it failed to penalise those who sheltered disaffected clergy. But in Herefordshire dissident gentry were few and landowners were more inclined to exercise their influence in support of the church.

A close relationship between a landowner and his parish church might be expressed in several ways: through residence (and the presence of monuments and hatchments in the church), and through ownership of the advowson or tithes. However these relationships were not universal. The majority of principal landowners were gentlemen but in 1754 there were only 107 gentry seats in 200 parishes, with some parishes having more than one and a substantial number none at all.²⁵ This uneven distribution extended to tithes and advowsons (table 25). In 1707 lay people held advowsons in just over half the parishes whose patron is known. Thomas Foley headed the list with four livings, followed by the Sir Robert Harley, Sir Herbert Croft and Lord Chandos with three each. By comparison the Crown held 12 livings, the Bishop of Hereford 21 and the Dean and Chapter 29.²⁶ As a result, although lay people owned a large percentage of livings, they did not individually exercise enormous influence. But they could make a difference. When the Foleys bought the Stoke Edith estate from the Lingens in 1670 the rector was Robert Scudamore, whose family included both recusants and Laudians. On Scudamore's death, Paul Foley asked Sir Edward

23. H.R.O. HD4/1. vol. 100, pp. 49, 183, 189; vol. 119, p. 34.

24. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 39, Harris v. Matthews, Parry and Walwyn, 5 September 1695 to 18 June 1696.

25. Above p. 65.

26. H.C.A. 7008/1, pp. 480-494, 497, 502.

Table 25. Distribution of gentry seats, advowsons and tithes in lay ownership.

	Date	County	Key Selection
Total Parishes ¹		200	37
Gentry seats	1754	107	32
Advowsons	1707	77 (52%) ²	15 (50%) ³
Great Tithes ³	1650	76 (38%) ⁴	07 (19.4%) ⁵

1. See also appendix VII.
2. Out of 147 "benefices" whose patron is recorded.
3. Out of 30 "benefices" whose patron is recorded.
4. Out of 200 parishes, excluding 18 where laymen shared tithes with ecclesiastics.
5. Out of 36 parishes, excluding 1 where laymen shared tithes with ecclesiastics.

Harley's advice on the choice of a successor and appointed John Wickens, a young man " a lecturer, of pious parents, orthodox and good life".²⁷

Proportionately fewer lay people owned tithes. About 1650 they owned all the great tithes in 38% of parishes and shared them with ecclesiastical dignitaries in another 9%. As impropriators they sat in the chancel and were buried there, but it is doubtful whether ownership of tithes itself gave them much influence, particularly if they were not resident. It did, however, entail responsibility for the chancel, although the picture is complicated in two ways. Firstly landowners leased tithes owned by ecclesiastical dignitaries. The Harleys farmed the tithes of Wigmore from the bishop of Hereford; and Thomas Rawlins of Kilreague and later the Duke of Chandos farmed those of Llangarron from the Dean and Chapter.²⁸ Secondly tithes were restored to the parish clergy both on a permanent and an *ad hoc* basis. Viscount Scudamore restored tithes permanently at Holme Lacy, Abbey Dore, Bolstone and Bosbury; the Hoptons restored those

27. Cliffe, *Puritan Gentry Besieged*, p. 103.

28. H.C.A. 7008/1, p. 208; 7031/3, p. 337; 7031/4, p. 144.

of Bishops Frome; and Sir William Gregory gave the tithes of Haugh Wood in the parish of Woolhope to the vicars there.²⁹ Payments on an *ad hoc* basis were made by Paul Foley at Tarrington and Dormington and the Dean and Chapter did the same in a number of their livings.³⁰ The Harleys also passed on the tithes they farmed at Wigmore, but abandoned the practice after problems arose.³¹ The responsibility of landowners for the care of chancels was thus both extended and reduced but, along with the payment of church rate and tithes, it was the most important legal obligation a landowner might acquire in relation to a parish church.

Chancel Repairs

Lay impropiators have a bad reputation among historians for the care of chancels, yet it is exceedingly difficult to find specific examples of neglect in the literature. Heal and Holmes cite incidents from the late sixteenth century, while Jacob comments that the gentry in the eighteenth century were most usually presented for not repairing chancels or chapels.³² In Hereford diocese they were very rarely presented at all, and like other tithe owners, normally kept chancels in good order.³³ However they were, in the late seventeenth century, responsible for three out of four cases, of prolonged neglect - at Eardisley, Much Marcle and Bredwardine. At Eardisley Benhaile Baskerville failed to repair the chancel from

29. M. Gibson, A View of the Ancient and Present State of the Churches of Door, Home-Lacy and Hempstead; endowed by the Right Honourable John, Lord Viscount Scudamore ... (1727), pp. 25, 36; James Hill's manuscripts, vol. 3, p. 339; H.C.A. R616 for 1685-1686.

30. Cliffe, Puritan Gentry Besieged, p. 108; H.C.A. 7031, p. 551; 7031/4, pp. 174-175.

31. Above p. 121.

32. Heal & Holmes, Gentry, 1500-1700, p. 336; Jacob, Lay People, p. 141.

33. Above pp. 91, 95.

1674 until his death in 1684 and it was another four years before it was in good order.³⁴ A later historian has drawn attention to his poverty.³⁵ But many of the clergy were poor. Yet most kept their chancels well. There is no evidence that Baskerville was hostile to the church, but the problem was not solved until the estate changed hands after his death.

At both Much Marcle and Bredwardine the tithes were divided and at Much Marcle the division, coupled with generosity on the part of one impropriator, was at the root of the problem. Sir John Kyrle undertook all repairs up to his death in 1679 and did not claim anything from his fellow impropriator Sir Thomas Duppa. Difficulties arose because the chancel needed repair in 1688 when Sir John's heir was a minor; and they were still unresolved when Sir Thomas Died in 1694. The diocese was finally able to step in effectively in 1702 and order the parish to do repairs, only because the vestry had illegally levied church rate on the tithes for 20 years.³⁶ Sir John's goodwill had unfortunate consequences. Had he been sole impropriator there would have been no problem.

At Bredwardine the Walwyns owned most of the tithe of grain, valued at £40 or £50 in 1699 and the Vaughans most of the tithe of hay, valued at £10.³⁷ Herbert Walwyn consistently refuse to repair the chancel and may have hoped that the Vaughans would do so alone. In fact they did so once in 1672 and there were several sequestrations, but Walwyn's resistance remains unexplained. He may have been of Baptist sympathies like others in the parish, but he seems to have been obsessively determined to make the most of his tithes and to press claims at the expense of the vicar. The chancel was not restored until Henry

34. Above p. 125..

35. C.J. Robinson, A History of the Castles of Herefordshire and their Lords (1869), p. 47.

36. Above pp. 125-126.

37. H.R.O. HD 7/32.

Cornewall of Moccas bought the tithe in 1707 and it was then properly kept.³⁸

None of these cases reflects well on the impropiators, but their neglect was exceptional and it should be noted that the tithes in these parishes passed into the hands of other major landowners who for the future took their responsibilities seriously. In addition the failures should be set against the voluntary contribution made by landowning families towards the care of churches.

Gifts and Subscriptions

Gifts from landowners are recorded in 15 parishes (table 26). They range from rings of bells and land for a new church to money towards communion rails. In all but three parishes the landowners were resident: the exceptions being Thomas Foley who contributed to the rails at Yarkhill, Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford and his son, who presented bells to Wigmore and the Holmans at Winforton.³⁹ All of them, however, were major property owners in the parishes concerned. Five of the ten families who made gifts had strong religious traditions. The Scudamores had been Laudians and some of the Hoptons had non-juring sympathies; while both the Harleys and the Foleys were of Puritan descent. Most interestingly of all the Holmans, who lived at Warkworth near Banbury, were a staunchly recusant family.⁴⁰ In two other instances also there are indications of family tradition. Thomas Coningsby's grandfather, Fitzwilliam Coningsby had known Laud and the inclinations of the Brydges of Tyberton may be surmised from the altar piece incorporating symbols of the Passion and the

38. Above pp. 126-128, 236-237. .

39. H.R.O. F12/iv/40; F. Sharpe, The Church Bells of Herefordshire, their Inscriptions and Founders (5 vols, 1966-1975), 4, pp. 546-547; H.R.O. F83/4.

40. G. Rupp, Religion in England 1688-1791 (1986), pp. 186-187.

Table 26. Gifts from landowners to parish churches, c.1663-1762

Family	Place	Gift	Dates
Abrahall	Foy	E. window	1671-1675
Abrahall	Kings Caple	chancel: seat & window repair	1675
Brydges*	Aconbury	adorning	before 1714
Brydges	Tyberton	altar piece	1728
Coningsby	Hope-under-Dinmore	adorning	before 1718
Foley	Yarkhill	money towards rails	1740
Harley	Wigmore	ring of bells	1721
Harley	Titley	unspecified	1757-1762
Holman*	Winforton	rails, money towards pulpit	1701-1707
Hopton*	Canon Frome	adorning & pews	1717-1723
Scudamore	Holme Lacy	restoration, adorning & pews	c.1663-1668
Scudamore	Holme Lacy	ring of bells	1709
Scudamore	Kentchurch	ring of bells	1730
Unett	Castle Frome	adorning	before 1718
Wardour	Whitney	land for churchyard	1740

*Associated with the building or restoration of vaults & aisles

Eucharist.⁴¹ Little evidence survives about schemes of decoration paid for by landowners, except at Holme Lacy, restored by Viscount Scudamore in the

41. J. Hillaby, 'Beauty of holiness': the east window' in Shoesmith & Richardson, Dore Abbey, p. 187; N. Pevsner, The Buildings of England. Herefordshire (1963), p. 103; G.W.O. Addleshaw & F. Etchells, The Architectural Setting of Anglican Worship, footnote 4, p. 159 where the date is incorrectly given as 1720.

sixteen-sixties, which was inevitably Laudian.⁴² Occasionally they might contribute to subscriptions for improving churches and it is disappointing that, although subscriptions for clocks were made at Winforton, Kingstone and Westhide the only subscription list to survive is at Winforton in 1699, where there is also a list for the pews installed in 1707. The subscription for the clock is headed by the Holmans, the non-resident lords of the manor, and that for the pews by the Barnesleys, the principal landowners in the neighbouring parish of Eardisley.⁴³

The pattern that emerges is one of generosity directed, however, to parishes where the landowners lived or had large estates. This serves to reinforce the view that there was often a strong sense of personal identity between major landowners and their parish churches, as evidenced by monuments and hatchments, plate and soft furnishings. But the number of parishes to benefit was small and it is noteworthy in Herefordshire that at least six of the ten families concerned were exceptionally wealthy, five were families with a tradition of strong religious commitment and that the gifts from the Abrahalls were bequests from men who left no children.

Rebuilding

Of the fifteen churches and chapels rebuilt between 1662 and 1762, five churches and a chapel were built by landowners; and one family, the Hoptons, replaced a wooden tower in brick (table 27). The chapel at Marston Stannett was rebuilt for pastoral reasons to replace a medieval chapel. Elsewhere personal reasons seems to have been paramount. Monnington-on-Wye and How Capel were rebuilt to provide family memorials; while Tyberton, Stoke Edith and Shobdon were incorporated into larger schemes in which country houses were rebuilt and landscapes re-designed.⁴⁴

42. J. Hillaby, 'Calvinists and anti-Calvinists' in Shoesmith & Richardson, *Dore Abbey*, p. 162.

43. H.R.O. F83/4; HD7/57; AA69/2. 44. Above pp. 134-144.

Table 27. Churches & chapels rebuilt or altered by landowners, 1679-1756.

Family	Place	Work Done	Date
Bateman	Shobdon	church & chancel	1749-1756
Brydges	Tyberton	church, chancel & tower	1719-1722
Foley	Stoke Edith	church & chancel	1740-1741
Gregory	How Caple	church, tower & transept	1693-1695
Hopton	Canon Frome	brick tower	1730
Rogers	Marston Stannett	chapel of ease	1711
Tomkyns	Monnington-on-Wye	church & chancel	1679-1680

Building required supervision. The work of craftsmen and labourers had to be co-ordinated and allowance made for interruptions caused by bad weather and harvests.⁴⁵ At Minsterley in Shropshire, where Lord Weymouth rebuilt the church between 1689 and 1692 the work was supervised by the architect with Lord Weymouth's steward as clerk of the works.⁴⁶ But in Herefordshire architects seem only to have drawn up the plans. At Tyberton between 1719 and 1722 rebuilding was supervised by Francis Brydges, who managed the Tyberton estate for his son William, a lawyer working in London who used Tyberton Court only for vacations. The plans were drawn by an unidentified London surveyor.⁴⁷ But this is the earliest classical church in Herefordshire and, since Francis Brydges lived in Hereford close to the cathedral, it is tempting to think that it was influenced by Philip and Thomas Bisse.

At Stoke Edith rebuilding was supervised by Thomas Foley himself, although he was in London from December 1740 to early May 1741, when he left

45. D.R. Hainsworth, Stewards, Lords and People. The Estate Steward and his World in Later Stuart England (1992), pp. 166, 239.

46. G. Randall, The English Parish Church (1982), p. 280, note 83; Hainsworth, Stewards, Lord and People, p. 166.

47. Herefordshire Houses, Parks and Gardens. Notes to Accompany an Exhibition (1964), p. 19.

money for the church with his steward.⁴⁸ But when in residence he dealt with the workmen personally, though not to his wife's satisfaction. She wrote to a friend in July 1741:

Our church is almost finished, but by the blunders of the workmen, and the obstinacy of Mr Wickins [the rector], it will not be so handsome as the draught, which vexes me extremely; I wish Mr. Foley had not so much complaisance in the affair.⁴⁹

Ten days later when he paid Richard Dier, the plasterer, in full for his work, Thomas Foley added half a guinea "for his good behaviour", a bonus not given to anyone else.⁵⁰

The rebuilding of Shobdon was supervised partly by Richard Bateman, who managed the estate for his nephew John, Viscount Bateman and partly by their steward Benjamin Fallows. Richard Bateman usually spent part of the summer at Shobdon and the rest of the year in London and Windsor, so that plans for the church went to and fro between 1746 and 1755. But in 1749 something went very wrong and it seems that in 1750, 1752 and 1753 he spent between six and eight months each year at Shobdon instead of the usual three or four. There is no proof, but the need for close supervision of the new church was probably a major factor.⁵¹

The five churches and the chapel rebuilt by landowners were all in parishes where they or their families had seats, again a reinforcement of the perception that a sense of identity with the parish church was significant for those who restored, embellished or rebuilt churches. Such projects entailed trouble and expense. The recorded costs for Stoke Edith are about £550 for a nave and chancel built on to a medieval tower, compared with £392 for nave, chancel and

48. H.R.O. E12/iv/40 1 December 1740 - 2 May 1741.

49. *Life and Correspondence of Mrs Delaney*, 2 (1861), p. 163, quoted in B.F.L. Clarke, *Eighteenth-Century Church*, p. 63.

50. H.R.O. E12/iv/174/2 [5]; E12/iv/40 24 July 1741.

51. Above pp. 137-139.

tower at Preston Wynne and approximately £240 for nave, chancel and cupola at Titley.⁵² Moreover things could and did go wrong, so it is perhaps not surprising to find that supervision was in the hands of landowners themselves or the relatives who managed their estates.

Beyond the parishes where they owned property, landowners could support rebuilding through subscriptions for new churches. In Herefordshire there was only one such subscription, at Preston Wynne in 1727, where landowning families contributed £79.07.06 or 41.5% of the subscription, amounting to 20.2% of the total.⁵³ Both county and parish gentry were solidly represented, among them some of the families who had rebuilt or made gifts to other churches. None of them had any known connection with Preston Wynne and they were probably approached personally by the vicar, Richard Waring.

Local Commissions

Landowners not only contributed financially to the care of churches through their rates and tithes and through the money spent on rebuilding and improving churches. They sat on local commissions of inspection. In Hereford diocese these commissions were modelled on the deanery commissions set up to value livings for Queen Anne's Bounty. Each of these consisted of six to ten members of whom three or four would be clergy and the rest laymen, including landowners.⁵⁴ The commission to allocate pews at Orleton in 1722 consisted of four laymen, two of them landowners and four clergy. Five of them, including the landowners, made the allocation.⁵⁵ At Weston-under-Penyard in 1738 the tower was inspected by a commission of three clergy and three laymen, two of them

52. H.R.O. E12/iv/174/1-14, E12/iv/40; AF27/1; AB56/21, 31.

53. The clergy contributed 25.2% of the subscription, exclusive of 6.3% from commutation money. The balance of approximately 27% came from professional men, widows and a few people whose status and connections with Herefordshire are unclear.

54. H.C.A. 7008/1, pp. 224-239. 55. H.R.O. AL19/21, pp. 93v., 95.

being landowners from nearby parishes.⁵⁶ Such activity was sporadic, but it allowed landowners to participate with the clergy in the care of churches outside their own parishes and provided wider opportunities for the kind of clerical/lay co-operation envisaged in canon law.⁵⁷

Conclusions

The Herefordshire evidence does to a limited extent support the view that landowners neglected chancels. But those who did so were a tiny minority in a group who usually cared for chancels well and who remedied the neglect of their predecessors when necessary. The evidence also confirms the image of families rebuilding, improving and adorning churches, an activity which was evident throughout England.⁵⁸ However analysis of the kind undertaken for this chapter might well reveal that elsewhere, as in Herefordshire, only a small percentage of parishes benefited from such generosity.

Yet the association of landowners with country churches remained strong and by 1662 such churches had already, for centuries, been used by the gentry as an environment in which to display their authority.⁵⁹ In a sense, though, a country church was a poor theatre for ostentation. Few people outside the parish would be aware of it. Landowners who wished to display their wealth and influence could do so more effectively by rebuilding houses and redesigning the landscape around them. Perhaps this is why there are so many notable country houses of the period from 1662 to 1762 and so few notable churches and why Secker urged the

56. H.R.O. AI.91/22, p. 63-63v.

57. Above pp. 225-226.

58. Clarke, *Eighteenth-Century Church* (1963), pp. 50-89; M. Whiffen, *Stuart and Georgian Churches* (1947-48), pp. 13-45.

59. Heal & Holmes, *Gentry 1500-1700* (1994), p. 369.

rebuilding and embellishment of churches on the gentry.⁶⁰ Landowners played a conspicuous role in building and improving churches, but they were part of a wider pattern of activity in which many others were participants.

60. T. Secker, 'A charge delivered to the clergy of the Diocese of Oxford in the year 1753' in Eight Charges delivered to the Clergy of the Dioceses of Oxford and Canterbury (1769), pp. 179-180.

PART FOUR. THE LAITY

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

SMALLER LANDOWNERS AND TENANTS

The common people have a custom, in all these parts, of kneeling down and saying a short prayer when they go occasionally into a church.¹

Within the ecclesiastical system the lay people of early modern England shared two legal obligations in the parishes where they owned or occupied property. Firstly they paid church rates, out of which the church was maintained and its expenses met. Secondly they paid tithes towards the income of their minister and, out of these tithes, the minister or the impropriator maintained the chancel. In country districts they were predominantly parish gentry, farmers, craftsmen, labourers and paupers. They are not easy to study, since most of them avoided both the church courts and the religious controversies of the period. Recently, however, historians have argued that, within a wide spectrum of belief, most supported the established church, although within a society where local

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1. J.J. Cartwright, The Travels through England of Dr. Richard Pococke... during the Years 1750, 1751 and Later Years ..., Camden Society New Series 42 & 44 (2 vols, 1888-1889), 2, p. 228.

diversity was the norm.² Traditions established under the Tudors and Stuarts remained strong in Hanoverian times and, as late as 1756, Richard Pococke (quoted above) observed in Herefordshire a respect for the church as a place of devotion. It has also been argued that church building and improvement in the early eighteenth century provides a significant indicator of lay piety.³

Money for the care of churches came from the church rate, with a legal distinction drawn between the fabric for which all ratepayers were responsible and other essentials for which only residents were rateable.⁴ In practice the distinction was usually ignored, no doubt for simplicity's sake. Ratepayers fell into three categories: residents; non-residents whose property included a dwelling and who were represented in church by their tenants; and non-residents who paid on land and farm buildings which carried no right to a seat. The clergy were exempt from church rate and impropiators from church rate on their tithes. Otherwise everyone was liable, although the poor occupants of rateable properties might be exempted. The rates were levied in the parish and spent there so that the community was well aware of what happened to the money.

Few people objected to payment. Some objections were linked with

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2. J. Maltby, Prayer Book and People in Early Stuart England (1998), p. 8; A. Walsham 'The parochial roots of Laudianism revisited: catholics, anti-calvinists and 'parish Anglicans' in early Stuart England', Journal of Ecclesiastical History 49 (1998), pp. 623-624; I. Green 'Anglicanism in Stuart and Hanoverian England' in S. Gilley & W.J. Shiels, eds, A History of Religion in Britain. Practice and Belief from Pre-Roman Times to the Present (1994), pp. 180, 187; D. Cressy, Birth, Marriage and Death. Ritual, Religion and the Life Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England (1997), p. 478.
 3. W.M. Jacob, Lay People and Religion in the Early Eighteenth Century (1996), pp. 221-222.
 4. E. Cannan, History of Local Rates in England (2nd edn, 1912), pp. 15, 24-25.

disputes. Younger Cooke refused to pay his rates at Stoke Edith until the argument over seats for his property was resolved;⁵ and at Kingstone in the seventeen-thirties there were wide-spread objections when non-residents and some residents, who had not subscribed to the clock, protested at paying for its maintenance and wanted a reduction in their rates.⁶ Sometimes refusal to pay occurred when there were very steep temporary rises in the rate to meet the cost of recasting a ring of bells or rebuilding a church. Bells were recast at Eardisley in 1662 and at Allensmore in 1721.⁷ In both parishes several people refused to pay rates, including Thomas Baskerville of Eardisley whose brother was churchwarden.⁸ At Titley when the church was rebuilt in 1762 there were also defaulters and the vestry authorised the officers to recover the money.⁹

The Church's expectations, for all the laity alike, were set out in a number of texts available in every parish. Basic legal requirements were defined in the Canons of 1603(1604) and in visitation articles. These were expanded into a system of belief and practice by the Bible, the Book of Common Prayer of 1662, the Book of Homilies and Bishop Jewell's sermons. People were expected to attend church on Sundays, to receive communion three times a year, to bring infants for baptism, to observe Anglican discipline in the sacraments of marriage and burial, to send children and servants to catechism, to pay church rates and tithes and to live in peace with their neighbours. How far people attended church on a regular basis it is hard to say. Long journeys to church, bad weather, disability and the care of small children reduced church attendance. It also seems that more people attended at festivals, since the gallery at Kingstone was used only on those occasions and for visiting choirs.¹⁰

5. H.R.O. HD7/21/30; HD4/1, vol. 118, pp. 91, 97v.

6. H.R.O. HD7/57.

7. H.R.O. HD7/4/99; H.C.A. 7002/1/9, pp. 18, 19, 20v., 22v.

8. H.R.O. HD7/6/192; H.C.A. 7002/1/9, pp. 23-24; C.J. Robinson, A History of the Mansion and Manors of Herefordshire, (1873), pp. 106-107.

9. H.R.O. AB56/21. 10. H.R.O. HD7/57.

But seats were usually allotted according to status and many households with only one seat would have contained two adults. Some no doubt sat in unallocated seats or arranged to use a neighbour's seat, but other households probably attended on a representative basis and the absence of one or more members was quite usual. Between April 1757 and March 1758, when Thomas Turner was churchwarden of East Hoathly in Sussex, the level of church attendance in his household varied. On Christmas Day four of the five members of his household attended twice, his wife being ill. Other wise their attendance was more sporadic. On Sunday, May 8th he was "at home all day ...". On May 22nd he and his wife only were at church in the afternoon. On June 5th the whole household was at church.¹¹ Their practice confirms that the view that most households, if not most individuals, attended church regularly.¹² But church seating arrangements did not always reflect the importance of the household as a unit in society. Occasionally, in the case of ordinary people, some members of a family might sit together, as they did at Holme Lacy and Orleton in Herefordshire. Often, however, households with two or three seats were accommodated in different pews, while children and servants sat apart; and in some churches men and women were seated in different pews.¹³

Yet it was the heads of households, as ratepayers who maintained the parish church and who came together to fund restoration, improvement and rebuilding. This chapter has two aims: to examine the evidence for such commitments whether they were paid for out of the rates or on a voluntary basis; and to compare the range of what was done in this way with work funded by the great landowners who have been the centre of attention in earlier studies.

The Spread of Evidence

The range of evidence for the restoration, improvement and rebuilding of

11. D. Vaisey, *The Diary of Thomas Turner, 1754-1765* (1984), pp. 98,99, 127.

12. Jacob. *Lay People*, p. 12. 13. Above p. 187.

churches by communities is very limited and presents an interesting contrast with that available for the work of principal landowners. The achievements of the latter are evident in the buildings themselves and are recorded in the writings of antiquaries and, more rarely, in landowners' accounts. Churches rebuilt by the wealthy do not often feature in diocesan records because they were usually completed quickly and there was no concern over lack of progress and lack of funds. Much parochial rebuilding, by contrast, is known only from the diocesan records since it was a slow process and was monitored by the authorities until the work was finished. Occasionally, as at Norton Canon and Whitney, fabric that is recognisably eighteenth-century survives, but a great deal has been removed by the Victorians or is masked the practice of re-using medieval windows and doors. In the same way contemporary furniture and decoration has been superseded and only bells survive as some indication of how much communities spent on their churches in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Evidence for restoration, recasting of bells, adorning and new seating, paid for out of parish funds, can be found in both diocesan and parish records, with itemised churchwardens' accounts providing most of the evidence. In seven of the twelve parishes where long runs of accounts exist, restoration work was carried out between 1674 and 1755 and in two others, Almeley and Little Hereford, there is evidence that major work was done (table 28). The seven key parishes are profiled in tables 9 to 12, but the tables conceal several shifts in the social hierarchy and a change in the number of gentry houses in each parish between 1662 and 1762.¹⁴ Significantly, at the time when restorations were carried out, there was no principal family in any parish which was both exceptionally wealthy and long-established. The same was true when rings of bells were recast.

Restoration and Improvements by Ratepayers

When parish communities paid for restoration and improvement they

14. Above pp. 100-102, 109.

could face substantial temporary rises in church rate, sometimes over a period of several years. Bequests for the repair of the church were almost unheard of in rural parishes, but Almeley owned houses from which the income was added to the rates and Stretton Grandison had land from which the rent went towards the

Table 28. Parochial restoration 1674-1755

Parish	Dates	Work Done	Cost
Almeley ¹	1742-44	Restoration/re-ordering	£150.00.00? ²
Brampton Abbots	1715	Ceiling & Paving	£06.10.08
Edwin Ralph	1748	Roof stripped	£09.19.10
Little Hereford ¹	1722	Adorning/reordering	Not known
Pencombe ³	1717	Restoration	£26.10.08
Pipe & Lyde	1749-53,55	Restoration	£29.17.06½
Stoke Edith	1674	Roof stripped	£22.17.11
Whitbourne	1679	Restoration	£25.12.10
Winforton	1699-1700,04 1708, 1710	Restoration	Not known ⁴

1. Not key parishes 2. No itemised accounts 3. After a storm in 1716. 4. No accounts

Table 29. Rate rises to pay for restoration 1674-1755

Parish	Dates	Annual rates	
		Restoration	Norm ¹
Almeley	1742-44	c.£50	£18
Brampton Abbots	1715	£10.05.11	£3-5
Edwin Ralph	1748	£13.00.04 ²	£3-4.10s.
Pencombe	1717	£31.06.04	£5-6
Pipe & Lyde	1749-53,55	£7.13.08 ³	c.£1.10s.-£2
Stoke Edith	1674	£34.00.00½	£7-10
Whitbourne	1679	£26.00.00	£8-11
Winforton	1699-1700,04 1708, 1710	Not known	£2.10s.-3.10s. ⁴

1. For years immediately before & after the beginning & end of restoration.
 2. Made up of £9.05.00 levied at 1s. in the pound for the roof & £3.15.04 levied at 4d in the pound for other expenses.
 3. Over 5 years. Receipts for 1752 are not recorded. 4. From 1705.

fabric.¹⁵ Figures for the cost of restoration in nine parishes are given in table 28.

They range from a relatively modest sum of £6.10.08 for a new ceiling and paving at Brampton Abbots to nearly £30 at Pipe, with an exceptional sum of about £150 at Almeley. The impact on the rates (where known) is given in table 29. In every case the rise was substantial, even at Almeley and Pipe where work was spread over several years. In some places large sums were also raised to enlarge and recast rings of bells. In the three parishes for which figures are available the costs ranged from About £64 to over £94 (table 30). Such places were not alone. At least 26 other country parishes did the same during this period.¹⁶ Almost all the money, for both restoration and for bells, came out of church rates. But at Almeley a very small amount came from the rent of parish houses; and both Almeley and Whitbourne borrowed sums of £40 and £50 respectively in order to have money available while the rates were being collected.¹⁷

These enormous rises caused little protest, probably because the care of a church was under local control. The vestry decided what should be done and levied the necessary rate, which was then spent in the parish. The work was there for all to see and the accounts were audited by the vestry which could and did disallow items. Church wardens who failed to submit accounts had to be presented at visitations.¹⁸ But normally there were no problems and the diocese was only involved if work was in hand during a visitation.

15. H.R.O. G73/1; W76/26 & 27.

16. Above p. 107.

17. H.R.O. G73/1; AL92/1.

18. G. Bray, ed., The Anglican Canons 1527-1947, Church of England Record Society 6 (1998), Canon 89.

Table 30. Rings of bells recast by parishes and their cost

Pop. = Population

Parish	Pop. 1671	Date	Cost ¹	Annual rate	
				Bells	Norm ²
Eaton Bishop	225	1725	£94.09.06	£28.02.03 ³	£5 - £8
Whitbourne	463	1717	£87.13.03	£97.00.01	£6 - £9
Winforton	251	1722	£64.17.03	£21.17.03 ⁴	£3 - £5

1. Minimum costs which can be certainly attributed to bells.

2. For years before and after the cost of bells was met.

3. Over 6 years 1724-1729. 4. Over 4 years 1722-1725.

Adorning and new furniture were much less expensive. The recorded costs of adorning range from £1.06.00 at Edwin Ralph in 1719 to £5 at Eaton Bishop in 1718;¹⁹ while communion rails cost £1.12.07 at Titley in 1698 and about £1.15.09 in 1685 at Whitbourne where the Bishop gave the timber.²⁰ Seating was more expensive. "Boarding" the pews at Stoke Edith in 1679 cost £6.12.09 and a new set of uniform pews for Winforton in 1707 cost £13.03.00.²¹ Sums of up to six or seven pounds could often be spent without causing a rise in the rate, provided that no extensive maintenance was needed in the same year and that there was no need to recast a bell or replace a surplice, a bible or a prayer book. But larger sums had to be met by a rise in rates or by other means. This is probably why nearly half the cost of seats at Winforton was met out of a subscription and much of the rest came from a levy on those entitled to seats.²² The parish had a large percentage of households exempt from hearth tax in 1671 and its ordinary church rate was between £2.10.00 and £3.10.00 a year.²³

Limited though it is, the evidence does show that that rural parishes

19. H.R.O. N20/1; N25/8. 20. H.R.O. AB566/24; A92/1.

21. H.R.O. J72/9; F83/4. 22. H.R.O. F83/4.

23. M.A. Faraday, 'The hearth tax in Herefordshire', T.W.N.F.C. (1973), p.84; H.R.O. F83/4.

carried out both restoration and the kind of embellishment and improvement that is more usually associated with wealthy individuals and urban congregations. Although the poorer parishes could not afford much, others raised quite astonishing sums over short periods of time and with few objections. Lack of documentation makes it impossible to prove that they were typical but, given the random survival of archives, it seems probable that they were.

Rebuilding by Ratepayers

Out of fifteen church and chapels rebuilt between 1662 and 1762 eight were apparently paid for out of church rates (table 31). In four parishes extra help was received from a prominent landowner, either at the time or later. At Whitney William Wardour gave the land for a new churchyard when the church had to be moved to save it from the River Wye in 1740; and at Titley in 1758 the Earl of Oxford made an offer of help for which the parish recorded its thanks without specifying what he proposed.²⁴ Hope-under-Dinmore, rebuilt about 1708, was adorned by Lord Coningsby probably about 1716;²⁵ while the Hoptons adorned Canon Frome and provided new pews between 1717 and 1723 after they had added an aisle and a vault to the church (completed in 1674). They then rebuilt the tower in 1730.²⁶ Such contributions suggest that landowners saw themselves as members of parochial communities in which they co-operated with their neighbours, by taking at least some of the burden off the rates, as well as paying a substantial part of those rates themselves.

But, as the figures for Titley show, that burden was still very heavy. Titley normally levied a church rate of threepence or fourpence in the pound, bringing in between £6 and £8. But in 1761 the parish allowed Thomas Chandler, the churchwarden, £220 to rebuild the church and meet other expenses and levied an initial rate of two and sixpence in the pound which raised £60, with the proviso

24. Above pp. 141-144. 25. Above p. 112.

26. Above pp. 159.

Table 31. Parish churches rebuilt out of church rate.

Allensmore 1668-1682; 1716	Norton Canon 1705-1717
Brobury 1676-1682; 1694-1695	St Weonards c. 1710
Canon Frome c.1669-1675*	Titley 1757-1763*
Hope-under-Dinmore c.1708*	Whitney 1740*

*Personal contributions were made in these parishes by principal landowners either at the time or during the next sixty years.

that a further rate would be levied when the money had been spent. How many times they levied a rate of two and sixpence is not recorded, but there may have been two further levies before the rate dropped to one and sixpence in 1763.²⁷ The total cost of about £240 for partially rebuilding and furnishing Titley was substantial, but considerably lower than the cost of £392 for Preston Wynne and about £550 for Stoke Edith where the medieval tower was retained. But £240 was, nonetheless, a huge sum for a country parish to find, and this may well explain why churches rebuilt at parish expense were either adapted or reconstructed. Only Canon Frome "burnt by the warres to the ground" was completely rebuilt and only there and at Norton Canon were the new churches built of brick. Elsewhere they were of stone incorporating much old fabric. Only Allensmore received a grant: £10 from the diocesan commutation money between 1680 and 1682.²⁸

In addition to churches, local communities rebuilt at least eight towers (with or without spires) and two turrets between 1662 and 1762 (table 32). The cost is recorded only at Eardisland in 1760, where the parish accepted an estimate of £155.²⁹ Again the cost would explain why towers and spires were only rebuilt out of necessity and why spires might be taken down.³⁰ And as with more extensive rebuilding, grants were unusual: £5.5.0 from the diocesan commutation

27. H.R.O. AB56/21; above ch. 8, p. 9.

28. H.R.O. AL19/20, p. 137v. 29. H.R.O. AJ32/58.

30. Above pp. 150-155.

money towards the tower at Byford in 1716 and £3.03.00 from the Dean and Chapter of Hereford at Dinedor in 1736.³¹

Table 32. Towers/spires and turrets rebuilt out of church rates.

Brampton Abbots (turret) 1663	Eardisley 1705-1710
Byford c.1710-1717 ¹	Middleton-on-the-Hill c.1725
Dilwyn 1687-1690	Llanrothal (turret) 1680-1682
Dinedor c.1737 ²	Shobdon 1725-1730
Eardisland 1760	Wormbridge 1674

1. Grant of £5.5.0. from diocesan commutation money.

2. Grant of £3.03.00 from the Dean and Chapter of Hereford.

Parish communities rebuilt eight churches, eight towers (with or without spires) and two turrets, as compared with six churches, a chapel and a tower rebuilt by principal landowners. Major landowners were, however, involved in such projects. They were ratepayers in the parishes concerned and in some parishes they made an extra contribution. Everyone was part of a shared tradition of rebuilding, restoration and improvement.

Gifts and Subscriptions

The list of gifts made by individuals who were not major landowners is short compared with that for the principal landowning families (tables 26 & 33). Leading landowners made sixteen gifts in fourteen parishes, most of them very substantial. Others made eight gifts in six parishes and there were four subscriptions. Two donations were very considerable: paving for a very large church from William Bowkes at Bodenham and a ring of bells from an anonymous woman parishioner at Eardisland.³² But the subscriptions at

31. H.C.A. 7008/1, p. 516; 7031/4, p. 176.

32. N.C. Reeves, The Leon Valley. Three Herefordshire Villages. Kingsland, Monkland and Eardisland (1980), pp. 136, 139; J. Duncumb, Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford (8 vols, 1804-1815), 2, p. 59.

Winforton, amounting to £7.14.00 for the clock and £5.19.00 in part payment for the pews, came from lay people of all ranks, with additional contributions from the rector; while the clock for Westhide was bought by the minister, curate and inhabitants.³³ But at Kingstone the subscription was controversial and when the clock broke down there were disputes over paying for repairs.³⁴ This indication that subscriptions were not without difficulty is confirmed by a comment from the rector of Winforton that acquiring a clock by subscription was "an Enterprise sufficiently difficult in the Prosecution, yet more abundantly satisfactory to myself and others when accomplish'd."³⁵

Table 33. Individual gifts and subscriptions 1667-1756

Parish	Date	Donor	Item
Bodenham	1714	William Bowkes	Paving
Eardisland	1728	Anonymous	Ring of bells
Eaton Bishop	1667	John Squier	Font ¹
" "	1709	Rector & leading parishioners	Communion table & rails
Kingstone	1727	Subscription	Clock
" "	1756	R. Russel	Bell
Madley	1731	Henry Dottine	Vestry fitted up
Westhide	1728	Subscription	Clock
Winforton	1699	Subscription	Clock
" "	1701	Parishioners	Communion table
" "	1707	Subscription & levy	Pews
" "	1707	John Stringer	Bricks for a window

1. Now at Credenhill.

People from all walks of life helped to fund work on parish churches, collectively and individually. But in the two parishes where details are available subscriptions

33. H.R.O. F83/4; AA69/2.

34. H.R.O. HD7/57. 35. H.R.O. F83/4.

were fraught with problems. It was also necessary for someone (probably the minister) to be willing to handle the money and oversee the work. These factors may explain why subscriptions were not apparently more common and why parishes preferred to depend on the church rate, levied proportionately on all properties and spent by the wardens, whose accounts were audited by the vestry.

Conclusions

The building and rebuilding of churches outside towns has been associated with wealthy landowners, who rebuilt in a more or less fashionable style.³⁶ In Herefordshire it is certainly true that churches were rebuilt by the county's leading landowners. Between 1662 and 1762 they rebuilt six churches, a chapel and a tower. They also contributed to the subscription for the chapel at Preston Wynne and made personal contributions in four of the eight parishes where churches were rebuilt out of the rates.³⁷ Their contribution therefore overlapped with that of others and was not confined to places where they paid the whole cost of a new church. But it should not be allowed to obscure the parallel contribution of ratepayers. There were quite a few parishes without a wealthy landowner to pay any part of the costs. In such places the burden was distributed between the 'middling sort' and the smaller ratepayers. This applied in four places where churches were rebuilt and in at least six of the ten parishes which rebuilt towers or turrets (tables 31 & 32).

Communities, like individuals, contributed to the improvement of churches. Relatively few gifts came from individuals outside the ranks of the gentry, but several subscriptions are on record and, significantly the cost of much

36. M. Whiffen, Stuart and Georgian Churches. The Architecture of the Church of England outside London 1603-1837 (1947-48), pp. 14-45; B.F.L. Clarke, The Building of the Eighteenth Century Church (1963), pp. 46-95; G. Randall, The English Parish Church (1982), pp. 110, 117, 119, 125-128.

37. Above pp. 243-244, 258..

restoration and adorning was paid for out of the rates. It was country ratepayers, too, who usually met the cost of new sets of pews and galleries. Rural parishes could not afford the lavish altar pieces commissioned by the rich individually and by urban churchgoers, but they could and did to an extraordinary extent raise money to recast and enlarge rings of bells. They also, in case of need, redecorated, reroofed and reordered their churches. How far such communal effort was the norm it is impossible to say, because there has been no comparable study of the care of churches. But at Uffington in Berkshire, for example, the steeple was repaired in 1704 for £23.10.00 and in 1715 one of the aisles was rebuilt.³⁸ More research on churchwardens' accounts is needed in order to establish how far restoration and embellishment were paid for out of the rates as part of a continuous process of attention to the care of churches. Recently both Jacob and Gibson have stressed the extent to which churches were in fact rebuilt, restored and adorned by groups of lay people, but the emphasis is on town churches which are better recorded in print.³⁹ However in a rural context Jacob, in his study of Norfolk, has suggested that as long as religion was central to people's lives, they were probably content to maintain their churches and that the essentially communal nature of society down to the mid-eighteenth century was a significant factor.⁴⁰ On the other hand poverty, particularly in times of agricultural depression, could undermine a community; and the character and prosperity of a community were therefore important in the care of churches.⁴¹

It would be illuminating to know how far, if at all, programmes of restoration and improvement were prompted by inspections and primary visitations. Much was apparently done independently of such events. In

38. B.F.L. Clarke, Eighteenth-Century Church, pp. 91-92.

39. W.M. Jacob, Lay People, pp. 190-199; W. Gibson, The Church of England 1688-1832 (2001), pp. 169-172.

40. W.M. Jacob, 'Clergy and society in Norfolk 1707-1806' unpubl. Ph. D. thesis, University of Exeter (1982), pp. 277, 434.

41. Jacob, Lay People, pp. 191-192.

Herefordshire restoration and rebuilding can be identified from the sixteen-sixties onwards, but there is a noticeable lack of restoration in the seventeen-twenties and seventeen-thirties, perhaps because of the impact of Philip Bisse's campaign of improvement (tables 28, 30, 31). If this is a correct perception (based as it is on very slender evidence), then it seems that the higher clergy could and did succeed in improving the condition of churches overall at least for a time. But the laity should also be given credit for their own initiatives and for their diligence in maintaining churches, factors which were crucial in the survival of those churches, since like all buildings, they needed frequent attention. Lay independence is evident in the ordering of churches and there seems no reason why it should not have come into play in maintenance, restoration and rebuilding.⁴² It was in their churches that lay people gathered together to worship, to hear God's word, to receive the sacraments and to learn their duty to God and their neighbours.⁴³

42. Above pp. 178-179.

43. 'Homily for repairing and keeping clean, and comely adorning of churches' in Certain Sermons or Homilies Appointed to be Read in Churches ...and Now Thought Fit to be Reprinted by authority from the Kings Most Excellent Majesty (1673), pp. 161-164.

PART FOUR. THE LAITY

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN. CRAFTSMEN

Except the Lord build the house: their labour is but lost that build it.¹

The majority of country people in early modern England were engaged in agriculture. But among them, in many parishes, there were craftsmen, including those who worked on churches. Whether they were Anglicans, recusants or protestant non-conformists, they were subject, like everyone else, to the church courts and they paid church rates and tithes in the parishes where they owned and occupied property. They have attracted little attention from historians. In general terms they might form family businesses in which the same craft was followed by fathers and sons, brothers and cousins. And they were part of a wider network of dynasties which linked town and country, locality and region, and which drew people together across the bounds of parish, kin ship and occupation.² They appear, too, in a professional capacity waiting on vestries, tendering for contracts, and supervising as well as carrying out work.³

Canon law laid no specific requirements on them as craftsmen. The Church of England, following the psalmist, put its faith in God; and beyond this, vestries and individuals depended on the integrity and skill of the men they employed. Those who worked on the care of churches in Herefordshire divide into three groups: bellfounders, master craftsmen in the building and furniture trades and what one might call "parish" craftsmen. The bellfounders worked on a regional basis supplying bells in several different counties and dioceses. The

1. Psalm 127, verse 1.

2. A. Everitt, 'Dynasty and community since the seventeenth century', in A. Everitt, *Landscape and Community in England* (1985), pp. 311-313.

3. B.F.L. Clarke, *The Building of the Eighteenth Century Church* (1963), pp. 33-45, 156-161.

master builders and furniture makers who can be identified almost all came from Herefordshire, the exceptions being Stephen Reeves of Gloucester, who carried out stone carving for the new church at Tyberton and John Wood of Bath who made the altar piece there.⁴ Many of the master craftsmen lived in Hereford itself or one of the market towns and most worked well beyond the limits of their own parishes. The parish craftsmen are those who appear time and time again in churchwardens' accounts working on the same churches and who can sometimes be identified as residents from rating records and lists of officers. The aim of this chapter is to examine the requirements laid on these men, to look at some of the problems encountered by them and their employers, and to consider the scope of their activities and their identity.

Bellfounders

Herefordshire between 1662 and 1762 was served by a number of bellfounders; some of them individuals whose businesses died with them and some members of dynasties which continued for several generations (table 34).

Table 34. Bellfounders active in Herefordshire 1662-1762.

Name	Place of work	Period
Clibury family	Wellington (Salop)	1590-c.1700
John Finch	Hereford	c.1626-1664
John Martin	Worcester	c.1644-1691
Henry Williams	Glasbury (Radnor/Brecon)	c.1677-1721
Rudhall family	Gloucester	1679-1830
Evans family	Chepstow (Monmouth)	1686-c.1764
Sylvanus Lloyd	Leominster?	c. 1725

On many occasions they were asked to recast just a few bells. John Martin, for example, cast three bells for Bodenham in 1665, two for Madley in 1669, a

4. B.A. Bailey, 'William Brydges and the rebuilding of Tyberton church', T.W.N.F.C. 37 (1961-1963), pp. 211, 216.

sanctus bell for Stoke Edith in 1670 and two bells for Croft in 1682.⁵ Sometimes there is evidence of consultation. Thomas Higgins, churchwarden of Winforton, travelled some ten miles in 1721 to consult the Glasbury bellfounder Henry Williams, who was paid £1.10.00 probably for advice.⁶ Williams died the same year and the ring was recast and enlarged in 1722 by Abraham Rudhall of Gloucester. Recasting often involved adding new metal and a hint of the negotiations involved in trading old bells and metal comes from a letter from Richard Bateman to Benjamin Fallows at Shobdon. Rudhall of Gloucester had offered only eight shillings a pound for the bells and Bateman gave instructions that a small piece was to be broken off and sent for valuation.⁷

But the most significant work carried out for parish churches was the recasting and enlargement of complete rings of bells. This was done for at least 33 parishes in Herefordshire, including at Whitbourne in 1717, Winforton in 1722 and Eaton Bishop in 1725.⁸ In these three parishes the work was entrusted to the Rudhall family and the records give some indication of what was involved for both bellfounders and parishioners. Agreement had to be reached with the founder, the bells taken down, transported to Gloucester, brought back again and re-hung. Bell-frames had to be re-made or modified and the parish had to raise exceptional sums of money. Whitbourne drew up formal articles of agreement with Abraham Rudhall the elder and the churchwardens made several journeys to Gloucester, a round trip of sixty to seventy miles. But, by borrowing money, the parish met the entire cost of about £87 in one year.⁹ At Eaton Bishop Abraham Rudhall the younger visited the parish himself and signed an agreement entered in the parish book. Thereafter queries were settled by letter. The agreement specified that Rudhall should be paid in two instalments, one due when the bells were delivered and one a year later. The bells were recast in 1725 and delivered

5. F. Sharpe, The Church Bells of Herefordshire: their Inscriptions and Founders (5 vols, 1966-1975), 5, pp. 638-744.

6. H.R.O. F83/4. 7. H.R.O. G39/III/E/236.

8. Above pp. 255-256. 9. H.R.O. AL92/1.

in 1726, but the money was paid in instalments from 1726 to 1728.¹⁰ At Winforton there was confusion over paying for the bells because the rector, who had kept the parish accounts since 1705, died in October 1721 and the principal churchwarden was illiterate. The confusion was resolved through a court case which ran from 4 October 1723 to 8 April 1725 in the course of which Abraham Rudhall the younger was called as a witness.¹¹ There were also problems over payment at Bodenham when a churchwarden died in office in 1665 and the diocese had to intervene there too.¹²

The master bellfounders were not only skilled craftsmen. They were substantial businessmen who travelled the country, inspected bells, negotiated contracts and bargained for old bells and bell metal. They worked in conjunction with bell-hangers and those who transported bells by water and overland. Hundreds, if not thousands, of pounds worth of bells passed through their foundries every year and they handled large sums of money. They had also to sustain their businesses when payments were delayed.

Master Craftsmen: Building and Furniture Trades

The master craftsmen engaged to rebuild, adorn and furnish churches between 1662 and 1762 were an elite. Initially they might be asked to inspect and advise on a building. At Titley in 1757 "Experienced" craftsmen concluded that the church was dangerous and beyond repair.¹³ Similarly, a carpenter was asked to view the roof at Llanwarne in 1747 and he described it as "very bad".¹⁴ Parish vestries rebuilding churches and towers invited masons to tender. Titley in 1761 drew up a short list of three named masons "or any other proper person that shall be approved of by the parishioners" and in the event the contract went to Richard

10. H.R.O. N25/10, p. 54; N25/8.

11. H.R.O. F83/4; HD4/1, vol. 47.

12. H.R.O. HD7/8/34; above ch. 13, p. 7.

13. H.R.O. AB56/21. 14. H.R.O. HD7/65.

Price of Brilley who was not on the original short list.¹⁵ At Eardisland in 1760 "several Workmen or Builders" attended a vestry meeting with estimates for rebuilding the tower and Thomas Hooper of Yarpole, who put in the lowest estimate, was chosen.¹⁶ In both instances the master mason was responsible for supplying all materials and for their transport. Master masons were also employed at Tyberton and Shobdon. At Tyberton the work was supervised by William Brydges' father, Francis, who managed the estate for him. But since he lived in Hereford, about ten miles away, the master mason, Robert Pritchard of Clehonger, probably carried much day-to-day responsibility. The bricks were made on the estate, but carved stonework was supplied by Stephen Reeves of Gloucester.¹⁷ At Shobdon the mason, Gethin, seems to have worked under the direct supervision of Richard Bateman or, in his absence the steward Benjamin Fallows.¹⁸ In such circumstances, as at Stoke Edith and Preston Wynne, where supervision was in the hands of those who commissioned the work, craftsmen were employed individually.¹⁹

Terms of engagement for individuals varied. Payment by measure was one option. The joiner, the bricklayer and the plasterer who helped build Stoke Edith were all paid in this way.²⁰ So were the joiners who made pews at Winforton and Titley.²¹ But if this was not possible a sum was agreed in advance, as it was with the Kington joiner who made the new pulpit, reading desk and

15. H.R.O. AB56/21. The parish book is in poor condition and the masons' names are not very legible.

16. H.R.O. AJ32/58.

17. B.A. Bailey, 'Tyberton church', pp. 211-214; Herefordshire Houses, Parks and Gardens. Notes to Accompany an Exhibition (1964), pp. 19-20.

18. H.R.O. G39/III/E/232,245.

19. H.R.O. E12/iv/174/2-8; AF27/1.

20. H.R.O. E12/iv/174/2.

21. H.R.O. AB56/21, 3 October 1762.

sounding board for Titley.²² Similar terms applied to adorning. In 1718 Eaton Bishop agreed with William Fisher, limner, of the City of Hereford, that he would adorn the church for £5. The agreement specified that he would redraw the King's Arms and that, as well as the Decalogue, the Lord's Prayer and the Creed, he would include twelve sentences and Death and Time.²³ Several other limners were employed on the same basis to other adorn churches, but there is no evidence for where they lived, although it is probable that Hanibal Williams who worked at Whitbourne in 1686 and 1693 and at Edwin Ralph in 1719, was based at Bromyard.²⁴ Normally the limners provided their own materials, but when Mr. Barney was engaged to adorn Whitbourne in 1715, payments were made to a second man for preparing the paints and to a third for bringing them to Whitbourne.²⁵

The terms and conditions on which master craftsmen were employed varied. Sometimes they took on a complete contract and sometimes part of it. Sometimes they provided materials and sometimes not. When those who commissioned work were free as individuals to supervise, only a limited amount was delegated to the craftsmen and they were employed individually for specific parts of the work. But if a parish employed a master craftsman to rebuild a church or a tower, then he took complete responsibility for workmen, materials and transport and would be handling even larger sums of money than the bellfounders. Several of the master masons - Richard Price of Brilley, Robert Pritchard of Clehonger and Thomas Hooper of Yarpole - came from country parishes, but like the bellfounders they took considerable responsibility and needed to be good co-ordinators and good businessmen.

Parish Craftsmen

The craftsmen who carried out restoration and maintenance work on

22. H.R.O. AB/21, 10 February 1763.

23. H.R.O. N25/10, p. 33. 24. H.R.O. AL92/1; N20/2.

25. H.R.O. AL92/1

parish churches were parochial in the sense that they were employed time and again on the same churches and, with the possible exception of glaziers, probably lived in or near the parishes where they worked. Most of them probably worked time and again on the same churches within a fairly well-defined locality, but the limited number of itemised churchwardens' accounts makes it impossible to study their catchment areas. Parish records rarely throw much light on their connections, but in two parishes - Winforton and Brampton Abbots - it is possible to fill in a few details.

Several craftsmen at Winforton came from the Higgins family who were prominent in the parish in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as craftsmen and landowners. The pulpit was given in 1613 by Thomas Higgins, gentleman, whose namesake had one of the most valuable estates in the parish in 1663; and Richard Higgins repaired the north chapel of the parish church in 1682, probably as tenant of the manor.²⁶ Nine of the family contributed to the new clock in 1699, including four married men, Thomas Higgins the elder, Thomas Higgins the younger, Roger and Richard. Thomas Higgins the younger made the 'clock house' for the new clock and he, Roger and Richard all worked on the church in the first two decades of the eighteenth century, usually as carpenters. Thomas Higgins the elder and Thomas Higgins the younger between them served as churchwardens for at least nineteen years from 1693 to 1725; and the younger man was second churchwarden to Edmund Mason from 1721 to 1725. During those years the bells were recast, problems over payment for them had to be resolved, and a new parish chest was made to keep the plate, books and documents which had been kept by the rector, Joseph Guest, until his death in 1721.²⁷

26. R.C.H.M. England, An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Herefordshire (3 vols, 1931-1934), 3, p. 213; M.A. Faraday, Herefordshire Militia Assessments of 1663, Royal Historical Society, Camden Fourth Series 10 (1972), p. 84; H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 124, Weobley Deanery, p. 17.

27. H.R.O. F83/4; HD4/1, vol. 47; abpve pp. 209, 267..

Another man who appears regularly in the Winforton accounts from 1687 to 1722 is the blacksmith John Collins. He was asked frequently to repair the bells or the clock and did a large amount of work taking down and rehangng the bells in 1722. He also supplied small items like hinges and nails and he made the locks and keys for the new chest. But the craftsman most frequently employed from at least 1685 to 1718 was John Houlds or Howles, the mason whose name is on the datestone on the chancel. He was churchwarden in 1704 and carried out a whole range of work on the church over the years. He helped rebuild the porch, repaired the roof and walls, and relaid paving slabs when people were buried in the nave. He restored the chancel in 1698 and probably restored the roof and floor of the nave between 1699 and 1704. He had two namesakes in the parish who, like him, subscribed to the clock in 1699, but the name disappears from the parish records after 1718.²⁸

Men like the Higgins family and John Houlds, who were prosperous enough to serve as churchwardens, probably enjoyed a reasonable degree of financial security. But the same was not true for all craftsmen, as the history of Thomas Vobes of Brampton Abbots reveals. Thomas Vobes the younger arrived in Brampton Abbots from the neighbouring parish of Upton Bishop in 1739 as a child of four or five with his parents, a brother and two sisters. About 1743, at the age of nine, he became servant to the curate and in 1744 was paid eightpence for some work in the church. The family was evidently in difficulties at the time, since that year Brampton Abbots obtained a settlement certificate for them from Upton Bishop. But by 1746 Thomas Vobes the elder was working as a millwright and his son went to join him. Eight years later the father died and the son took over the business at the age of twenty. He was evidently capable because in 1756, aged twenty-two, he was paid the fairly substantial sum of £8.09.10 "as per bill" by the churchwardens. Subsequently, in 1766 or 1767, he moved to St. Weonards for seven years, married and had a child. But in 1773 or 1774 he

28. H.R.O. F83/4.

returned to Brampton Abbots and was still there when in 1802, aged 68, he applied for poor relief and there was doubt as to whether the family settlement certificate, which included him as a child, was still valid, given that he had lived and worked for so long in Brampton Abbots as an adult.²⁹

Thomas Vobes was probably characteristic of many people, including many craftsmen, in the countryside. They occupied the gulf between parish elites and the long-term poor and might pass part of their lives in poverty, often as children or in old age. Detailed study of parish records, coupled where possible with wills and title deeds, would reveal a little more about them. But, for the most part, they will remain shadowy figures, like the casual labourers (often paupers) who worked with them, clearing rubbish out of churches and gathering moss.

Relations with Employers

Evidence for relations between craftsmen and employers is very sparse indeed, amounting to three instances where there were problems, one where good conduct was rewarded by an employer and one where a good relationship was mirrored in generosity on the part of the craftsmen. When Stoke Edith was rebuilt in 1740 and 1741 "blunders" by the workmen, of which Mrs. Foley complained, may well have lain behind her husband's decision to pay a bonus to only one craftsman, the plasterer Richard Dier.³⁰ Complaints also surface at Brampton Abbots in 1708, when the churchwarden charged five shillings for "making up the accounts and other troubles with the workmen";³¹ and at Moreton-in-Lugg in 1721 where a workman "disappointed" the parish and they had to find another.³² But by contrast at Winforton when the pulpit was removed and rebuilt in 1707,

29. H.R.O. A15/18; AK27/44/6.

30. H.R.O. E12/iv/40, 24 July 1741; Life and Correspondence of Mrs Delaney, 2 (1861), p. 163, quoted in Clarke, Eighteenth-Century Church, (1963), p. 63.

31. H.R.O. AA15/18. 32. H.R.O. HD7/18/309.

William Parlar the joiner gave four days labour and John Houlds the mason one day.³³

No other examples of such gifts have come to light, but on the whole, it seems, employers and craftsmen worked amicably together. This was probably in large part because most of the the craftsmen were local men, well known to their employers and engaged for their skills and their knowledge of where to source materials. Sometimes, however, there were difficulties that affected everyone, principally bad weather. At Tyberton in 1672 the church was not well covered or paved because of the weather, which was again hindering work in the autumn of 1673.³⁴ At Byford in 1710 winter delayed work on the steeple and at Titley in 1719 bad weather held up repairs.³⁵ Such problems were not uncommon and, judging from the surviving records, the weather caused far more difficulties than incompetence or lack of co-operation from craftsmen.

Conclusions

The tasks which characterise the work of craftsmen in Herefordshire confirm what has been found by Basil Clarke in the case of master craftsmen. They gave advice, carried out surveys, submitted estimates and entered into formal agreements, in addition to supervising and doing work themselves. Such activities had been a familiar part of parish and estate administration long before 1662 and continued to be so after 1762. But they cover only part of the work of caring for a church. In the intervals of restoration and rebuilding, churches were kept in repair by a small army of craftsmen and labourers. Further research on regional and local dynasties would tell us more about them personally and further study of parish records would throw more light on what they did. But for the moment they remain obscure. Their work was not regulated by canon law and

33. H.R.O. F83/4.

34. H.C.A. 4593, 4594 (2).

35. H.R.O. HD7/40; HD7/44.

was usually paid for, not given. But their contribution to the care of churches was as essential as that of the clergy and the notaries public, the churchwardens and the ratepayers; and as significant as that of benefactors and subscribers. Indeed, without their skills, nothing could have been effectively achieved at all.

PART FOUR. THE LAITY.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN. CHURCHWARDENS.

You shall swear truly and faithfully to execute the Office of a Churchwarden within your Parish, according to the best of your skill and knowledge; and also to present all such Things and Persons, as to your knowledge are presentable by the Laws Ecclesiastical of the Realm.¹

Churchwardens have been almost entirely ignored by ecclesiastical historians. Spaeth has outlined their financial responsibilities, but only Jacob has given detailed attention to the scope of their duties. His account confirms that these were extensive; that considerable amounts of time and money were devoted to the care of churches and their embellishment; and that churchwardens and vestries were businesslike in meeting commitments.² Historians of local government have treated the wardens' obligations unevenly. The Webbs considered that few people objected to holding the office because it was one of dignity and importance without very onerous duties. But they then stress that "parochial office was a burden and not a privilege" and place churchwardens first among the parish officers "alike in representative character, extent of functions and financial

1. Articles of Enquiry Concerning Matters Ecclesiastical Exhibited to the Minister, Churchwardens and Sidesmen of every Parish ... [a contemporary set of articles stitched into the front of Madley Parish Book 1698-1713, H.R.O. BK52/35], p. 1.
2. D.A. Spaeth, The Church in an Age of Danger. Parsons and Parishioners, 1660-1740 (200), pp. 100-101; W.M. Jacob, Lay People and Religion in the Early Eighteenth Century (1996), pp. 8-10, 208-212.

responsibility".³ This, in the light of evidence from parish and diocesan records in Herefordshire, seems a more accurate judgement than the view that the office was not very onerous. Tate gives considerable space to their ecclesiastical duties, but much of his discussion of church fabric is concerned with adorning (including the decoration of churches with greenery), provision of communion wine and bell-ringing, so that the weight of their responsibility for church buildings is obscured.⁴

Churchwardens were in fact key officers and, as the Canons of 1603(1604) make plain, their faithful discharge of their oath was "the chief means whereby public offences may be reformed and punished".⁵ Twice a year, under oath, they were required to make presentments in writing and to attend in person at visitations in response to articles issued by the ecclesiastical authorities. Those articles ended with a reminder that wardens were liable to punishment by the courts for wilful omission and perjury, and some added the further reminder that "wilful Perjury will meet with a more heavy Judgement hereafter."⁶

The Canons and articles together provide a guide to the wardens' ecclesiastical duties.⁷ By canon law they were responsible for the care of the church (except the chancel) and its furnishings; for assisting the minister in the

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3. S. & B. Webb, English Local Government from the Revolution to the Municipal Corporations Act [1]: the Parish and the County (1906), pp. 18-21.
 4. W.E. Tate, The Parish Chest (3rd edn, 1969), pp. 90-115.
 5. 'The Canons of 1603(1604)' in G. Bray, ed., The Anglican Canons 1527-1947, Church of England Record Society 6 (1998), Canon 26.
 6. E.R.C. Brinkworth, Episcopal Visitation Book for the Archdeaconry of Buckingham, 1662 Buckinghamshire Record Society [6] (1947), p. 93; Articles of Enquiry Concerning Matters Ecclesiastical ... H.R.O. BK52/35, pp. 1 & 8.
 7. The following canons of 1603(1604) refer to churchwardens: 19-20, 26-28, 52, 53, 57, 82-85, 88-89, 109-113, 115-119.

orderly conduct of services; and for making presentments twice a year at visitations. In addition they had to register visiting preachers, pay the parish clerk if local custom required this, submit accounts, and attend the minister when schismatics came to repent. Visitation articles amplify these requirements: to report on the state of the church and its chancel, the churchyard and the property of the benefice; to present misconduct on the part of clergy and laity; and to monitor those who required licences or controlled charities. Such requirements imply a high degree of integrity, since the wardens reported on their own care of the church and its furnishings and, more often than not, they were trustees of parish charities. In addition they normally had responsibility for allocating seats, which extended at Holme Lacy to deciding which child in each family should sit with his or her parents.⁸ They might also be asked to act as sequestrators.⁹

Churchwardens at this period were very numerous. At any one time there were between 18,000 and 20,000 in office in England, of varying degrees of competence and experience, as their oath explicitly acknowledges in asking them to fulfil the office to the best of their skill and knowledge. Their capacities varied. Clergy in Kent in 1758 complained of wardens who were neglectful, ignorant and illiterate.¹⁰ Yet their ranks included men like Richard Gough, the historian of Myddle who had a certain amount of legal training and Thomas Turner of East Hoathly, who was a widely read man and conscientious.¹¹ Whatever their abilities they were trusted, not only by the ecclesiastical authorities and those setting up charities, but by the secular powers. Like the vestries, to which they answered in the first instance, they acquired a growing number of non-ecclesiastical responsibilities, ranging from the destruction of

8. B.M. Add. Ms. 11044. 9. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 122, p. 81v.

10. W.J. Gregory, Restoration, Reformation and Reform, 1660-1828. Archbishops of Canterbury and their Diocese (2000), p. 261.

11. D. Hey, 'Introduction' in R. Gough, The History of Myddle (Penguin edn, 1981), pp. 8, 13-16; D. Vaisey, The Diary of Thomas Turner, 1754-1765 (1984), pp. xxii-xxiii, xxv, 347-353.

vermin to the administration of the poor law and the management of open field systems.¹²

Methods of Appointment and Terms of Office

Methods of election varied from parish to parish. Under canon law churchwardens were chosen jointly by the minister and parishioners, with the minister choosing one and the parishioners the other in case of disagreement.¹³ Additional criteria applied locally, subject to the fact that in some parishes the minister and the parish chose one warden each by custom. In some parishes the office was served by the heads of certain households, including women. In others it was more open, but there was very often a rota and in some places more than two wardens were chosen, normally to represent individual townships.¹⁴ Economic status was an important, if unofficial, factor because of the financial burden.¹⁵ In a group of Cambridgeshire parishes in the seventeenth century the wardens came from the middle echelons of the parish hierarchy before the Civil

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12. J.H. Bettey, Church and Parish. A Guide for Local Historians (1981), pp. 105-106; E. Carlson, 'The origins, function and status of churchwardens with particular reference to the diocese of Ely' in M. Spufford, ed., The World of Rural Dissenters, 1520-1725 (1995), pp. 180-186; W.E. Tate, The Parish Chest. A Study of the Records of Parochial Administration in England (3rd edn, 1969), pp. 90-95.
 13. 'Canons of 1603(1604)', Canon 89.
 14. S. & B. Webb, English Local Government from the Revolution to the Municipal Corporations Act [1]: the Parish and the County (1906), pp. 16, 21-22; Tate, Parish Chest, pp. 85-86.
 15. D. Eastwood, Government and Community in the English Provinces 1700-1870 (1997), p. 28; H.R. French, 'Social status, localism and 'the middling sort of people' in England 1620-1750', Past and Present 166 (2000), p. 93; below pp. 286-288.

War, and from its upper echelons afterwards.¹⁶ Most wardens were substantial farmers, craftsmen and tradesmen, but an analysis of three parishes in Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Staffordshire has shown how diverse their position might be, depending on the pattern of economic activity in the parish and its neighbourhood.¹⁷

Herefordshire appears to conform to the general pattern where methods of election are concerned, although evidence is thin. Bisse, who required replies to each article at his primary visitation in 1716, asked only whether the churchwardens were chosen every year; and 78 out of 96 rural parishes (c.81%) simply replied 'Yes', with a further eight specifying that they had one warden only.¹⁸ Three parishes are known, at different dates, to have chosen their wardens by joint consent of the minister and parishioners.¹⁹ In another five the minister chose one and the parishioners the other according to local custom.²⁰ Four parishes chose their wardens from certain houses, either by rota or by custom, including Abbey Dore, where a rota made in 1681 had to be updated in 1732 to accommodate changes in the pattern of landholding; and Whitbourne where the minister and parishioners chose one each from a list of eligible properties.²¹ Parishes seem, in fact to have been free to do as they pleased, provided they made

16. E. Carlson, 'Office of churchwarden', pp. 195-199.

17. J. Kent, 'The rural 'middling sort' in early modern England, circa 1640-1740: some economic, political and socio-cultural characteristics', *Rural History* 10 (1999), pp. 19-23.

18. H.R.O. HD5/14/40-60, 62-70, 72-101, 103-113, 115-134, 182-196, 198-210, 212-216.

19. H.R.O. HD5/14/54 Little Birch; HD7/14/339 Staunton-on-Wye; HD7/15/226 Titley.

20. H.R.O.L HD5/14/118 Ocle Pychard; HD5/14/195 Eardisley; HD7/11/27 Whitbourne; HD7/11/34 Edwin Ralph; HD7/15/265 Winforton.

21. H.R.O. HD5/14/45 Foy; HD5/14/55 Little Dewchurch; H.R.O. AC16/25 Abbey Dore; HD7/11/27 Whitbourne.

a choice. Eaton Bishop in 1714 set up its own rota by which all owners of property worth £10 a year and all tenants of property worth £20 were required to serve as churchwardens and overseers "in strict rota".²² Women were permitted to find substitutes with the consent of the courts.²³ But some chose to take up office. At Stoke Edith Mary Hide served in 1742, the year after the church was rebuilt.²⁴ And at Madley, Elizabeth Hargest served in 1745 when major roof repairs were carried out.²⁵

Periods of office varied, but some idea of normal practice can be derived from the twelve parishes where long runs of accounts survive (appendix II.A.1). In seven parishes wardens served for one year at a time and the same practice was adopted at Titley from 1696 when the parish decided to appoint one warden and not two.²⁶ But at Pipe, Stoke Edith, Stretton Grandison and Winforton it was usual for wardens to serve at least two years at a time and often much longer. The same practice appears at Moreton-on-Lugg where frequently one man would serve as junior churchwarden for two or three years and then for another two or three years as senior warden.²⁷ Sometimes wardens continued in office to complete rebuilding or restoration or to resolve financial problems. This happened, for example, at Byford in 1716 when the tower was rebuilt; at Eaton Bishop in 1726 when the new bells were being re-hung; and at Winforton from 1721 to 1725 when the same wardens stayed in office while the bells were paid for.²⁸

22. H.R.O. N25/10, p. 24.

23. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 105, p. 46 Canon Frome; HD4/1, vol. 110, p. 25 Garway and Kings Caple; HD4/1, vol 111, p.348 Stretton Sugwas.

24. H.R.O.J72/9. 25. H.R.O. BK52/39.

26. Brampton Abbots, Eaton Bishop, Edwin Ralph, Hentland, Madley, Pencombe and Whitbourne; H.R.O. AB56/21.

27. H.R.O.HD7/16/249-372.

28. Above pp. 151-152, 209, 266-267.

No research has been done on parish elites in Herefordshire; but they were probably, as elsewhere, largely composed of farmers. The gentry rarely held the office of churchwarden, although at Titley the Greenly family did so regularly and in 1732 "Mr. Harley", the younger brother of the Earl of Oxford, was warden there. Elsewhere George Vaughan held the office at Hentland in 1677, Lane Harris at Pencombe in 1678 and Thomas Davies at Stretton Grandison in 1729.²⁹ Craftsmen were also chosen. At Winforton Thomas Higgins the elder and Thomas Higgins the younger, both of them carpenters, served for at least nineteen years between them from 1693 to 1725 and John Houlds, a mason who worked frequently on the church, was warden in 1704.³⁰ Much was left to the discretion of the parishes, even to the extent that they might have one warden not two and, although elections were held annually, there was no obligation to elect different people every year. As long as the office was filled and the wardens submitted returns and attended visitations the parishes could suit themselves and follow their own custom.

Rebuilding, Restoration and Repair

Major decisions about churches were taken by the vestry, which would normally be attended by all those eligible for office and any other landholders or parishioners who wished to attend. Rates were agreed by the vestry; decisions made about the choice of craftsmen and the terms of contracts; and occasionally, the contracts or drafts contracts were written into the parish book.³¹ Vestries might also make their own inspections. When John Jones was engaged to strip and shingle the north side of the spire at Eaton Bishop in 1738, the parishioners

29. H.R.O. AB56/21. N13/1; L33/6; J29/1. 30. H.R.O.F83/4.

31. For example a contract for the bells at Eaton Bishop in 1725, H.R.O. N25/10, p. 54; and a series of contracts for the church, bell-turret and furniture at Titley in 1762 & 1763, H.R.O. AB56/21; B. Clarke, The Building of the Eighteenth-Century Church (1963), pp. 33-45.

insisted on inspecting and approving the materials he obtained before paying him a first instalment for the work.³² At Titley, when the church was rebuilt in 1762, the contract specified that the builder was to be paid by instalments, with the final payment due only after the building had been surveyed on behalf of the parish.³³ For major contracts, master craftsmen were made responsible for finding and transporting materials as well as supplying labour, which took much of the burden off the wardens.³⁴ But on some occasions, when the contractors supplied most of the materials, the wardens might be asked to supply additional items. When Hope-under-Dinmore employed Thomas Colomb to repair the steeple in 1740, they agreed that he should supply all the materials except new timber for the roof. And again, in 1760, when they engaged joiners to mend the bell wheels, the joiners supplied "all necessities" except iron and leather.³⁵

But contracts under which master craftsmen supplied materials, transport and labour were rare. Normally the churchwardens found all three. Some idea of what this might entail may be gleaned from the accounts for the restoration of the roof at Stoke Edith in 1674 and for the recasting of the bells at Eaton Bishop in 1725. At Stoke Edith the wardens bought 5000 "tiles" and 40 crests, as well as lath and other timber, nails, lime and hair and clay. They paid for carriage and, when the work was overtaken by the harvest, they paid a premium for carriage. They paid five craftsmen, two of them with an assistant; and they employed a woman to gather moss and a man to clear rubbish out of the church, a task which took three days.³⁶

At Eaton Bishop recasting the bells occupied the parish from 1724, when they were taken down, until 1726 when they were re-hung; although the final debts were not paid until 1729. In addition to the materials acquired at Stoke Edith in 1674, the wardens of Eaton Bishop in 1725 and 1726 bought paving,

32. H.R.O. N25/10. 33. H.R.O. AB56/21.

34. Above p. 268. 35. H.R.O. N31/32.

36. H.R.O. J72/9.

hoops, bell ropes, oil, grease and a basket. They called in masons to "view the steeple". They employed six craftsmen, including the bellfounder Abraham Rudhall, and several labourers who helped to take down the bells and later removed rubbish and tiles from the church. The wardens arranged the transport of the bells to and from Gloucester and had to bring in building materials. Their accounts also record payments for letters from Gloucester, for a court order to repair the bells and for making up the accounts.³⁷

Such major undertakings occurred only at intervals, although they were a normal part of parish life viewed over a period of time. But parish churches generally required at least some repair on an annual basis and even for small tasks churchwardens had to seek out workmen, arrange transport and find materials. Sometimes special journeys were necessary and these were paid for. The churchwarden of Titley, for example went "to Kington three times for hair" in 1744, a distance of about three miles; and one of his successors in 1753 went "to Brilley for tiles" covering eight or nine miles each way.³⁸ Wardens were also paid, very occasionally for their time. Such payments are recorded, for example, at Pipe and Lyde in 1678 or 1679 when one of the wardens received five shillings for "My labour - being with the workmen and directing them 5 days".³⁹ Similarly, one of the wardens at Whitbourne in 1691 charged sixpence for his expenses in connection with glazing several windows; and Jonas Parry, the churchwarden of Titley in 1696, was paid a shilling for helping a workman.⁴⁰ But normally expenses were paid only for visitations, as the parish of Hentland made plain in 1725.⁴¹

Visitations and Courts

Churchwardens submitted presentments and attended two visitations a

37. H.R.O. N25/8. 38. H.R.O. AB56/31.

39. H.R.O. G20/3. 40. H.R.O. AL92/1; AB56/24.

41. H.R.O. N13/1, memorandum 7 June 1725.

year. They might also attend a third visitation when their successors were sworn in. If they failed to send in a presentment or if they failed to attend they were cited. They might also be cited in the intervals of visitations, to receive orders to repair the parish church or to certify the completion of rebuilding or repairs. On occasion failure to certify probably stemmed from absentmindedness on the part of the wardens or the fact that no one was available to bring a certificate to Hereford. But citation to certify was also used by the courts as a mechanism for monitoring progress on rebuilding. At Norton Canon the rebuilding of church and chancel extended from 1705 to 1717.⁴² The parish was cited in the diocesan court several times in 1707 and 1708 in the wake of Humphrey Humphrey's triennial visitation in 1706.⁴³ It was cited again in 1710 and 1716.⁴⁴ But the final stages of supervision were transferred to the Dean's court, which cited the church in 1717 as "being not quite finished".⁴⁵ Finally in 1718 there is a citation for providing and repairing four seats and a chest "presented to be long bespoke and expected."⁴⁶ Similarly Shobdon was cited on a number of occasions between 1719 and 1729 to certify the repair of the tower, which had blown down in 1719.⁴⁷

Orders to repair were sometimes the result of such delays. Shobdon received orders to repair the tower at Michaelmas 1723 and again in 1724, four and five years after its collapse.⁴⁸ But an order to repair could be sought by the parish as a defence against ratepayers who might object to a large increase in their rates. At Eaton Bishop the bells were taken down in 1724 and taken to Sugwas prior to shipment to Gloucester for recasting. Subsequently, at Easter 1725, the parish obtained a court order to repair them before making a contract with

42. Above p. 142.

43. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 107, pp. 68, 86, 88, 96.

44. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 108, p. [1v.]; vol. 109, p. 3.

45. H.C.A. 7002/1/8, p. 124v. 46. H.C.A. 7002/1/9, p. 3.

47. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 109, pp. 55, 66, 83, 90, 100v., 125v.; vol 111, p.21; above p. 152.

48. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 109, pp. 83, 90.

Abraham Rudhall.⁴⁹ At Titley both factors came into play. The parish was cited to rebuild the church in 1760, three years after it had been demolished. The order subsequently gave the vestry a firm basis for ordering the churchwarden to proceed against those who had failed to pay their rates towards rebuilding.⁵⁰

The practice of requiring churchwardens to attend in person at visitations had two advantages. Firstly it allowed the visitor and his officials to question them about their presentments and to arrive at better decisions. Secondly the wardens came into contact, at least distantly, with the senior clergy, their surrogates and officers. Those who served regularly as churchwardens probably became fairly well-acquainted with the personnel of the courts and this acquaintance fed into a web of other relationships. Some wardens were quite probably more or less distantly related to notaries or apparitors; others might be tenants of church lands or tithes. But, as yet, no research has been done on wardens and their network of relationships. They were, however, like craftsmen, drawn into a whole web of activities and connections which linked them and their parishes with the wider world.⁵¹

But attendance at visitations and court sessions could be time-consuming and also difficult, when churchwardens and sidesmen had to make a round trip of up to forty miles, in all weathers and often over bad roads. Exceptionally conditions could be dangerous. On May 10th in 1666 one of the wardens from Almeley attended a visitation at Weobley five or six miles away. In recording his expenses he wrote "the water floods being so high (greate haile that time) that I could not come home that night but in danger of my life".⁵² In these circumstances it is perhaps not surprising to find the incumbent of Wormbridge (about twenty miles from Leominster where the diocesan courts then met) writing in 1674 on behalf of a churchwarden that "... he appeared not ... because of his

49. H.R.O. N25/8; HD4/1, vol 109, p. 108v.; above pp. 266-267.

50. H.R.O. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 110, p. 121; AB56/21.

51. Above p. 264. 52. H.R.O. G73/1.

age and the danger to his life by such a Journey, considering his infirmitie ...".⁵³

In a similar vein, about 1672, Thomas Dowsing, rector of Winforton (some 15 miles from Leominster), wrote that

The new Churchwarden is Edward Woodcocke of the Towne
chosen per me ... who desires to be excused for his absence this
visitation as being very deaf besides not well able to Ride."⁵⁴

Journeys could be very arduous as well as time-consuming and took people away from their business. But time and effort were not the only commitments needed to fulfil the duties of a warden. Financial demands also came into play.

Parish Finance

Rates were levied by the vestry, usually on a basis of threepence or fourpence in the pound for church rate in Herefordshire and eightpence or ninepence for poor rate. But the church rate could rise to as much as two shillings and sixpence in the pound to meet the cost of rebuilding or recasting a ring of bells and might stay at that level for several years. In the ordinary way the sums raised annually varied from a minimum of about thirty shillings at Pipe and Lyde to a maximum of about £18 at Almeley.⁵⁵ Money from other sources was rare.⁵⁶ Less rare, though not very frequent, were the occasions when expenditure outstripped the usual limits. The cost of recasting five or six bells (and perhaps a sanctus) ranged from about £64 to £94, while Titley church cost a total of about £240.⁵⁷ The wardens were responsible for collecting the rate and for listing for

53. H.R.O. HD7/17/75. 54. H.R.O. HD7/15/256.

55. Above p. 254.

56. Almeley had "church houses" and Stretton Grandison "church lands" which were let and the proceeds added to the rates. H.R.O. G73/1-2; W76/26-27. In 1743 the church lands at Stretton Grandison were let for three lives for a fine of £5 and an annual rent of £1. In 1751 the fine had risen to £18 and the rent to £1.10s.0d.

57. Above pp. 256-258.

the vestry those who did not pay, whether from poverty or because they had some objection, and they might need to present defaulters.

Income and expenditure in the range from £64 to £240 were not the norm for churchwardens as such, but their experience of handling money did not begin and end with church rates. Many of them were prosperous or fairly prosperous farmers, tradesmen and craftsmen who handled money as part of their business dealings. They were trustees of parish charities which provided sums similar to the amounts raised by church rate. They were also liable to serve as overseers, accounting in Herefordshire for a total of up to £65 a year. But there was a crucial difference between the way in which poor and church rates were managed. All payments from the poor rate were authorised beforehand by the whole vestry. However only in the case of restoration or rebuilding did the vestry authorise expenditure from the church rate in advance. For everything else the wardens decided their own expenditure within a frame work of visitation fees, travelling expenses and set payments for small items such as washing the surplice.

At the end of the year the churchwardens had to submit accounts to the vestry and their successors had to confirm at visitation that the accounts had been given up. Occasionally items were disallowed or the vestry decided to set limits for the future to payments for journeys or writing up the accounts.⁵⁸ Sometimes wardens failed to submit accounts, an offence which was presentable.⁵⁹ But on the whole they were businesslike; and they needed to be careful since, if expenditure exceeded income, they had to pay the bills and wait to be reimbursed by their successors. Sometimes a parish might borrow money, but in Herefordshire loans are only recorded at Almeley in 1744 and at Whitbourne in 1717.⁶⁰ Regulations for the Dean's peculiar were issued in 1669 which required

58. H.R.O. N25/8, 11 April 1728; G73/1, p. 24; N13/1, 7 June 1725.

59. H.R.O. HD4/1, vol. 100, pp. 100, 112v. Brampton Abbots; HD7/34 Pencombe.

60. H.R.O. G73/2; AL92/1.

all churchwardens to submit accounts within six weeks of Easter and laid it down that the new churchwardens must pay their predecessor "immediately" if they were out of pocket.⁶¹ Such ideals were not always attainable, but deficits were usually a matter of shillings. However, when Walter Rogers and William Stone of Eaton Bishop left office at Easter 1727 after the bells had been recast, the parish owed them £8.17s.7d. and £17.6s.8d. respectively. They were excused church rate until the debt was paid off in 1729 when Walter Rogers received £4.1s.7d. and William Stone's widow £13.18s.6d.⁶² In the light of such evidence it is hardly surprising that parishes delayed presenting necessary restoration work until they had wardens in office who were willing and able to shoulder both the practical and the financial burdens.⁶³

Conclusions

Historians writing on parish elites have not looked separately or individually at churchwardens and overseers of the poor. They have concentrated on identifying the factors which defined membership and have emphasised the gulf between the elite, the lesser ratepayers and the poor.⁶⁴ They have also stressed the importance of dynastic links and status among parish elites.⁶⁵ But there is disagreement of the extent of their power. This is probably because it is difficult to know how far lesser ratepayers exercised their right to participate in

61. H.C.A. 7002/1/4, 24 July 1669.

62. H.R.O. N25/8. 63. Above pp. 93-94.

64. Eastwood, *English Provinces*, pp. 43-49; French, 'Social status', pp. 93-97; Kent, 'Rural 'middling sort' ', pp. 21-24.

65. French, 'Social status', pp. 87, 93, 97; A. Mitson 'The significance of kinship networks in the seventeenth century: south-west Nottinghamshire' in C.V. Phythian-Adams, ed., *Societies, Cultures and Kinship, 1580-1850. Cultural Provinces and English Local History* (1993), p. 72.

parish government and to vote at vestry meetings.⁶⁶ Eastwood underlines the representative nature of parish institutions until their "slow emasculation" in the nineteenth century, in contrast to the Webbs who considered that parish officers "were clothed with powers over their fellow-parishioners which we should now deem inconsistent with civil liberty".⁶⁷ Certainly in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries parish government came from within the community and parishes to a large extent governed and policed themselves.⁶⁸

In practice the balance of power probably varied from one place to another and was liable to shift according to circumstance. In ecclesiastical matters, however, there are indications in Herefordshire that ordinary parishioners asserted themselves vis-a-vis the authorities. The churchwardens' duty of presentment seems, in lay minds, to have been translated into a belief in the exclusive right of wardens to present, upon which the clergy hesitated to encroach.⁶⁹ The churchwardens of Kingstone failed for ten and twenty years respectively to present the problems caused by a clock and gallery installed without faculties and ignored the vicar's threat to present them, which was never effectively implemented.⁷⁰ At Llanwarne, where the roof nearly fell in in 1747, the wardens apparently failed to present, probably because of strong opposition to repairs by the ratepayers. Their rector, rather than making a presentment, wrote to the deputy registrar asking for the matter to be laid before the court.⁷¹ On both occasions the court dealt with the problems but no one was officially admonished.⁷² At Orleton fear of disputes led the parishioners to ask the chancellor of the diocese to allocate the new seats in their church and a

66. Spaeth, *Age of Danger*, pp. 100-101.

67. Webb, *Parish and County*, p. 40.

68. W.M. Jacob, 'Clergy and Society in Norfolk, 1707-1806', unpubl. Ph.D. thesis, University of Exeter (1982), p. 33.

69. Above p. 91. 70. H.R.O. HD7/57.

71. Above p. 227. 72. Above p. 91.

commission faced the daunting task of allocating seats to 106 households, subject to the parishioners' wish that men and their wives should sit together and the chancellor's directions that they should consider the quality of the persons and the value of their property.⁷³ These examples suggest that a great many of the ratepayers could and did participate in parish affairs when they wished to do so; and that wardens probably faced considerable difficulties in deciding how far they should bow to public opinion. In such circumstances ecclesiastical courts, incumbents, curates and churchwardens alike moved with circumspection.

Churchwardens were among the oldest of parish officers. They were, in many respects, trustees of society: not just of church buildings, but of aspirations and values, since the parish church was not simply a house of prayer but a reflection of parish history and parish hierarchy, its physical centre and moral embodiment.⁷⁴ Their office was essentially a "voluntary" one and unpaid. Where the care of church buildings was concerned they carried, with the vestry, almost entire responsibility for the fabric and its contents and for the choice of craftsmen. This, in combination with other responsibilities (both ecclesiastical and secular), was part of a tradition of service to their communities. For some of them that service could extend over many years, perhaps in several different parishes and, in some families, it might extend over several generations.

73. Above pp. 90, 185-186.

74. Carlson, 'Office of churchwarden', pp. 206-207; M. Cross, 'The church and local society in the diocese of Ely, c. 1630-1730', unpubl. Ph.D dissertation, University of Cambridge (1991), p. 90.

CHAPTER NINETEEN. CONCLUSIONS

WHY THE BELIEF IN NEGLECT?

Our church is well amended and may hold good for future generations.¹

This thesis has examined the care of churches in Herefordshire during the century after the Restoration, a sphere of activity shaped, in varying degrees, by law, tradition, custom and contemporary assumptions. Canon law provided the basic framework, which was then coloured by the differing strands of catholic and protestant tradition that had evolved within the Church of England since the Reformation. At parish level, law and tradition were often varied by local custom and by a measure of lay autonomy which was greater than is usually acknowledged. The underlying assumption, however, shared by clergy and laity alike, was one of conformity to a Pauline concept of decency and good order, both in the conduct of worship and in the care and ordering of churches.

Historians have continued to differ over whether or not churches were neglected in the century after the Restoration, although work on individual counties and dioceses has shown that standards were better than many writers have claimed and that there was a genuine improvement. But, apart from Basil Clarke's work, little attention has been paid to maintenance and restoration between the Restoration and Queen Victoria's accession.² This thesis represents a first attempt at the topic on a local basis for the century between 1662 and 1762 and a first attempt to make systematic use of archival evidence to a new level of detail. Such attention to particularities (of kind that are often glossed over or ignored) reflects a fundamental reality of the subject: the fact that the care of churches is a continuous process and cannot be adequately assessed through selective use archives. In addition it is essential that those archives are married

1. Certificate from the churchwardens of Tretire, [1708], H.R.O. HD7/38.
2. B.F.L. Clarke, The Building of the Eighteenth-Century Church (1963).

with the evidence provided by antiquarians, historians and artists and by the buildings themselves, not least because there are substantial gaps and limitations in the evidence in all its forms.

A Revised View

Detailed use of the archives of the Anglican church in Herefordshire has revealed considerable limitations in our knowledge of the care of church buildings and their furniture. These limitations can be summed up as follows. Firstly the ecclesiastical authorities exercised constant supervision through visitations and courts and they extended that commitment through proper attention to the care of chancels in parishes where they owned the tithes and by occasional gifts and a contribution to subscriptions. Secondly churches were generally well maintained, with programmes of restoration and the recasting of rings of bells being part of the normal pattern of activity in spite of the expense. There was also far more rebuilding than has been realised, much of it achieved out of church rates. The contribution made by major landowners towards rebuilding and improving churches remains a significant one; but it was part of a wider spectrum of activity and confined to a small number of parishes. The contribution made by communities of ordinary lay people, supported by the parish clergy, was equally important.

Thirdly, and unexpectedly, chancels were better cared for than churches. In spite of their low incomes Herefordshire rectors set a good example, with frailty in old age being a bigger problem than poverty. Ecclesiastical office holders and lay people, whether impropriators or farmers, were also conscientious for the most part. It is true that there were three serious cases of neglect in parishes where tithes belonged to the gentry. But they represent a tiny percentage of those responsible for the care of chancels and their negligence was, in due course, so well remedied that the medieval chancels they neglected still survive.

Fourthly careful attention was paid to the ordering of churches and to the provision and allocation of seating, although the evidence is too slight to allow very firm conclusion to be drawn. What seems clear is that lay people exercised

considerable autonomy in the care and ordering of their churches and that, while this sometimes led to neglect, it was also expressed in the extent to which they took the initiative in programmes of restoration and in the way in which they achieved, on occasion, the rebuilding of an entire church. A significant contribution, too, was made by craftsmen, unregulated by canon law. Fifthly, and very crucially, churchwardens played a major role. They carried responsibilities for building work of a kind more usually associated with landowners and their stewards and, if the rates ran out, they might have to subsidise the work for a time. They had also to act within the constraints imposed not only by parish finance, but by public opinion.

Much more research is needed to establish whether or not these new perspectives on the care of churches in Herefordshire are valid elsewhere. But there are plenty of indications that this may be so. Historians commenting on individual dioceses, counties and archdeaconries have questioned the belief that churches were neglected for over forty years.³ And more recently the view that churches were not neglected has been confirmed in wider studies of the Church of

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3. J.S. Purvis, The Condition of Yorkshire Church Fabrics 1300-1800, St. Anthony's Hall Publications 14 (1958), pp. 24-26; A. Warne, Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century Devon (1969), pp. 53, 55-59; W.R. Ward, Parson and Parish in Eighteenth Century Hampshire. Replies to Bishops' Visitations, Hampshire Record Series 13 (1995) p. xxi; W.J. Gregory, Restoration, Reformation and Reform, 1660-1828. Archbishops of Canterbury and their Diocese (2000), pp. 171-177.

England.⁴ Nonetheless belief in the negligence and inadequacy of the post-Restoration church dies hard.⁵ Incorporated into this belief is a conviction that church buildings were neglected. If this conviction is to be laid to rest, there is not only a need to extend research. It also seems worthwhile to examine the factors which have contributed to its longevity.

Why the Belief in Neglect? The Use of Evidence

Belief in the neglect of church buildings centres on two distinct sets of problems. The first set relates to the use of evidence, the second to the assumptions underpinning this belief. Three major types of evidence are available: the buildings themselves; pictures of the buildings; and written evidence, most significantly the archives of parishes, dioceses and peculiars.

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4. J. Walsh & S. Taylor, 'Introduction: the church and Anglicanism in the 'long' eighteenth century' in J. Walsh, C. Haydon & S. Taylor, eds, The Church of England c. 1689-c.1833. From Toleration to Tractarianism (1993), pp. 9-10; M. Smith, 'The reception of Richard Podmore: Anglicanism in Saddleworth 1700-1830', in Walsh, Haydon & Taylor, Church of England, pp. 113-117; W.M. Jacob, Lay People and Religion in the Early Eighteenth Century (1996), pp. 187-199, 207-208, 217, 221-222; W. Gibson The Church of England 1688-1832. Unity and Accord (2001), pp. 169-170.
 5. P. Virgin, The Church in an Age of Negligence. Ecclesiastical Structure and Problems of Church Reform 1700-1840 (1989); J.M. Robinson, Treasures of the English Churches (1995), pp. 127-138; S. Frear, A Companion to the English Parish Church (1996), pp. 179-180; D.A. Spaeth, The Church in an Age of Danger. Parsons and Parishioners, 1660-1740 (2000), pp. 258-259; A. Jones, A Thousand Years of the English Parish. Medieval Patterns and Modern Interpretations (2000), pp. 200-201; N.J.G. Pounds, A History of the English Parish. The Culture of Religion from Augustus to Victoria (2000), pp. 395-396.

The buildings themselves are often deeply flawed as evidence. Heavy Victorian restoration has removed most traces of seventeenth and eighteenth-century change and restoration.⁶ The Victorians were particularly ruthless in removing dormer windows, ceilings and plaster; and in replacing not only seating, but fonts and sometimes pulpits. Occasionally, as at St. Margarets, there is a drawing in the church showing an unrestored interior. Or a baluster font survives in the churchyard, like the one at Weston-under-Penyard.⁷ Similarly box pews and galleries, like those at Kings Caple, still exist; but most seating is now Victorian. More frequently, a seventeenth or eighteenth-century pulpit remains in use; although, if it was once a two or three-decker, it has often been cut down like the pulpit at Monnington-on-Wye.⁸ As a result we get a glimpse of early modern interiors. But of the many dormer windows, ceilings and other earlier features taken out there is no sign. Nor is there much plaster. It was stripped off together with centuries of wall paintings.

The Victorians did not deliberately destroy evidence of their predecessors' work, but they were inspired by ideals in pursuit of which they were both blinkered and destructive. The majority of early modern interiors were swept away.⁹ So was much early modern fabric and, in both cases, the evidence of time, money and effort expended by early modern communities and tithe owners.

A second problem with the buildings stems from the functional re-use of windows and doors cases. Sometimes this is very obvious. The Norman doorway at Tyberton and the thirteenth-century windows at Norton Canon, incorporated into eighteenth-century brick fabrics, are prime examples.¹⁰ But

6. Clarke, Eighteenth Century Church, p. 98.

7. R.C.H.M., England, An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Herefordshire (3 vols, 1931-1934), 2, p. 211.

8. N. Pevsner, The Buildings of England. Herefordshire (1963), p. 255.

9. M. Chatfield, Churches the Victorians Forgot (1980), p. 9.

10. R.C.H.M., England, Herefordshire Inventory, 1, p. 242; 3, p. 153.

sometimes re-use is less obvious, although the incorporation of a fourteenth-century window, alongside seventeenth-century copies in the nave at How Caple is evident to a trained eye; and architectural historians have been rightly cautious in not assuming that the tower at Shobdon is co-eval with medieval windows in its upper stages.¹¹ Similarly the attribution of a medieval date to the nave at Hope-under-Dinmore has inevitably been tentative, because drastic Victorian restoration in 1879 has obliterated all evidence of the rebuilding in 1708.¹² Elsewhere, however, the chancel at Brobury (apart from its roof), the nave and tower at Allensmore and the nave at St. Weonards are dated to the middle ages.¹³ Yet there is explicit documentary evidence that all of them, like Hope-under-Dinmore, were rebuilt in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries¹⁴

Victorian restoration and functional re-use of doors and windows have left us with structures that are incomplete and ambiguous. To some extent the resulting difficulties can be resolved by turning to pictorial evidence. For this thesis pictorial material has been used only in a limited way to establish the broad scope of what the Victorians destroyed. But careful investigation of drawings, watercolours, paintings, prints and photographs for small groups of churches would help to extend our understanding of what churches used to look like, what exactly the Victorians removed and what they normally kept. In addition full study of the pictorial evidence for individual churches, together with a study of the buildings and the written evidence, would reveal much more, not only about the development of each building, but about the context in which the Victorian agenda of restoration developed.

Fundamental, however, to further research is a reconsideration of the way in which archival evidence is used. Several writers have drawn attention in general terms to the value of churchwardens' accounts as a source for the study of

11. R.C.H.M., England, Herefordshire Inventory, 2, p. 91; 3, p. 179.

12. R.C.H.M., England, Herefordshire Inventory, 3, p. 67.

13. R.C.H.M., England, Herefordshire Inventory, 1, pp. 14-15, 228; 3, p. 26.

14. Above pp. 144-146.

the care of churches.¹⁵ But no detailed and systematic use has been made of accounts or of the vestry minutes which occasionally accompany them. If Herefordshire is typical, there is a major limitation to this evidence, because so few itemised accounts survive. Yet it is possible to show that it was unusual for parishes not to spend money on the maintenance of their churches every year. Some parts of the fabric received recurrent attention. Others were repaired occasionally as the need arose. The accounts reveal, too, that restoration work was carried out, sometimes over a period of years; and that significant sums were spent on recasting rings of bells. The picture that emerges is not one of indifference or neglect. Belief in neglect should therefore be queried and similar research extended to other areas to establish whether the patterns of activity revealed in Herefordshire are more widespread.

Fuller use has been made of episcopal and diocesan records, including those of archdeacons and peculiars. But much of the discussion has been based on single documents, like Secker's Canterbury Speculum or on single sets of articles such as those recently published for Hampshire and Surrey.¹⁶ Where comparisons have been made over a period of time, both Ford (who takes a pessimistic view of the post-Restoration church) and Warne (who regards the eighteenth century with more favour) point to an improvement in the condition of churches.¹⁷ But in order to achieve a balanced view, it is helpful to explore

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15. J.H. Bettey, Church and Parish. A Guide for Local Historians (1987), p. 117; S.C. Humphrey, ed., Churches and Chapels of Northern England (1991), p. 31.
 16. W.J. Gregory, The Speculum of Archbishop Thomas Secker, Church of England Record Society 2 (1995); Ward, Parson and Parish in Eighteenth-Century Surrey. Replies to Bishop's Visitations Surrey Record Society 24 (1994); Ward, Eighteenth-Century Hampshire (1995).
 17. W.K. Ford, Chichester Diocesan Surveys 1686 and 1724, Sussex Record Society 78 (1994), pp. 9, 15; A. Warne Eighteenth-Century Devon, pp. 52-54.

visitation returns from churchwardens in more depth; and to use them in conjunction with act books, letters and certificates. In this way is it possible to establish whether the mechanisms for monitoring the care of churches were in effective working order. And only in this way is it possible to document the care of chancels at all.

The routine documentation provided by courts and visitations can be extended by clerical surveys and archdeacons' inspection books, where they exist. But it should be appreciated that surveys and inspections were not part of the regular mechanism of diocesan administration and not all dioceses seem to have had recourse to such procedures. Evidence may also be drawn from articles addressed by bishops to parish clergy and from *specula*. Such documents, however, do not always include evidence on the state of churches (appendix VIII). This should not be taken as an indication of episcopal indifference. Secker omitted churches from his articles addressed to the clergy of Oxford diocese in 1738.¹⁸ Yet the editor of his letters was able to conclude that the care of churches was "very close to Secker's heart".¹⁹ It seems more probable that bishops omitted enquiries about parish churches either because they were satisfied with the information available to them or because they wished to place an emphasis on pastoral care and education in the work of the clergy, while acknowledging that the care of churches was primarily a lay responsibility.

Records of ecclesiastical administration have considerable limitations.²⁰ But taken as a whole, in conjunction with parish records, they reveal that the care of churches was a constant preoccupation, alike for those with jurisdiction, for incumbents and for congregations. They reflect the realities of the situation: that

18. H.A. Lloyd-Jukes, ed., Articles of Enquiry Addressed to the Clergy of the Diocese of Oxford at the Primary Visitation of Dr. Thomas Secker, 1738, Oxfordshire Record Society 38 (1957).

19. A.P. Jenkins, The Correspondence of Thomas Secker, Bishop of Oxford 1737-1758, Oxfordshire Record Society 57 (1991), p. xxv.

20. Above pp. 92-94.

the care of a building is a process.²¹ In any diocese or archdeaconry this process was multiplied many times over, not simply in relation to churches but in relation to parsonages and their outbuildings. Those concerned had considerable experience of building maintenance. The records reveal how constantly ratepayers applied themselves not only to maintenance, but to restoration and rebuilding, even if it took years; and how patiently the authorities monitored and, no doubt, encouraged rebuilding work, spun out by communities struggling to find the money. Tithe owners, too, with few exceptions, were generally prompt in carrying out repairs. Such were the realities which informed the legal and administrative decisions of the church courts. It will not do to claim negligence without looking at all the available evidence and at the circumstances in which people exercised their responsibilities.

Why the Belief in Neglect? Questionable Assumptions

The second set of problems central to the belief that churches were neglected in this period relate to the assumptions from which historians have started out. Three are particularly pertinent to the care of churches: first that Victorian criticisms are well-founded; second that disrepair invariably implies neglect; and third that lay people in general, and churchwardens in particular, made no useful contribution to the care of churches. Several historians have recently pointed out that the Victorians had a vested interest in disparaging their predecessors.²² Victorian criticism was directed specifically at an alleged failure to build much-needed new churches and at the unsatisfactory state of fabric and furnishings. The view that not enough churches were built is now being firmly challenged. New churches were built and old ones rebuilt as necessary in many

21. R. Morris, Churches in the Landscape (paperback edn 1997), pp. 316-321.

22. Walsh & Taylor, 'Church and Anglicanism' in Walsh, Haydon & Taylor, Church of England, p. 64; N. Yates, Buildings, Faith and Worship. The Liturgical Arrangement of Anglican Churches, 1600-1900 (1991, rev. edn 2000), pp. 47-48; Gregory, Restoration, Reformation, pp. 1-2.

parts of the country from the Restoration onwards. In addition the seating capacity of churches was increased by installing galleries and new sets of pews.²³ It has been pointed out, too, that the Victorians did not always demonstrate a need for new churches either in the eighteenth century or in their own time.²⁴ It is also plain in Herefordshire that there was more rebuilding than is evident now in the fabric of the churches. For seven out of the fifteen churches and chapels rebuilt there is only written evidence to reveal rebuilding. If the same is true throughout the country, then the amount of rebuilding was greater than has been realised.

Much work remains to be done on Victorian restorations. Restoration in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries is directed towards keeping the fabric of churches and their contents in good repair. To some extent this was true under the Victorians although, ironically, they were sometimes no more successful than their predecessors in completing work in good time. Eaton Bray in Bedfordshire was in poor condition in 1847 and continued to deteriorate. But in spite of plans for restoration in the the eighteen-seventies, work was not begun until 1891 and it was not finished until 1916.²⁵ A similar lengthy restoration took place at How Caple in Herefordshire between 1889 and 1912.²⁶ To the extent that the Victorians did no better than their Stuart and Georgian forbears, their criticisms are not entirely well-founded.

But the Victorians had additional priorities: to "restore" churches to a

23. Walsh & Taylor, 'Church and Anglicanism', in Walsh, Haydon & Taylor, Church of England, pp. 9-10; M. Smith, 'Richard Podmore', in Walsh, Haydon & Taylor, Church of England, pp. 113-117; W.M. Jacob, Lay People, pp. 186-191; Gregory, Restoration. Reformation, pp. 173-174; Gibson, Church of England, pp. 169-174.
24. W.R. Ward, Eighteenth Century Hampshire, p. xxi.
25. C. Pickford, Bedfordshire Churches in the Nineteenth Century, Bedfordshire Historical Record Society 73, 77 & 79 (3 vols, 1994-2000), 1, pp. 242-243.
26. R.C.H.M., England, Herefordshire Inventory, 2, p. 91.

Gothic ideal (based on fourteenth-century models) which they themselves had devised; and to create interiors to conform to that ideal and to changed liturgical practices.²⁷ In pursuit of these aims they were ruthlessly satirical and at the same time a vigorous campaign, led by the Tractarians and the ecclesiologists, promoted the best forms of Gothic architecture and a reform in the ordering and decoration of churches.²⁸ Their use of satire suggests that the Victorians knew very well that they were not being either reasonable or fair. They applied to their predecessors ideals of their own recent invention. To the extent that their criticisms are anachronistic, they are again, not well-founded.

The view that disrepair must mean neglect seems deeply rooted. No allowance is made for the age of church buildings, climate, severe weather, an ordinary range of human frailties or financial constraints. But in support of that assumption, evidence is used very selectively. Two writers have taken a critical view of the state of churches in the eighteenth century, using William Nicolson's survey of the diocese of Carlisle in 1703 and 1704.²⁹ Yet, even on a pessimistic reckoning, only half the country churches visited by Nicolson and fewer than half the chancels had anything wrong with their fabric at all (table 8). And of the total of 104 or 105 rural and urban churches surveyed, only eight to ten churches and

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27. M. Chatfield, Churches the Victorians Forgot (1979), p. 9; G. Randall, Church Furnishings and Decorations in England and Wales (1980), pp. 27-28.
28. Robinson, English Churches, pp. 128-129, 155-159; Clarke, Eighteenth Century Church, pp. 200-210,
29. J.W. Legg, English Church Life from the Restoration to the Tractarian Movement Considered in Some of its Neglected or Forgotten Features (1914), p. 122; Jones, English Parish, pp. 200-201.

fifteen chancels were exceptionally bad.³⁰

The third and final assumption to be questioned is the view that lay people in general, and churchwardens in particular, took little interest in the state of churches. Wardens have repeatedly been ignored or marginalised by historians. Yet they provided the foundation on which the Church of England built up its entire system of administering canon law.³¹ They were "key functionaries in the life of the Church at local level"; people "whose importance cannot be overstated".³² They collected and spent the church rates levied by the vestries and accounted for that money to their neighbours. They represented their communities (lay people and clergy alike) twice a year at visitations. Most were dependable and quite equal to their responsibilities. Complaints against them were rare. Historians, however, have continued to regret the brevity of their presentments.³³ Yet few have used presentments in any depth, while churchwardens' accounts remain largely unexamined. The role of churchwardens could usefully be re-assessed, especially where the care of church buildings is concerned. There is also a value in looking at the work of all the people involved and in placing an emphasis on achievements as well as shortcomings. It is surely a mistake to press claims of negligence without looking in more depth at the evidence which is now available and without re-examining the assumptions which underlie those claims.

30. C.M.L. Bouch, Prelates and People of the Lake Counties. A History of the Diocese of Carlisle, 1133-1933 (1948), p. 292; Jacob, Lay People, p. 189.

31. 'The Canons of 1603(1604)' in G. Bray, ed., The Anglican Canons 1527-1947, Church of England Record Society 6 (1998), Canon 26.

32. Jacob, Lay People, p. 9; Warne, Eighteenth-Century Devon, p. 15.

33. Gregory, Speculum of Thomas Secker, p. ix.

Debate over the care of churches will continue as part of the wider debate over the health of the church in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This thesis is based on evidence for one county between 1662 and 1762. But the debate should undoubtedly extend to other counties, to the years between 1762 and 1837 and to the whole of the Victorian period. If that debate is to be worthwhile, there are four considerations which it is helpful to bear in mind. Firstly the time is surely ripe for a re-evaluation of the evidence and the way in which it is used. Secondly more attention might be given to the post-medieval history of church fabrics and to questioning the claims of Victorian commentators and their successors. Thirdly it would be helpful to bring the realities of building maintenance into the debate. And fourthly the people concerned, particularly the churchwardens, might be brought into the picture alongside the buildings themselves. Most of the churches survive (in one form or another) and have claimed attention to the exclusion of the people who once cared for them. Modifying that imbalance could enhance understanding both of what went wrong and of what was achieved.

The Book of Homilies spelt out for wardens the immediate implications of their responsibility for the care of churches.³⁴ The comment made by the wardens of Tretire, about 1708, that their church was 'well amended and may hold good for future generations' suggests that parishes also recognised the longer term significance of what they did.³⁵ Parish churches were a focal point in their communities. They were maintained out of communal funds for the use of the community: for public worship and public administration. With their churchyards, they were places of burial and recreation, places to remember the

34. 'Homily for repairing and keeping clean, and comely adorning of churches' in Certain Sermons or Homilies Appointed to be Read in Churches ... and Now Thought Fit to be Reprinted by Authority from the Kings Most Excellent Majesty (1673), pp. 161-164.

35. H.R.O. HD/38.

dead and places to relax and celebrate. They were there not just for the present, but for future generations and had been so for centuries. Rebuilding, restoration, improvement and routine maintenance of churches remained, it seems, an ordinary part of parish life in the century after the Restoration. As a result the Victorians were building on the legacy of their predecessors, as others had done before them and as their own successors have done ever since.

APPENDIX I. ALPHABETICAL LIST OF PLACES INCLUDED

Symbols (C) = Chapel, (D) = Peculiar of the Dean of Hereford, (P) = Prebendal

Peculiar, L = Lower, U = Upper.

IA. KEY CHURCHES AND CHAPELS

Parish	Deanery	Sub-Regions	Hundred
Aconbury	Archenfield	Archenfield	Wormelow U
Allensmore (D)	Hereford	Central	Webtree
Bodenham	Weston	Central	Broxash
Brampton Abbots	Ross	Ross	Greytree
Brobury	Weobley	Western	Grimsworth
Byford	Weobley	Central	Grimsworth
Canon Frome	Frome	Eastern	Radlow
Croft	Leominster	North-West	Wolphy
Dilwyn	Weston	Central	Stretford
Dinedor	Hereford	Central	Webtree
Eardisland	Leominster	Central	Stretford
Eardisley	Weobley	Western	Huntington
Eaton Bishop (D)	Hereford	Central	Webtree
Edwin Ralph	Frome	Bromyard	Wolphy
Hentland	Archenfield	Archenfield	Wormelow U
Hope-under-Dinmore	Leominster	Central	Wolphy
How Caple	Ross	Woolhope	Greytree
Llangarron	Archenfield	Archenfield	Wormelow L
Llanrothal	Archenfield	Archenfield	Wormelow L
Madley (D)	Hereford	Central	Webtree
Marston Stannett (C)	Frome	Bromyard	Broxash
Middleton-on-the-Hill	Leominster	Bromyard	Wolphy
Monnington-on-Wye	Weobley	Central	Grimsworth
Norton Canon (D)	Hereford	Central	Grimsworth
Pencombe	Frome	Bromyard	Broxash
Pipe and Lyde (D)	Hereford	Central	Grimsworth

IA. KEY CHURCHES AND CHAPELS

Parish	Deanery	Sub-Regions	Hundred
Preston Wynne (D)(C)	Hereford	Central	Broxash
St. Weonards	Archenfield	Archenfield	Wormelow L
Shobdon	Leominster	North-West	Stretford
Staunton-on-Wye	Weobley	Western	Grimsworth
Stoke Edith	Weston	Eastern	Radlow
Stretton Grandison	Frome	Eastern	Radlow
Titley	Leominster	North-West	Wigmore
Tretire	Archenfield	Archenfield	Wormelow L
Tyberton (D)	Hereford	Central	Webtree
Whitbourne	Frome	Bromyard	Broxash
Whitney	Weobley	Western	Huntington
Winforton	Weobley	Western	Huntington
Wormbridge	Archenfield	Ewyas	Webtree

IB. ADDITIONAL CHURCHES AND CHAPELS

Parish	Deanery	Sub-Regions	Hundred
Abbey Dore	Weobley	Ewyas	Webtree
Aconbury	Archenfield	Archenfield	Wormelow U
Almeley	Weobley	Western	Stretford
Avenbury	Frome	Bromyard	Broxash
Bacton	Weobley	Western	Webtree
Bosbury	Frome	Eastern	Radlow
Bredwardine	Weobley	Western	Webtree
Byton	Leominster	North-West	Wigmore
Castle Frome	Frome	Eastern	Radlow
Clodock	Hay	Ewyas	Ewyas Lacy
Cradley	Frome	Eastern	Radlow
Evesbatch	Frome	Eastern	Radlow
Fownhope	Ross	Woolhope	Greytree

IB. ADDITIONAL CHURCHES AND CHAPELS

Parish	Deanery	Sub-Regions	Hundred
Foy	Archenfield	Ross	Wormelow U
Garway	Archenfield	Archenfield	Wormelow L
Hampton Bishop	Hereford	Central	Grimsworth
Holme Lacy	Archenfield	Central	Webtree
Kentchurch	Archenfield	Archenfield	Webtree
Kimbolton	Leominster	Bromyard	Wolphy
Kings Caple	Archenfield	Archenfield	Wormelow U
Kingsland	Leominster	Central	Stretford
Kingstone (D)	Hereford	Central	Webtree
Leintwardine	Clun	North-West	Wigmore
Little Hereford (P)	Ludlow	Central	Wolphy
Llanwarne	Archenfield	Archenfield	Wormelow U
Lyonshall	Weobley	North-West	Stretford
Mansell Lacy	Weobley	Central	Grimsworth
Moreton-on-Lugg (P)	Hereford	Central	Grimsworth
Much Marcle	Ross	Eastern	Greytree
Orleton	Leominster	Central	Wolphy
Pixley	Frome	Eastern	Radlow
Pudleston	Leominster	Bromyard	Wolphy
St. Margarets	Hay	Western	Ewyas Lacy
Stretford	Leominster	Central	Stretford
Sutton St. Michael	Weston	Central	Broxash
Thrupton (D)	Hereford	Central	Webtree
Wellington	Weston	Central	Grimsworth
Westhide (C)	Weston	Eastern	Radlow
Weston-under-Penyard	Ross	Ross	Greytree
Whitchurch	Archenfield	Archenfield	Wormelow L
Wigmore	Leominster	North-West	Wigmore
Yarkhill	Frome	Eastern	Weobley

APPENDIX II. ANALYTICAL LISTS OF PLACES INCLUDED**IIA. KEY PLACES: REASONS FOR INCLUSION**

Numbers in brackets indicate places included for more than one reason and are cross-references to the numbered sub-sections in this appendix.

* indicates places for which there are shorter run of churchwardens' accounts (appendix IIIB)

1. Itemised Churchwardens' Accounts for 33 Years or More

Brampton Abbots (3)	Pipe and Lyde
Eaton Bishop	Stoke Edith (2)
Edwin Ralph	Stretton Grandison
Edwin Ralph	Titley (2)
Hentland	Whitbourne
Madley	Winforton

2. Churches and Chapels Rebuilt

Allensmore 1668-c.1682, 1716	Preston Wynne 1727-1730
Brobury 1676-1682; 1694-1695	St Weonards c.1710
Canon Frome c.1669-1675 (1,3,6)*	Shobdon 1749-1756 (3)
Hope-under-Dinmore c.1708 (1)*	Stoke Edith 1740-1741 (1)
How Caple 1693-1695	Titley 1757-1763 (1)
Marston Stannett c.1711	Tyberton 1719-1722
Monnington-on-Wye 1679-1680	Whitney 1740
Norton Canon 1705-1717	

IIA. KEY PLACES: REASONS FOR INCLUSION**3. Towers Rebuilt**

Byford c.1710-1717	Eardisley 1705-1710
Canon Frome 1730 (1,2,6)	Middleton-on-the-Hill c.1725*
Dinedor c.1737	Shobdon 1725-1730 (2)
Dilwyn 1687-1689	Wormbridge 1674 (1)*
Eardisland 1758-1760	

4. Turrets Rebuilt

Brampton Abbots 1663 (1)	Llanrothal 1680-1682
Croft 1682?	

5. Chancels Rebuilt

Bodenham c.1740*	Tretire 1723
Staunton-on-Wye 1716	

6. Private Aisles/Vaults Built

Aconbury before 1714	Llangarron 1678-1679
Canon Frome 1717-1723 (1,2)	

IIB. CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF REBUILDINGS. CHURCHES, CHAPELS AND TOWERS

For turrets, chancels and private aisles see Appendix IIA, 4-6.

Churches/Chapels

1668-c.1682	Allensmore: nave and tower (see also 1716 below)
c.1669-1675	Canon Frome: whole church, brick with wooden tower
1679-1680	Monnington-on-Wye: nave and chancel
1693-1695	How Caple: nave, with new tower and transept
1676-82 & 1694-5	Brobury: whole church
1705-1717	Norton Canon: nave and chancel
c.1707-1708	Hope-under-Dinmore: whole church
c.1710-1712	St. Weonards: nave
c.1711	Marston Stannett: whole chapel
1716	Allensmore: nave (see also 1668-c.1682)
1719-1722	Tyberton: whole church
1727-1730	Preston Wynne: whole chapel
1740	Whitney: whole church, without spire
1740-1741	Stoke Edith: nave and chancel, without north chapel
1749-1756	Shobdon: nave, chancel and transepts
1757-1763	Titley: whole church

IIB. CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF REBUILDINGS. CHURCHES, CHAPELS AND TOWERS

For turrets, chancels and private aisles see Appendix IIA, 3-5.

Towers

1674	Wormbridge
1687	Dilwyn
1705-1710	Eardisley
c.1710-1717	Byford
c.1725	Middleton-on-the-Hill
1725-1730	Shobdon
1730	Canon Frome: brick tower in place of wooden one
1737	Dinedor ?
1749-1760	Eardisland

IIC. ADDITIONAL PLACES: REASONS FOR INCLUSION

Numbers in brackets indicate places included for more than one reason and are cross-references to the numbered sub-sections in this appendix.

1. Itemised Churchwardens' Accounts

Almeley (2,3)	Kingstone (2,3,4,)
Avenbury	Leintwardine
Bacton	Sutton St. Michael
Cradley	Thrupton
Kingsland	Wellington

2. Neglect by Parishioners

Kingstone (1,3,4)	Llanwarne

IIC. ADDITIONAL PLACES: REASONS FOR INCLUSION**3. Chancels: Repair and Disrepair**

Almeley (1,4)	Kingstone (1,2,4)
Bosbury	Mansell Lacy
Bredwardine	Much Marcle (4)
Byton	Pixley
Evesbatch	Pudleston
Foy	Stretford
Hampton Bishop	Wigmore
Kings Caple	

4. Fabric, Bells and Furniture: Provision and Problems

Abbey Dore	Lyonsall
Almeley (1,3)	Moreton-on-Lugg
Castle Frome	Much Marcle (3)
Clodock	Orleton
Fownhope	St Margarets
Garway	Westhide
Holme Lacy	Weston-under Penyard
Kentchurch	Whitchurch
Kimbolton	Wigmore (3)
Kiingstone (1,2,3,	Yarkhill
Little Hereford	

APPENDIX III. ITEMISED CHURCHWARDENS' ACCOUNTS

A. KEY PARISHES WITH MORE THAN 33 YEARS RECORDED

Parish											Total
	1662					1703					101
Date	'62	'73	'83	'93	'03	'13	'23	'33	'43	'53	
Brampton Abbots ¹		10	6	6	4	8	4	4	5	3	50
Eaton Bishop			*2	*1		7	9	10	10	10	46
Edwin Ralph					3	9	10	10	9	10	51
Hentland	8	6	9	4	1		6				34
Madley	*2			4	9	10	6	6	7	10	52
Pencombe		7	6	7	8	9	5	3	3	3	51
Pipe & Lyde		5	10	7		8	9	10	10	10	69
Stoke Edith ¹		7	10	9	10	9	10	9	7		71
Stretton G.							9	9	10	9	37
Titley ¹		7	10	3	6	10	8	10	5		58
Whitbourne		6	10	10	9	10	*2	*1	*3	*1	45
Winforton		8	3	8	10	6					35

* These years have not been included in the totals as the accounts are so sporadic.

1. Substantial or partial rebuilding occurred in these parishes.

B. KEY PARISHES WITH FEWER THAN 31 YEARS RECORDED

Parish											Total
	1662					1703					101
Date	'62	'73	'83	'93	'03	'13	'23	'33	'43	'53	
Bodenham	6										06
Canon Frome					4						04
Hope-under-Dinmore							3	1			04
Middleton-on-the-											
Hill							3	9	9	1	22
Wormbridge	c.21 years 1704-1724										c.21

C. ADDITIONAL PARISHES WITH FEWER THAN 31 YEARS RECORDED.

Parish											Total
	1662					1703					101
Date	'62	'73	'83	'93	'03	'13	'23	'33	'43	'53	
Almeley	5	1									6
Avenbury								6			7
Bacton								3	2	10	15
Cradley								2	7	7	16
Kingsland		1		3	2		1	6	6	6	28
Kingstone								2	6	3	11
Leintwardine*							1	9	10	10	30
Sutton St. Michael							2	2	7	4	15
Thrupton								3	4		7
Wellington	c.18 years 1712-1732										c.18

* Leintwardine's accounts for 1737, 1738, 1757, 1758 & 1760 cover only parts of the parish.

APPENDIX IV. DUNCUMB'S COLLECTIONS.

John Duncumb's manuscripts, with additions by later editors, are in Hereford Reference Library, including those for the hundreds of Stretford, Webtree, Wigmore and Wolphy which have not been published. Details of the published volumes are given below.

Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford, 8 vols, 1804-1915.

[Usually bound in 7 volumes. After Volume 3 there are no volume numbers on the title pages and where volume numbers have been assigned by libraries they vary from one set to another. A facsimile edition, with an introduction by P. Riden, is being published by Merton Priory Press, Cardiff, 1996-].

J. Duncumb.

Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford

(Vol. 1, 1804). (Hereford: E.G.Wright).

Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford

(Vol. 2 Part 1 (1812). (Hereford: E.G.Wright).

[Volume 2 had a very chequered history. Work on it was suspended on the death of the Duke of Norfolk, Duncumb's patron, in 1815. Unsold copies of Volume 1 and Volume 2, Part 1, together with pages 319-358, which had been printed, but not published, were taken to a warehouse in London, from which they were acquired in 1837 by Thomas Thorpe, a London bookseller. Thorpe bound Pages 319-358 into Volume 2, added an index and sold them. The volume was completed with Pages 359-406, including an index, by W.H. Cooke about 1854. (See Volume 2, p. 401 and Preface to Volume 3).

Three versions are available in Hereford Reference Library.

1. The version published in 1812 containing the Hundreds of Broxash and Ewyas Lacy without an index.
2. A complete copy of the combined work of Duncumb and Cooke. This contains the Hundreds of Broxash and Ewyas Lacy and the parishes of Aston Ingham, Brampton Abbots, Dormington, Fownhope, How Caple, Hope Mansell, Linton and Lea in the Hundred of Greytree. The date stamps indicate that it was acquired in 3 parts in 1854.
3. Cooke's continuation of the volume. On the title page "Duncumb's Herefordshire. Vol. 2. Pages 359-406. Reprinted 1916." On the spine "Vol. 2 Pt. 2". The volume contains the second part of the section on How Caple, together with Hope Mansell, Linton and Lea in the Hundred of Greytree.]

W.H. Cooke.

Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford. In continuation of Duncumb's History (Vol. 3, 1882). (London: John Murray).

[Greytree Hundred: Much Marcle to Woolhope].

Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford. In continuation of Duncumb's History. Hundred of Grimsworth (Part 1, 1892). (London: John Murray).

Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford. In continuation of Duncumb's History. Hundred of Grimsworth (Part 2, 1892). (London: John Murray).

[The two parts of Grimsworth are usually bound as one. There is no section on Norton Canon, which is described only in a very brief appendix].

M.G. Watkins.

Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford. In continuation of Duncumb's History. Hundred of Huntington (1897). (Hereford: Jakeman and Carver).

M.G. Watkins.

Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford. In continuation of Duncumb's History. Hundred of Radlow 1902. (Hereford: Jakeman and Carver).

[Huntington and Radlow are usually bound as one volume with a single index for both].

J.H. Matthews.

Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford in Continuation of Duncumb's History. Hundred of Wormelow. Upper Division (Part 1, 1912). (Hereford: Jakeman and Carver).

Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford in Continuation of Duncumb's History. Hundred of Wormelow. Upper Division, (Part 2, 1913). (Hereford: Jakeman and Carver).

[The two parts of Upper Wormelow are usually bound as one].

Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford. In Continuation of Duncumb's History. Hundred of Wormelow. Lower Division (Part 1, 1913). (Hereford: Jakeman and Carver).

Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford. In Continuation of Duncumb's History. Hundred of Wormelow. Lower Division (Part 2, 1915). (Hereford: Jakeman and Carver).

[The two parts of Lower Wormelow are usually bound as one].

APPENDIX V. DISTRIBUTION OF RURAL PARISHES BY SIZE AND SUB-REGIONS

Acreages, taken from the 1841 census, include chapelries.

Very small = up to 999 acres. Small = 1000 - 2499 acres.

Medium = 2500 - 3999 acres. Large = 4000 acres and over.

A. All Rural Parishes (200)

<u>COUNTY</u>	Total	Distribution by Size			
		V. Small	Small	Medium	Large
	200	39	95	35	31
		19.5%	47.5%	17.5%	15.5%
<u>WELSH ZONE</u>	Total	Distribution within Sub-Regions			
		V. Small	Small	Medium	Large
	76	17	33	11	15
	38%	22.4%	43.4%	14.5%	20
Archenfield	30	10	14	02	04
Western Border	17	04	04	05	04
Ewyas	10	01	06	00	03
N.W.Upland	19	02	09	04	04
<u>ENGLISH ZONE</u>	Total	Distribution within Sub-Regions			
	124	22	62	24	16
	62%	17.7%	50%	19.3%	12.9%
Central Plain	59	10	28	12	09
Eastern Plain	27	05	14	04	04
Ross	10	01	04	05	00
Bromyard Upland ¹	23	05	14	02	02
Woolhope	05	01	02	01	01

1. Does not include Acton Beauchamp, Edwin Loach or Mathon, which were all transferred to Herefordshire in the late nineteenth century.

APPENDIX VI. DISTRIBUTION OF MEDIEVAL CHURCHES BY SIZE AND SUB-REGIONS¹

A. All Rural Churches (143)

<u>COUNTY</u>	Total	Distribution by Size		
		Small	Medium	Large ²
	143	25	92	26
		17.4%	64.3%	18.1%
<u>WELSH ZONE</u>	Total	Distribution within Sub-Regions		
	55	11	35	09
	38.4%	20.1%	63.6%	16.3%
Archenfield	19	01	18	00
Western Border	14	03	08	03
Ewyas	09	02	05	02
N.W.Upland	13	05	04	04
<u>ENGLISH ZONE</u>	Total	Distribution within Sub-Regions		
	88	14	57	17
	61.5%	15.9%	64.7%	19.3%
Central Plain	42	04	27	11
Eastern Plain	19	03	14	02
Ross	07	02	03	02
Bromyard Upland ³	15	05	09	01
Woolhope	05	00	04	01

-
1. Churches known to have been rebuilt after 1650 have been excluded.
 2. Figures include borderline examples i.e. 1 small and 7 large.
 3. Does not include Acton Beauchamp, Edwin Loach or Mathon, which were transferred to Herefordshire in the late nineteenth century.

APPENDIX VII.

SEATS OF THE GENTRY IN RURAL PARISHES IN 1754

A. Distribution by Zone and Sub-Regions

<u>COUNTY</u>	Total Parishes	Total Seats
	200	107
<u>WELSH ZONE</u>	76 (38%)	36 (33.6%)
Archenfield	30	16
Western Border	19	07 ¹
Ewyas	10	05
N.W.Upland	17	08
<u>ENGLISH ZONE</u>	124 (62%)	71 (66.3%)
Central Plain	60	35
Eastern Plain	27	14
Ross	10	07
Bromyard Upland	22	10 ²
Woolhope	05	04

B. Distribution by Sub-Regions in terms of proximity to Hereford

Inner Sub-Regions		Outer Sub-Regions	
Total Seats	70 (65.4%)	Total Seats	37 (34.5%)
Archenfield	16	Western Border	07 ¹
Central Plain	35	Ewyas	05
Eastern Plain	14	N.W. Upland	08
Woolhope	05	Ross	07
		Bromyard	10 ²

-
1. Does not include Brilley Court in the parish of Kington, or the principal seat in that parish, Hergest Court, which is in Wales.
 2. Does not include Brockhampton Park and Clatter Park in the parish of Bromyard.

APPENDIX VIII. VISITATION RETURNS AND RELATED DOCUMENTS IN PRINT, c. 1660-1764.

* = no queries about churches, but a few comments.

** = items not seen

c.1660- 1670

1.** J.S. Leatherbarrow,

Churchwardens' Presentments in the Diocese of Worcester, c.1660-1760,
Worcestershire Historical Society Occasional Publications 1 (1977).

2. P. Braby,

'Churchwardens' Presentments from the Vale of Evesham, 1660- 1717',
Vale of Evesham Historical Society Research Papers 5 & 6 (2 vols, 1975
& 1977).

[Only the first deals with church fabrics and furniture].

3. S.A.Peyton,

The Churchwardens Presentments in the Oxfordshire Peculiars of
Dorchester, Thame and Banbury, Oxfordshire Record Society 10, (1928).

[Sporadic sets of returns. Early C17 to early C19].

4. E.R.C. Brinkworth,

Episcopal Visitation Book for the Archdeaconry of Buckingham, 1662,
Buckinghamshire Record Society [6] (1947).

5. W.M. Palmer,

Episcopal Visitation Returns for Cambridgeshire: Matthew Wren, Bishop
of Ely, 1638-1665 (1930).

[Includes transcripts and abstracts of a few returns for 1662 and the
Archdeacon's visitation orders for 1665. Pages 1-99 covering the years
1638 to 1662 are reprinted from Transactions of the Cambridgeshire and
Huntingdonshire Archaeological Society Vol. 4, pp. 313-411].

6. **H. Johnstone,**
Churchwardens' Presentments (17th Century). Part 1, Archdeaconry of Chichester, Sussex Record Society 49 (1947-1948).
[Includes 1664-1666 & 1670]
- 7**. **F. Hull**
Dr. John Warner's Visitations of the Diocese of Rochester, 1663 and 1670, Kent Archaeological Society, New Series 1, Pts 3-5 (1990).

1674-1687

8. **H. Johnstone,**
Churchwardens' Presentments (17th Century). Part 2, Archdeaconry of Lewes, Sussex Record Society 50 (1948-1949).
[1674 & 1677]
9. **P. Morgan,**
Inspections of Churches and Parsonage Houses in the Diocese of Worcester in 1674, 1676, 1684 and 1687, Worcestershire Historical Society New Series 12 (1986).
10. **W.J. Pressey,**
'Notes on visitations in the Archdeaconry of Essex' Transactions of the Essex Archaeological Society, 5 vols, 19 (1930), New Series 20 (1933), 21 (1937), 22 (1940), 23 part 1 (1942).
[1683 to 1686]
11. **H.W. Bradshaw,**
Notes of the Episcopal Visitation of the Archdeaconry of Ely in 1685, Cambridge Antiquarian Society Publications 3 (1879).
12. **W.K. Ford,**
Chichester Diocesan Surveys, 1686 and 1724, Sussex Record Society 78 (1994).

1704-1725

13. **R.S.Ferguson,**
Miscellany Accounts of the Diocese of Carlile, with the Terriers Delivered to Me at my Primary Visitation [1704], by William Nicolson, ... Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society Extra Series [1] 1877.
14. **R.E.G. Cole,**
Speculum Dioceseos Lincolniensis sub Episcopis Gul. Wake et Edm. Gibson, A.D. 1707-1723. Part 1. Archdeaconries of Lincoln and Stow. Lincoln Record Society 4 (1913).
[No further parts were published, but the Speculum for Leicestershire was published in Associated Architectural Societies Reports 22 (1893), pp. 227-365].
- 15.* **L.A.S. Butler,**
The Archdeaconry of Richmond in the Eighteenth Century, Bishop Gastrell's 'Notitia'. The Yorkshire Parishes, 1714-1725, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series 146 (1990).
[The 'Notitia' contain nothing about churches. But Appendix 2, pp. 159-171, includes an abstract of visitation returns, itemising causes taken up in the consistory court, c. 1711-1726, and a short list of faculties].
16. **J.S.Purvis,**
The Condition of Yorkshire Church Fabrics, 1300-1800, St. Anthony's Hall Publications 14 (1958).
[Includes abstracts of selected entries from the archdeacons' inspection books 1721-1725].

see also No. 12 above for Chichester 1724

1735-1763

17.* E. Ralph,

'Bishop Secker's diocese book' [1735], in A Bristol Miscellany, Bristol Record Society 37 (1985), pp. 21-63.

[Covers the City and Deanery of Bristol only, but the Miscellany includes a note by J.H. Bettey on the Dorset parishes in the diocese book, pp. 71-78].

18*. H.A. Lloyd-Jukes,

Articles of Enquiry Addressed to the Clergy of the Diocese of Oxford at the Primary Visitation of Dr. Thomas Secker, 1738, Oxfordshire Record Society 38 (1957).

19*. S.L. Ollard, & P.C. Walker,

Archbishop Herring's Visitation Returns, [1743], Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, 4 vols, 71 (1928), 72 (1929), 75 (1929), 77 (1930).

20.* J. Guy,

The Diocese of Llandaff in 1763, South Wales Record Society 78 (1991).

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The Speculum of Archbishop Thomas Secker, [1758-1761], Church of England Record Society 2 (1995).

22. W.R. Ward,

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[Relevant queries in 1764].

23. W.R. Ward,

Parson and Parish in Eighteenth-Century Surrey. Replies to Bishops' Visitations, Surrey Record Society 34 (1994).

[Relevant queries in 1764].

**APPENDIX IX. LEVELS OF MAINTENANCE BY PARISH,
MEASURED IN YEARS**

Parish	Repairs¹		Roofs		Windows		Bells²		Clocks	
	Total %		Total %		Total %		Total %		Total %	
Brampton Abbots (50 years)	18	36	10	20	20	40	18	36		
Eaton Bishop (46 years)	20	43	25	52	28	61	29	63		
Edwin Ralph (48 years)	23	48	18	37	03	06	08	17	13 ³	59
Hentland (34 years)	07	20	09	19	15	44	17	50		
Madley (52 years)	40	77	35	67	44	85	41	79	39	75
Pencombe (51 years)	23	45	26	51	33	65	26	51	08 ⁴	100
Pipe & Lyde (69 years)	27	39	25	36	19	27	34	39		
Stoke Edith (71 years)	21	29	28	39	32	45	43	60	51	72
Stretton Grandison (37 years)	10	27	07	19	29	78	19	51		
Titley (58 years)	19	33	31	53	36	62	05	09		
Whitbourne (45 years)	17	38	15	33	17	38	30	67		
Winforton ⁵ (44 years)	07	16	09	20	07	16	14	32	20 ⁶	83

1. Includes whitening and adorning. 2. Includes repairs to frames and wheels.

3. Nothing after 1735. 4. From 1738. 5. Includes 9 years of the rector's notes, but no accounts. 6. From 1705.

APPENDIX X. SENIOR CLERGY**A. BISHOPS OF HEREFORD**

1661	Nicholas Monck
1662-1691	Herbert Croft
1691-1701	Gilbert Ironside
1701-1712	Humphrey Humphreys
1713-1721	Philip Bisse
1721-1723	Benjamin Hoadly
1724-1746	Henry Egerton
1746-1787	James Beauclerk

B. ARCHDEACONS OF HEREFORD

1660-1684	George Benson
1684-1690	Samuel Benson
1690-1698	William Johnson
1698-1728	Thomas Fox
1729-1741	John Walker
1741-1768	Robert Breton

C. DEANS OF HEREFORD

1660-1661	Herbert Croft	1736-1748	Edward Cresset
1661-1672	Thomas Hodges	1748-1750	Edmund Castle
1672-1692	George Benson	1750-1756	John Egerton
1692-1724	John Tyler	1756-1771	Francis Webber
1724-1729	Robert Clavering		
1729-1736	John Harries		

APPENDIX XI. OFFICIALS**A. DIOCESE OF HEREFORD****Chancellors**

1660-1691	Timothy Baldwin
1691-1706	Charles Baldwin
1707-1754	Edward Wynne
1754-1767	Joseph Browne

Registrars

1662	Fitzwilliam Lawrence
1676	Fitzwilliam Lawrence & Griffith Reignold d. 1696
1697	Herbert Aubrey d. 1744 & Gilbert Hearne, d. 1716.
c. 1722	William Legard & Benjamin Hoadly
1747-1757	Benjamin Hoadly & Edward Pearson
1757	Thomas Clarke of Hereford & Edward Pearson, son of Edward Pearson of Barton Street, Westminster

Deputy Registrars

1663-1672	John Staverton
1672-?1693	Thomas Gravenor
1693-?1698	Tamberlaine Hords [the elder]
1698-1705	Charles Pearce
c. 1706-?1713	Thomas Maddox
c. 1713-?1724	John Chettle
1724-1749	Richard Pyle
1749-1753	Thomas Croft
1753-1756	Thomas Clarke

APPENDIX XI. OFFICIALS**B. ARCHDEACONRY OF HEREFORD****Officials Principal**

1677-1691 Timothy Baldwin (chancellor)

Registrars

1729?- William Stephens

1747 Samuel Gibbons the younger of the City of London and Thomas Breton
the younger of Northampton

There is no further evidence for these offices. The post of Official Principal was apparently subsumed into that of Chancellor. From at least 1729 the archdeacons always presided in their own courts, but the name of the notary in attendance is not often recorded. Before that date their courts were probably served by the registrars and deputy registrars of the diocese.

C. DEAN OF HEREFORD'S PECULIAR**Registrars**

c.1660-c.1674 Pauncefoot Walls
1674-1696 Griffith Reignold
1696-1704 Herbert Croft
1704-1708 Giles Ganderton
1708- Tamberlaine Hords [the younger] d.1745 and Richard Pyle d.1749
1749-1752? Thomas Croft
1752 Richard Moore and James Lane

Deputy Registrars

1670-1674 Griffith Reignold
In 1687 Giles Ganderton
1691-1695 Tamberlaine Hords [the elder]

Evidence for this post is limited as the dean's registrars usually attended the court themselves.

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AL19/18-23 Bishops' Registers 1634-1771. 6 volumes

HD4/1

Consistory Court Books: Acts of Office.

Note These volumes record, at different times, the proceedings of the bishop's court during episcopal visitations, the chancellor's court and the archdeacons' courts, depending on current administrative practice.

Archdeaconries of Hereford and Salop (excluding peculiars).

Vol. 99 1663-1665

100 1666-1672

Archdeaconry of Hereford: Deanery Act Books (including peculiars during episcopal visitations).

Archenfield with Callow, Moreton-on-Lugg and Upper Bullingham

101 1673-1675

121 1676-1681

Frome

116 1673-1676

120 1677-1681

Hereford

104 1680 (incomplete) and 1686

Consistory Court Books: Acts of Office

		Leominster
Vol.	114	1662-1663
	102	1673-1676
	103	1676-1679
	123	1680-1685
		Ross
	117	1673-1680
		Weobley
	119	1673-1676
	122	1676-1681
		Weston
	115	1662-1663
	118	1673-1682
	124	Ross 1681-1686; Weston 1682-1686; and Weobley 1682-1686
	125	Frome 1682-1686; Archenfield 1682-1686; and Leominster 1686
		Archdeaconry of Hereford (including peculiars during episcopal visitations; excluding the Archdeacon's visitations from 1709)
	105	1687-1691
	106	1692-1695 and 1698
	107	1701-1709
	108	1710-1715
	109	1716-1734
	110	1734-1762
		Archdeaconry of Hereford: Archdeacon's Visitations only.
	111	1729-1821

Consistory Court Books: Acts of Instance

Vol.	31	1668-1671
	39	1695-1696
	41	1701-1707
	42	1707
	47	1722-1726

Surveys

HD4/2/6 Miscellaneous Acts and Surveys, 18th century, including extracts from the Commonwealth Surveys known as "Oliver's Surveys" in Lambeth Palace Library, for the estates of both the bishopric and the cathedral, and a terrier of Moreton-on-Lugg, 1716

Consistory Court Papers

HD4/32 1692-1695, including a dispute between William Harris, Vicar of Bredwardine and Herbert Walwyn, impropiator of the tithe of grain there.

HD4/33 1696-1698, including further papers in Harris v. Walwyn.

HD4/34 1698-1701, including further papers in Harris v. Walwyn.

HD4/36 1704-1707, including claim for dilapidations by Francis Harris, rector of Brobury, against Benjamin Griffiths.

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HD5/15/1-170 Triennial visitation of Philip Bisse, 1719

HD5/14/1-39 Primary visitation of Benjamin Hoadly, 1722

HD5/16 Various visitations, 1720-1728

Diocesan Registrar's Files

- HD7/4-67 These bundles contain material relating to the whole diocese, including most of the surviving visitation returns and a variety of letters, certificates and other documents. Many of them concern the care of churches or the role of the clergy in their parishes, 1662-1763
- HD7/16/249-372 within this series comprises visitation returns for Moreton-on-Lugg 1675-1762

Note. A list of the items in each bundle, with piece numbers, is in progress and is available in Herefordshire Record Office.

- HD9/1-2 Diocese Books, containing a register of benefices, c.1742-1842. 2 volumes.

QUARTER SESSIONS RECORDS

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PARISH RECORDS

Abbey Dore

- AC16/25 Parish Book 1732-1782

Almeley

- G73/1-2 Parish Books 1662-1792. 2 volumes

Avenbury

- W49/1 Parish Book 1733-1811

Bacton

Parish Book 1715-1804

Bodenham

- M61/14 Parish Account Book 1652-1816

- AG3/31 Restoration Book, c.1889

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Opinion, 1802.
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AJ32/58 Parish Book 1734-1807
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AH50/2 Parish Register 1684-1746
AG4/22 Churchwardens' Accounts 1691, 1692, 1701, 1702
N25/8 Parish Book 1714-1759
N25/9 Parish Book 1760-1795
N25/10 Parish Book 1701-1747
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N20/2 Parish Book 1708-1830
- Hentland**
N13/1 Parish Book 1629-1729
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N31/32 Parish Book 1726-1822
- Kingsland**
A8/10-14 Churchwardens' Accounts 1675, 1694-1695, 1710, 1706,
1712
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AR4/69 Parish Book 1740-1783

Leintwardine

G25/63 Parish Book 1729-1762

Madley

BK52/34 Parish Book 1565-1687

BK52/35 Parish Book 1698-1713

BK52/36 Parish Book 1713-1736

BK52/37 Parish Book 1715-1738

BK52/38 Parish Book 1736- 1754

BK52/39 Parish Book 1738-1815

BK52/40 Parish Book 1754-1765

Middleton-on-the-Hill

AH61/16 Churchwardens' Account Book 1730-1796

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L33/6 Parish Book 1676-1705

L33/7 Parish Book 1702-1758

Pipe and Lyde

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Preston Wynne (chapelry of Withington)

AF27/1 Parish Register 1730-1812, including records relating to the rebuilding of the church.

Stretton Grandison

J29/1 Parish Book 1687, 1724-1782

W76/26-27 Leases of church lands, 1743 & 1751

Stoke Edith

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Thruxton

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AB56/24 Churchwardens' Accounts 1687-1714

AB56/30 Churchwardens' and Overseers' Papers 1719-1738

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J85/1 Parish Book 1716-1733

Westhide (chapelry of Stoke Edith)

AA69/2 Parish Register 1660-1770

(see also J72/4 under Stoke Edith)

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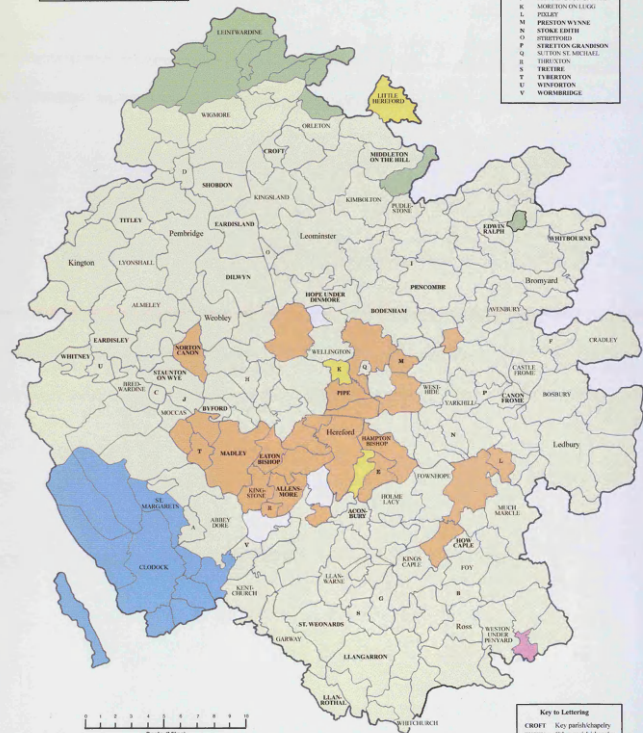
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HEREFORDSHIRE Ecclesiastical Jurisdictions

Diocese of Hereford
Archdeaconry of Hereford
Archdeaconry of Eborac
Peculiar of the Dean of Hereford
Other Peculiar
Diocese of St. David
Diocese of Gloucester
Extra Parochial

Key to Abbreviations
A. ABERCROMBY
B. BRANSTON ABBEYS
C. CROFT
D. DRYTON
E. EBRIDGE
F. FENWICK
G. GERRARD
H. HANWELL & NCV
I. HARTINGTON & WYKE
J. HUNTINGTON & WYKE
K. KILGER
L. LITTLE WILTON
M. MORTON & WYKE
N. NORTON & WYKE
O. ORE
P. PETERSTON GRANDISON
Q. QUENBY & WYKE
R. RICHMOND
S. ST. MARTIN
T. TIBBURY
V. VERNON

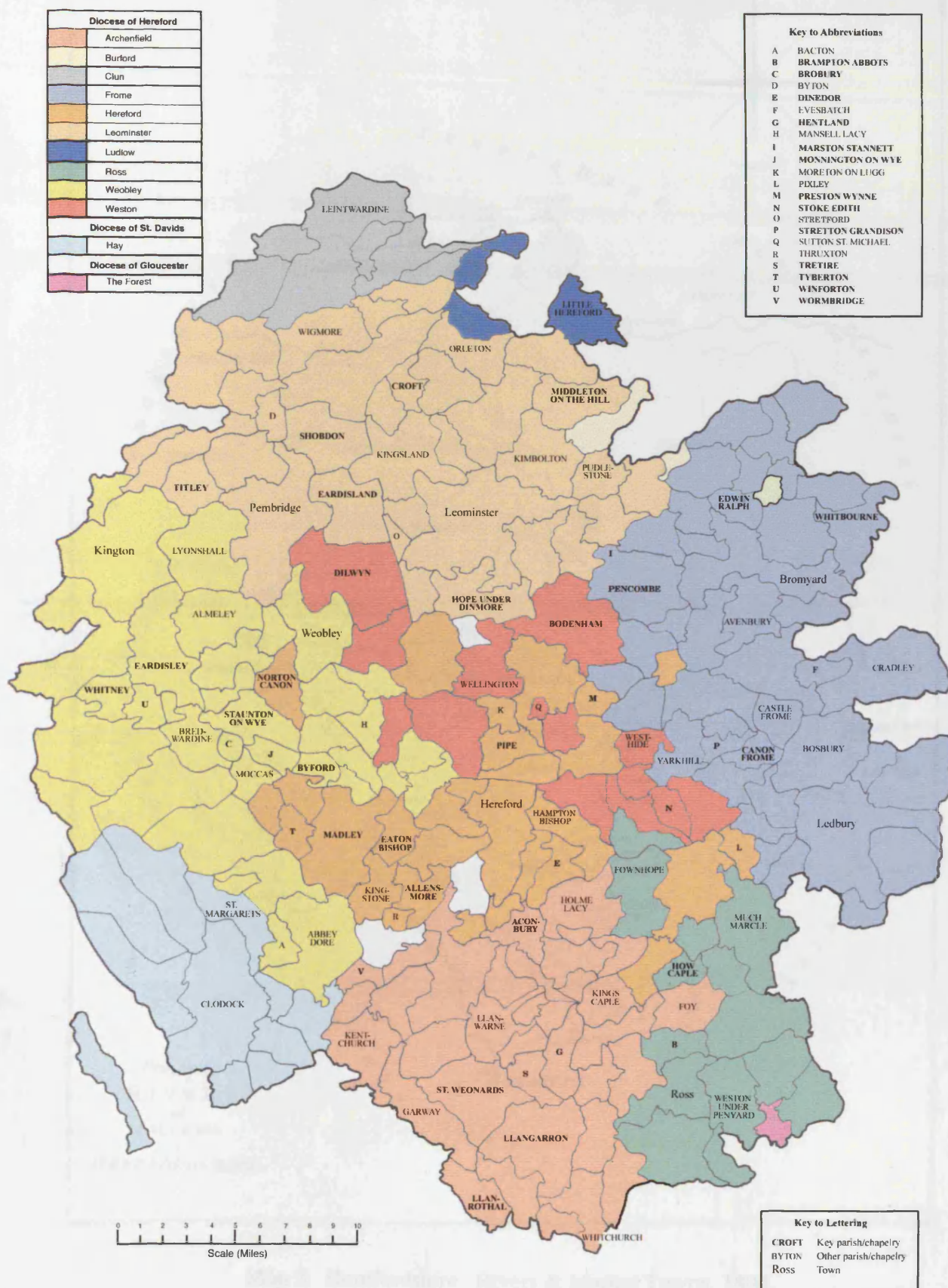


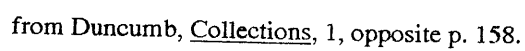
Map 1. Herefordshire. Ecclesiastical Jurisdictions.

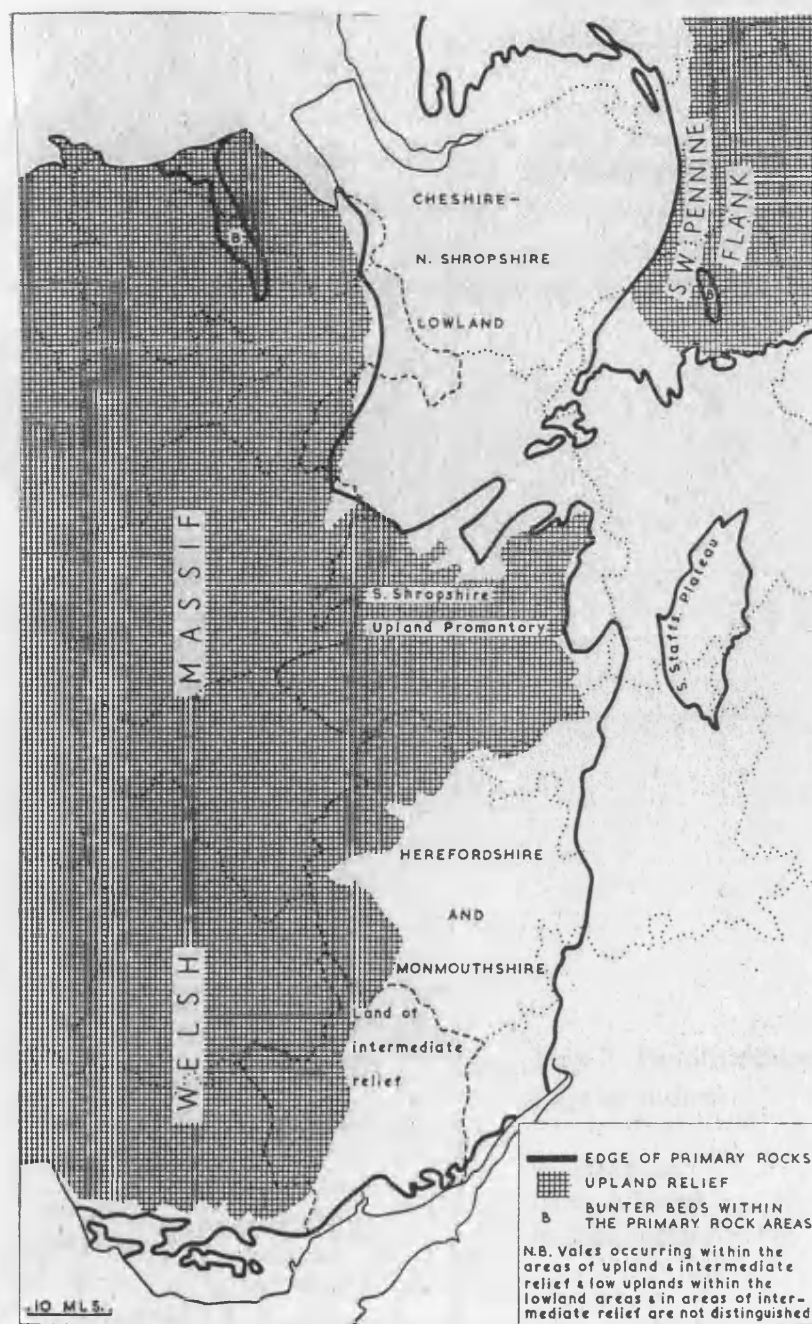
HEREFORDSHIRE

Deaneries for Episcopal Visitations

352







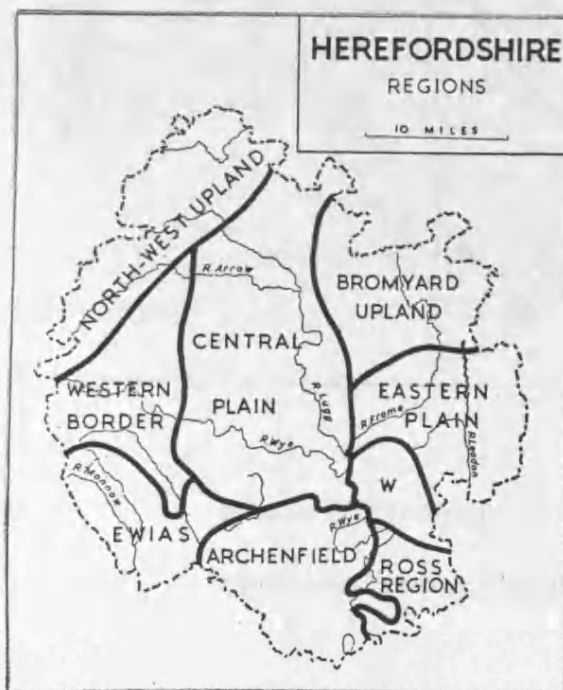
Map 4. The Welsh Marches. Relief.

from
 Sylvester, *Welsh Borderland*, p. 37.



Map 5. Herefordshire.
Relief.

adapted from
Darby & Terrett,
Midland England, p. 58.



Map 7. Herefordshire.
Pays in outline.

adapted from
Darby & Terrett,
Midland England, p. 106.



Map 6. Herefordshire. Roads, c. 1804.

adapted from Duncumb, *Collections*, 1, frontispiece.

HEREFORDSHIRE

Sub-Regions

357

	Archenfield
	Bromyard Upland
	Central Plain
	Eastern Plain
	Ewyas
	North-West Upland
	Ross
	Western Border
	Woolhope

Key to Abbreviations

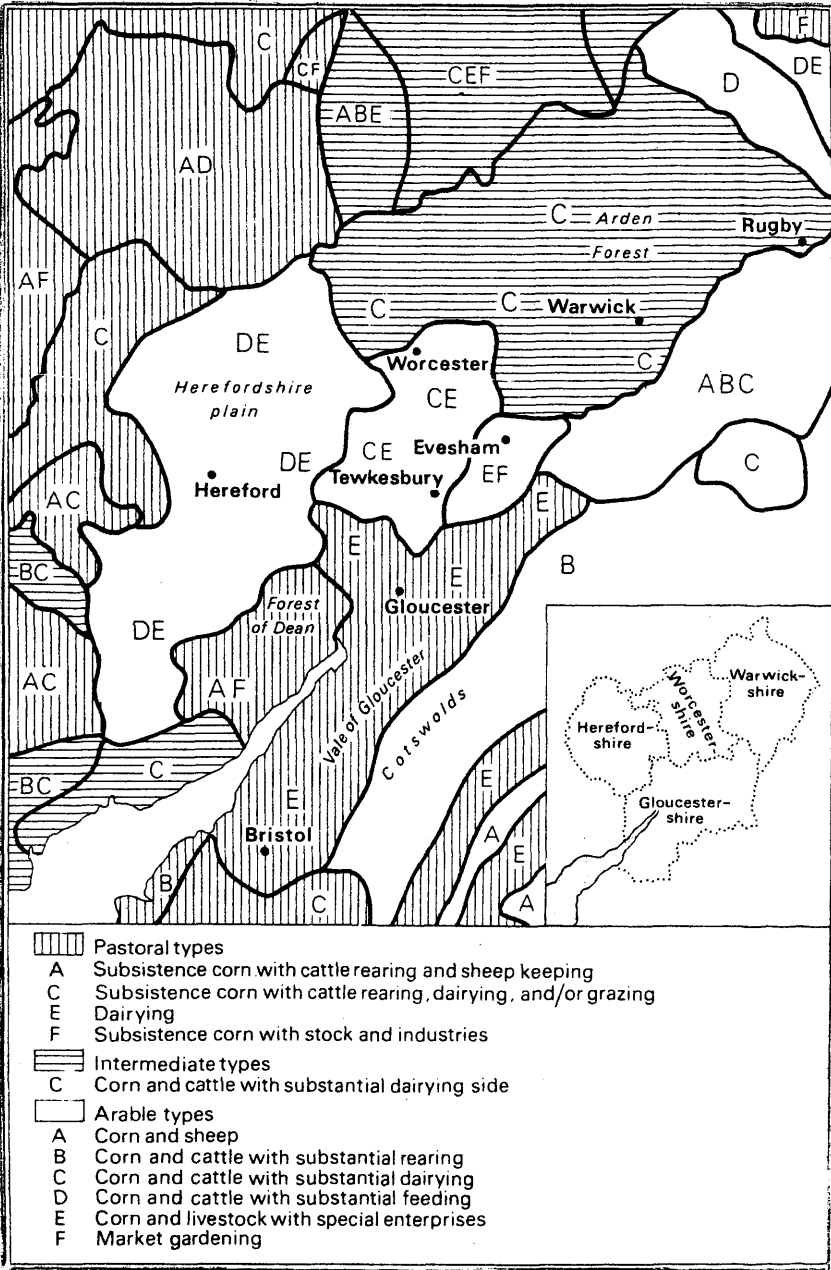
A	BACON
B	BRAMPTON ABBOTS
C	BROBURY
D	BYTON
E	DINEDOR
F	EVLISBATCH
G	HENTLAND
H	MANSSELL LACY
I	MARSTON STANNETT
J	MONNINGTON ON WYE
K	MORETON ON LUGG
L	PIDLEY
M	PRESTON WYNNE
N	STOKE EDITH
O	STRETTON
P	STRETTON GRANDISON
Q	SUTTON ST. MICHAEL
R	THRUXTON
S	TRETIRE
T	TYBERTON
U	WINFORTON
V	WORMBRIDGE



Key to Lettering

CROFT	Key parish/chapelry
BYTON	Other parish/chapelry
Ross	Town

Map 8. Herefordshire. Sub-Regions



Map 9. West Midlands. Farming Regions.

from Thirsk, Agrarian History 5, pt. 1, p. 161.

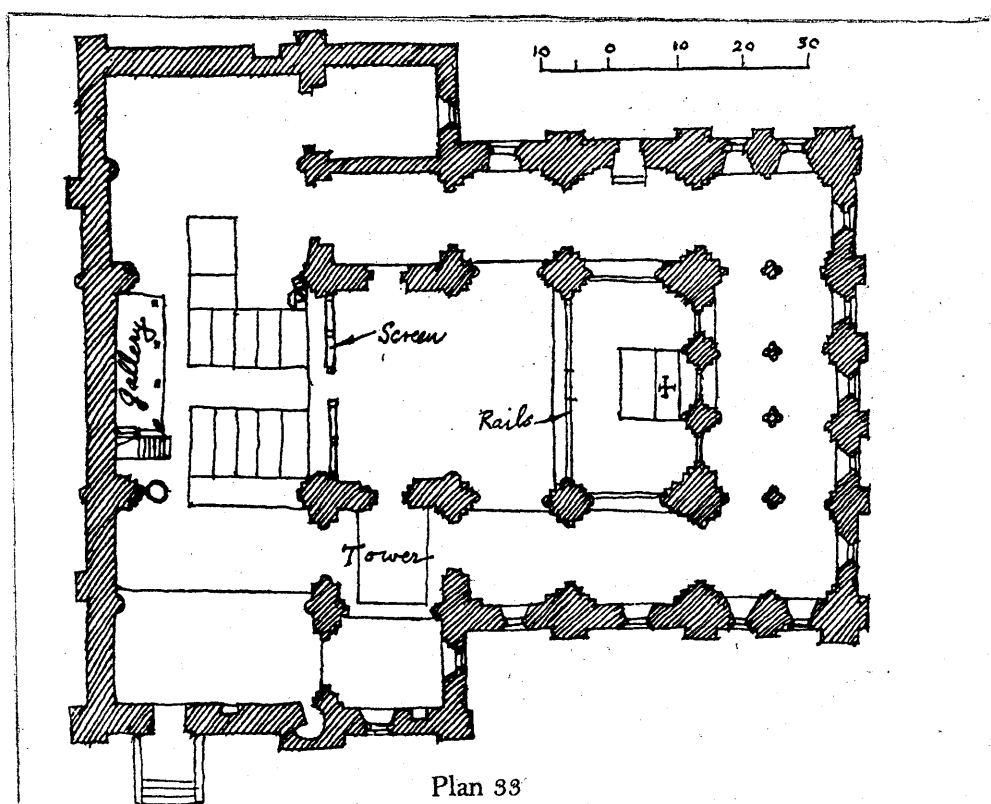


Plate 1a. Abbey Dore, 1635. The rector's pew & reading desk (not shown) stood east of the screen.

Addleshaw & Etchells, *Anglican Worship*, p. 131.

Plate 1b. Brampton Bryan.

Addleshaw & Etchells, *Anglican Worship*, p. 53.

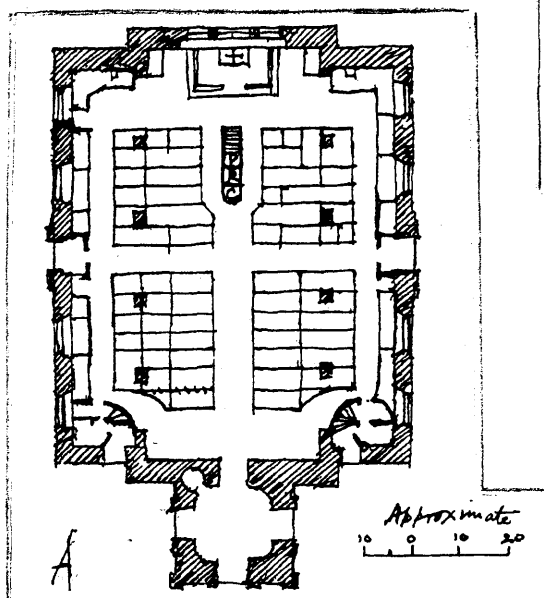
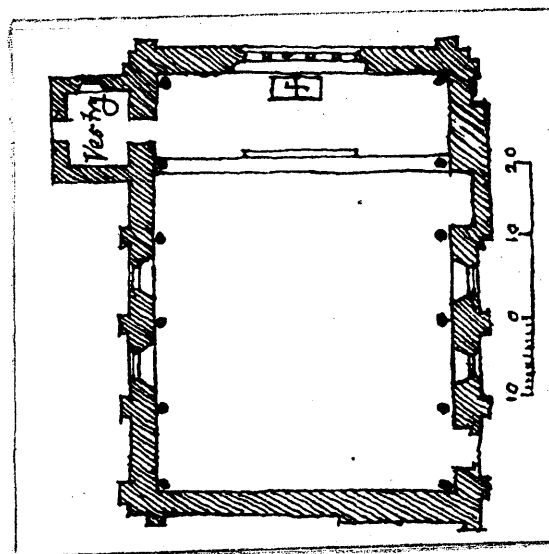


Plate 1c. St James, Piccadilly, early 18th C.

Addleshaw & Etchells, *Anglican Worship*, p. 55.

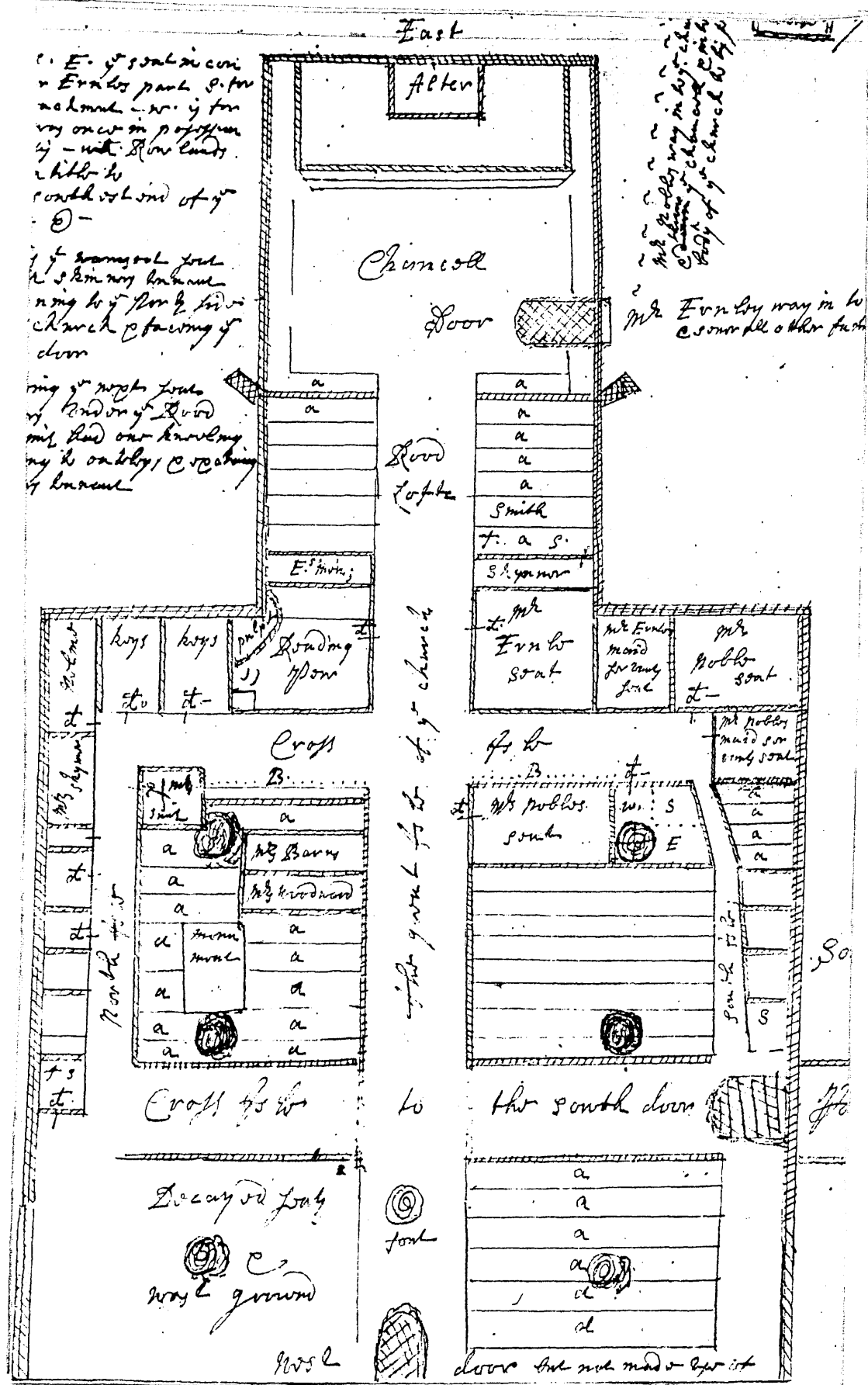


Plate 2. Much Marcle, c. 1716.

Hill's mss, vol. 3.

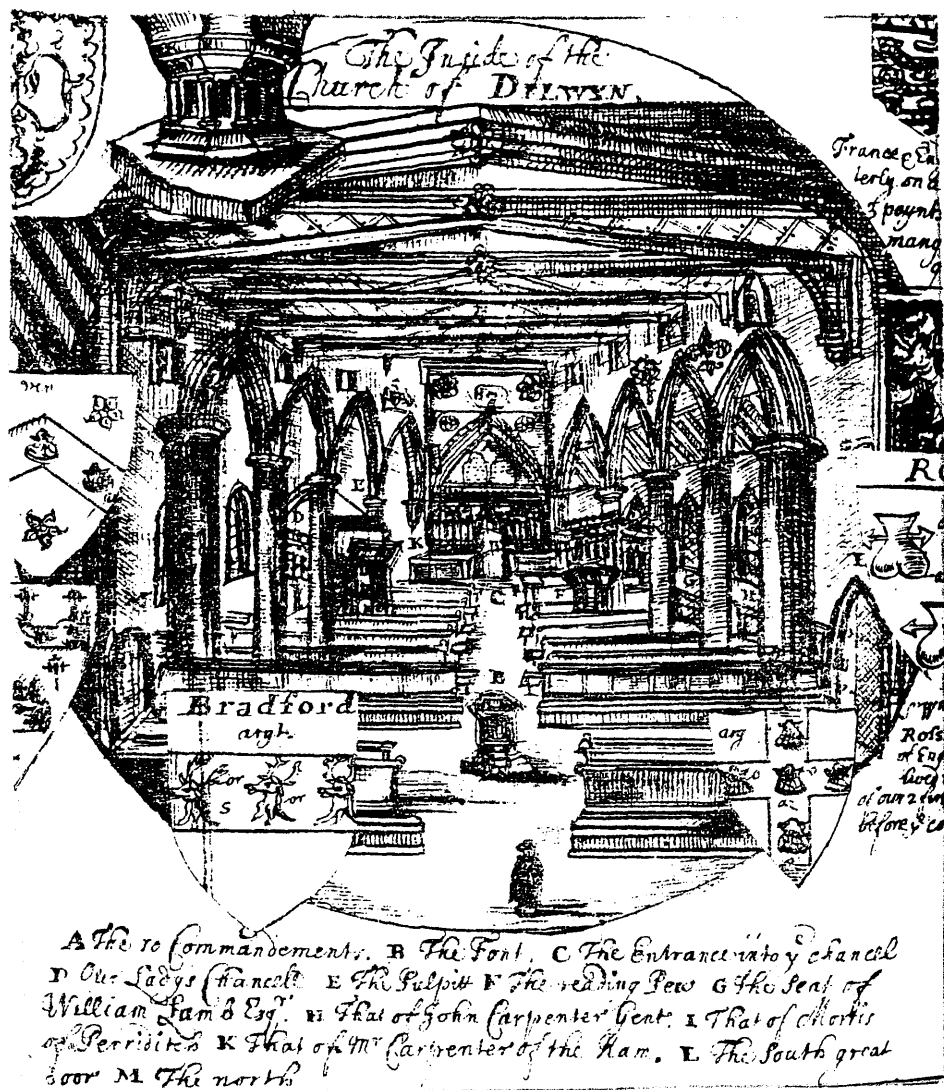


Plate 3a. Dilwyn, c. 1716.

Nicholls, [Dingley's] History from Marble, p. cclvi.

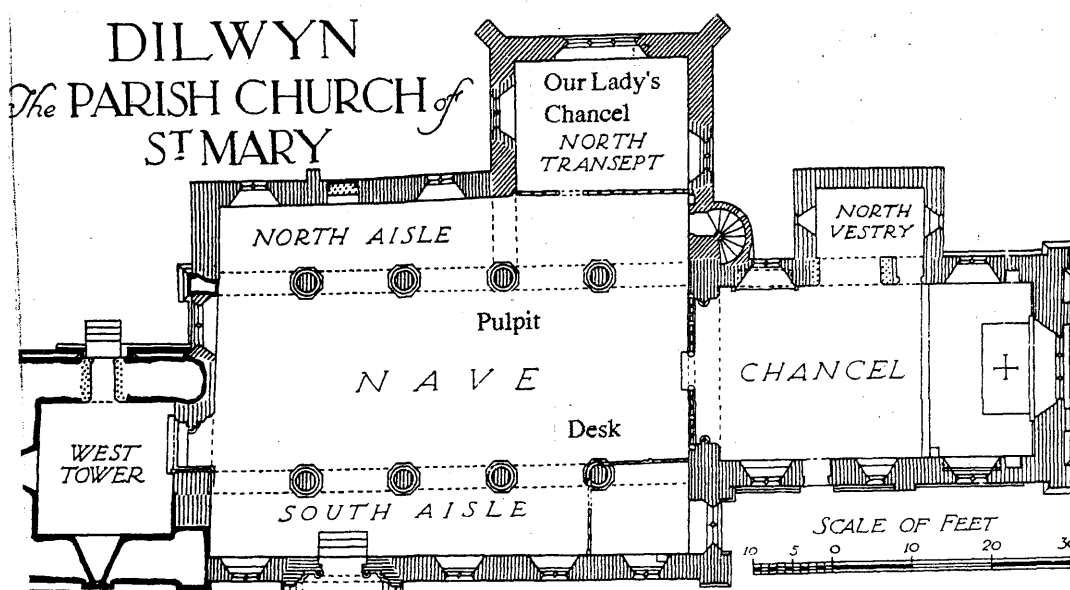


Plate 3b. Dilwyn.

adapted from R.C.H.M. England, Herefordshire Inventory, 3, p.37.

